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Dictionary of
American Slang

Barbara Ann Kipfer
Robert L. Chapman

DICTIONARY OF
American Slang

FOURTH EDITION

BARBARA ANN KIPFER Ph.D.
Editor

ROBERT L. CHAPMAN Ph.D.
Founding Editor

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PREFACE

To the Fourth Edition

THE EDITOR OF A DICTIONARY OF SLANG owes explanations to the general reader about why such a book is made, how it was made, and how to use it. Also, the editor must attempt to explain what slang is and the history of slang lexicography.

Why This Book Was Made

Why devote a book to this sort of uncouth language? Dictionaries are popularly thought to have strong influence, giving validity and authority to the entries and therefore having social and moral impact. A dictionary like this, which specializes in terms not to be lightly used in polite society, may therefore be thought of as teaching and advocating these terms.

Theoretically in linguistics, any corpus or body of vocabulary is worth recording. Lexicography is a science in that it values accuracy, completeness, and demonstrability. As a lexicographer, I collect and record slang because it is there—but this has been done carefully and responsibly. It is up to the reader to also be careful and responsible in using these powerful and provocative words.

Yes, children may sneak off into corners with this book and find dirty words—but the printed book is now challenged and often superseded as a source of these terms by films, television programs, and the Internet. These terms are no longer kept quietly in books, but at least in a book such as this, the words are explained, their usage offered, and histories described when available.

History of Slang Lexicography

In historical justification, this book joins itself to an Anglo-American tradition going back a little more than 200 years. Credit as founder of general slang lexicography (as distinct from those who dealt in

specialized lexicons of the vocabularies of thieves and tramps) goes to the distinguished British antiquarian Francis Grose, who published *A Classical Dictionary of the Vulgar Tongue* in 1785. After two further editions, the book became the basis of an 1811 updating and expansion called *Lexicon Balatronicum: A Dictionary of Buckish Slang, University Wit, and Pickpocket Eloquence*, with nearly 5,000 defined entries. Grose's book and its successor include the slang of the so-called *balatrones*, "jesters, buffoons, contemptible persons; literally babblers," and of learned humorists, those of the universities, as well as of thieves.

Grose's work held on until it was superseded in 1859 by John C. Hotten's *A Dictionary of Modern Slang, Cant, and Vulgar Words*, which had new editions through 1874. Then, in 1887, Professor Albert M.V. Barrere published *Argot and Slang: A New French and English Dictionary* at his own expense until Ballantyne Press offered the 956 pages by subscription two years later as *A Dictionary of Slang, Jargon, & Cant*. Barrere's collaborator was Charles Godfrey Leland, the first American to figure prominently in general slang lexicography. The dictionary embraced "English, American, and Anglo-Indian slang, Pidgin English, tinkers' jargon and other irregular phraseology."

In 1890, the first volume of John Stephen Farmer and William Ernest Henley's *Slang and Its Analogues* was published; volume 2 came the following year and the subsequent five volumes through 1904. The total number of pages published was 2,736.

After Farmer and Henley, good general slang lexicography was not resumed until 1937, when Eric Partridge brought out the first edition of his masterwork, *A Dictionary of Slang and Unconventional English*, which

was updated and enlarged in numerous editions and printings by Partridge himself through 1980, as well as posthumously to the present. Partridge was an important lexicographer and scholar, as well as a teacher, essayist, and novelist. He is credited with making slang lexicography more or less respectable.

The first full-scale dictionary of American slang appeared in 1960 when Harold Wentworth and Stuart Berg Flexner's *Dictionary of American Slang* was published by Thomas Y. Crowell (a company later incorporated into HarperCollins). Professor Wentworth had previously written the *American Dialect Dictionary*, portions of which were adapted for the slang dictionary. Flexner added thousands of slang definitions and wrote the invaluable preface, a wonderful treatment of the sociolinguistics of slang, last printed in the 1986 *New Dictionary of American Slang*. He also did the analytical work reflected in that book's appendix, which treated the processes of word-formation in slang. The 700-page Wentworth and Flexner was enlarged and updated in 1967 and 1975, and it is the basis of the present book.

The development of slang is swift and widespread. One may question how a print dictionary can hope to be accurate or up-to-date in the Internet age. The answer is, it cannot be; it is a snapshot in time. The analysis of what to include is much more important for a print dictionary, then, because it is essential to attempt to determine what words and meanings have lasting value versus ephemeral uses. Because of the enormity of the American slang vocabulary, no print or online dictionary is close to comprehensive despite the hard work of slang lexicographers.

The Internet is a dispenser, expediter, enhancer, and preserver of slang that must be entered into with a bit of caution. Any person or group can describe its slang vocabulary for the world to access, updated as often as daily. There are a growing number of glossaries and full-scale dictionaries online, spreading new slang. Much of the material is raw, unfiltered, and untouched by professional linguists or lexicographers. It is interesting, possibly useful, but not comparable with well-researched books.

How This Book Was Made

The book has a primary utility for people who find slang terms in speech or writing and need help with their meaning. It also serves readers who just plain enjoy slang and are curious about the particulars, such as usage and etymology. This book is intended for the general reader and does not include some of the very specialized vocabulary of subcultures. The aim is to describe terms that have gained a kind of broad acceptance and use.

The previous edition was analyzed for its user-friendliness, and decisions were made to change some of the format of the entries, the order of the senses, *etc.* The basic policies of this new edition remain the same: that it is to be a general dictionary of current American slang rather than a collection of special vocabularies, a scholarly historical treatment, or a book with a regional or other bias.

The Wentworth and Flexner *Dictionary of American Slang* remains the “seed,” and its wealth of material has been worked with over the years, retaining much, discarding some, and reviewing/revising all.

The new resource of the Internet/World Wide Web has certainly played a part in collecting and identifying new material, as well as standard lexicographic collection methods. Many Web sites describing slang terms exist, but almost none are authoritative in the sense that they have been assembled by trained lexicographers. However, that does not mean that they are not a great resource. Many Internet collections were examined, along with print collections of slang, in deciding what to

include in this edition, as data for definition-writing, and for examples of usage.

The definitions, examples of usage, and etymologies of the third edition were examined and reedited for entries retained from the previous edition. Two appendices are in this edition: the various words for “drunk,” “intoxicated,” and “intoxicated by drugs,” and a guide to text-messaging abbreviations. The vocabulary for drunk/drugged/intoxicated is large and ever-growing; the technical development of text messaging has added a new form of abbreviated communication to our culture.

Working through the various stages and having the advantage of using electronic files make dictionary work a less difficult task in the 21st century. The style and apparatus of this dictionary are explained in the “Guide to the Dictionary.”

What Is Slang?

In linguistics, where definitions at best are often imprecise and leaky, that of slang is especially notorious. The problem is one of complexity, such that a definition satisfying to one person or authority would seem inadequate to another because the prime focus is different. Like the proverbial blind men describing the elephant, all correctly, none sufficiently, we tend to stress one aspect or another of slang. My own stress will be on the individual psychology of slang speakers.

Sociolinguistic Aspects of Slang

The external and quantitative aspects of slang, its sociolinguistics, have been very satisfactorily treated, nowhere more so than in Stuart Berg Flexner's masterful preface to the *Dictionary of American Slang*. Readers may also consult Eric Partridge's 1954 *Slang To-Day and Yesterday*, particularly parts III and IV. Here you will read an updated version of Flexner's discussion of the social milieu from which American slang emerges, largely credited to Dr. Robert L. Chapman.

Recorded slang emerged from the special languages of subcultures. The group studied longest and most persistently has been the criminal underworld and the prison population. Other subcultures contributing greatly have been those of athletes and their fans, cowboys, drug (narcotics) users, entertainers (show business), gamblers, gypsies, hoboes, immigrant or ethnic populations, jazz musicians and devotees, police, railroad and other transportation workers, sailors, soldiers, and, of course, students.

In the 21st century, we must note that some of these traditional spawning grounds for slang have lost or ceased productivity and other subcultures have emerged to replace them. The terminology from hoboes, railroads, gypsies, cowboys, and even the military has slowed to a trickle. Criminals and police still make contributions, and gamblers offer zesty coinages. Teenagers and students will reliably be innovative and shocking. The entertainment world is still a fertile source of slang. Railroad slang has been replaced, though on a lesser scale, by the terms of the airline and trucking industries. The jazz world offers less, now, than rock and roll and other musical genres like hip-hop and rap.

Terms from the drug world have multiplied astronomically, as has the

slang vocabulary from sports. Among the immigrant-ethnic bestowals, Yiddish, Italian, and black American slang continue to add to our lexicon. In the matter of sex, our times have witnessed a great increase in the terms taken from or describing homosexuals. Some sources of slang are relatively new: the Internet/World Wide Web/ computer milieu and the hospital/medical/nursing complex. Television is a driving force behind the spread of the latter, as well as disseminating the slang of law enforcement and crime and also the business world.

With the information explosion, people feel free to create slang, and its spread is more unpredictable than ever before. Slang comes from everywhere, and the wave of communication will carry it further and faster than in the previous century.

One further distinction can be pointed out, that of “primary” and “secondary” slang. Primary slang is the speech of subculture members, natural and pristine to them, but certainly only an alternative to the rest of us, something to be chosen rather than required. Much of teenage talk and the speech of urban street gangs are examples of primary slang. Secondary slang is chosen not so much to show one’s part in a group as to express one’s attitudes toward (agreement or disagreement) and resourcefulness in borrowing the verbiage of such a group. Secondary slang is a matter of stylistic choice rather than true identification. When a mom says to her child, “my bad” for throwing away his baseball-card collection, it is her attempt to use secondary slang to soften the blow of what she did.

Individual Psychology of Slang

Obviously, an individual in one of the groups or subcultures mentioned above, or any of many others, resorts to slang as a means of attesting membership in the group or otherwise separating or distinguishing himself or herself from mainstream culture. He or she merges both verbally and psychologically into the subculture that prides itself on being different from, in conflict with, and/or superior to the mainstream culture. Slang is an act of bracketing a smaller social group, one that can be verbally joined and understood. The act of using slang is an act of featuring and obtruding the self within the subculture—by cleverness, control, up-to-dateness, insolence, virtuosity of audacious or satirical wit, aggression, et cetera. All this happens in the psyche. It explains most of what we know and feel about slang.

Slang is a universal mode of speaking, as old as humankind. Slang actually has its roots in the deepest parts of the mind, in the unconscious itself. That territory is perilous ground for a lexicographer, but some conjectures and relationships can be proposed for consideration.

The deeper psychodynamics of slang may have to do with two things: (1) defense of the ego against the superego, and (2) our simultaneous eagerness and reluctance to be human. Surely wounded egos are the most common human (nonanatomic) possession. Slang might be seen as a remedy, a self-administered therapy. Slang is a remedy that denies weakness and brags about sinfulness. In this view, it would not be too much to claim that therapeutic slang is necessary for the development of the self: that society would not be able to exist without its slang. It is a curious linguistic phenomenon that seems fleeting and frivolous—yet we can acknowledge that it is deeply ingrained and vital to human growth

and order. This is only one of the paradoxes of slang.

In this aspect, slang is similar to profanity. Like profanity, slang is a surrogate for destructive physical action. Freud once said that the founder of civilization was the first man who hurled a curse rather than a rock or spear at his enemy. Slang also has this usefulness, and profanity can actually be considered a subcategory of slang, the more elemental phenomenon.

Slang is language that has little to do with the main aim of language, the connection of sounds with ideas in order to communicate ideas—rather, it is an attitude, a feeling, a verbal action. To pose another paradox: Slang is the most nonlinguistic type of language.

What about “our simultaneous eagerness and reluctance to be human”—what has that to do with slang? The notion is that when you try to consider it deeply, slang seems to be joined with other phenomena such as Freud’s “dream work,” with comedy, and elements of myth. What slang shares with all of these is the salvational and therapeutic function of both divorcing us from and maintaining our connection with genetically being an animal. Dream work relieves us of the need to be reasonable and discharges the tension of the great burden with which our rationality charges us. Though we are uncomfortable with paradox in ordinary language, we easily tolerate it in slang, where it seems much at home.

Slang links itself to comedy in that it exploits and even celebrates human weakness (or animality) without working to destroy it completely. Slang makes room for our vileness, but only so much room. The great comics of the past have often come in pairs—Laurel and

Hardy, Dean and Lewis, Huck Finn and Tom Sawyer—with each member having his/her legitimacy. In myth, there were many trickster figures with a fondness for sly jokes and malicious pranks—elements, too, of much slang vocabulary.

Slang is also the idiom of life force, with roots near those of sexuality, obscenity, and death. The “dirty” parts of slang we surely know, but what about the tendency to kid about being killed in various manners? Gallows humor is quite central to slang.

One change with obvious connections to sociolinguistics and psycholinguistics is the relation of slang to gender. Women use taboo and vulgar slang quite often now, something formerly thought of as a male preserve. Sociologically, this shows the determination of women to enter the power structure and shed the restrictions of being female. Psychologically, the implications are less clear, but it may be that women are determined to be aggressive and strong, once identified as a part of profound maleness.

Apologies

The aim of the editor was to make a dictionary of current general American slang, and I have done my best to weed out entries that are only of dubious current or general status. That which is not current or not general has been left in this dictionary so that those readers who come upon these words in early writings will be able to understand the terms. Some of these also aid in understanding the derivation of more current terms.

Slang is a gray area that shares boundaries with the relaxed vocabulary identified as “informal” or “colloquial,” and inevitably this dictionary will include some of those terms deemed such by other books. Slang also shares a gray area with the “figurative idiom,” in which inventive and poetic terms, especially metaphors, are used for novelty and spice, self-advertisement and cheekiness. Again, some of these terms will be found in this dictionary, and you may disagree with the choice to include them. Please do contact the publisher with corrections and suggestions for future editions.

I cannot possibly express my full debt to the late Dr. Robert L. Chapman, who was the editor of the second and third editions, the latter of which I assisted. I wish he had been here to consult with, and my hope is that I have made changes he would champion and additions he would delight in.

GUIDE To the Dictionary

THE EDITOR HAS TRIED to make the apparatus of this book clear and self-explanatory, but a few guidelines may help the reader. These are given more or less in the order of the elements in the definition block itself.

The Main Entry

The main entry sometimes contains portions that do not appear in boldface and are not taken into account in alphabetization of the headwords. These include the articles *a*, *an*, and *the*, when they appear in the beginning of an entry, and the variable pronoun in a phrase, indicated by *someone*, *someone's*, *something*, *one's*, *etc.* Variant forms following *or* and variants found within parentheses appear in boldface but do not affect alphabetization.

Impact Symbols

Main entries considered to have strong social or emotional impact are indicated by delta symbols bracketing the entry itself or the separate definition numbers if the impact symbol does not apply to all senses of the term. The symbols are assigned on a two-level principle, corresponding to what have usually been called “taboo” and “vulgar.”

Taboo terms are *never* to be used, and vulgar terms are to be used only when one is aware of and desires their strong effect. In this book, terms of contempt and derision for racial or other groups have been included among the taboo terms.

Terms of strongest impact are marked with the symbols ◀▶ and those of lesser impact with the symbols ◀◁▷. The assignment of these is a matter of editorial judgment, and not everyone will agree with this judgment. In some places, it was difficult to assign impact symbols to terms that are acceptable within a group but are considered offensive when used by those outside the group. We have taken account of recent changes in the currency and acceptability of terms previously unspeakable.

Pronunciations

Words are respelled for pronunciation only when “normal” pronunciation cannot be readily ascertained or when pronunciation is crucial to the meaning of the term. The system of respelling is designedly very simple, depending on what we regard as a majority pronunciation of the respelled syllable and showing stressed syllables in capital letters.

Part-of-Speech Labels

Parts of speech and a few other grammatical particulars are indicated by rather self-explanatory abbreviations or labels:

adj adjective past part past participle

adv	adverb	phr	phrase
affirmation		prefix	
combining form		prep	preposition
infix		pres part	present participle
interj	interjection	pron	pronoun
modifier		question	
n	noun	sentence	
negation		suffix	
		v	verb

Variant Forms

Variation is shown in three ways:

1. In the main entry itself, up to three variants are shown, separated by *or*.
2. Where there are more than three variants, or they apply to various parts of the main entry, they are shown in parentheses with the label *Variations*.
3. Where variant forms apply to particular numbered definitions, this is shown by printing the form or forms at the beginning of the sense, introduced by *also*.

Dating Labels

Even though this is not meant to be a full-fledged historical dictionary,

the time of origin and/or special currency of the terms is shown by a dating label. These indicate the general time of origin when known. All labels are based upon evidence found in published scholarship or lexicography, and most are, of course, subject to correction where better evidence is found.

When an entry does not have a dating label, the inference is either that the date was undiscoverable or that the term is relatively recent.

Origin Labels

When the social group or milieu from which a term originated is known, it is indicated by an origin label that is often found with the dating label; for example, *late 1800s+ cowboys* or *1960s+ teenagers*.

Definitions

Definitions were written in what most users will accept as a normal form for dictionaries. A few added notes:

1. The usual distinction between transitive and intransitive verbs has not been used, in the belief that the definitions and the examples will make that distinction clear when useful.
2. After the label *sentence*, another sentence has been provided that translates the main entry.
3. Interjections, prefixes and suffixes, and combining forms have been explained “objectively,” with no attempt made to provide a strictly substitutable definition.

4. When a word is defined in one part of speech but is often used in others, it may be defined by example in this book. The most common case is where a noun is often used as an attributive modifier, which in this book is indicated by the label *modifier* followed by a colon and by an example of the use. Definitions by example apply to part-of-speech shifts from the main definition, which may or may not precede them in the entry since the parts of speech are alphabetical in this book.
5. Definitions are not always given in chronological order, even when that is known. The order of the parts of speech is alphabetical, to make the book entirely consistent.
6. Occasionally when an example itself fully defines the term, it will stand as the definition without further ado.

Slang Synonyms

Often slang synonyms are provided at the ends of definitions in small caps. Slang synonyms are also provided as quick definitions when a full definition is given elsewhere at a synonymous entry, usually at a more frequently used or interesting term.

Editorial Notes

When certain information seems useful but does not fit into the normal format of the definition block, it is included as an editorial note. These are introduced by a large black dot.

Examples

In this book, usage examples are given either when they have been collected from the media or when an invented example seems to help in definition or in showing context and structure. Examples have a double function: to illustrate usage and to validate usage and the inclusion of the term.

Etymologies

Etymologies, or word histories, are given in square brackets at the end of the definition block, before the cross-references. Slang etymology is less certain and precise than standard etymology. Because of the moral and social dubiousness of slang, less of it has been printed over the years, yielding less evidence than the lexicographer needs.

Etymologies are not given here when they are deemed to be obvious, but when they are accepted and demonstrable, they are stated as fact. In cases where an etymology seems necessary but none has been discovered or surmised, the notation *origin unknown* is used.

A part of the fun of making a slang dictionary is the exercise of ingenuity and insight for etymologies through the lexicographer's research. Etymological research is ongoing, so the editor asks to be enlightened if an etymology has been improved upon by other scholars.

Cross-References

This book attempts to cross-reference nearly every important term in

every phrase. Since this book defines a great number of phrasal entries, every attempt has been made to help the readers find the term being sought.

A

A *n* **1** Amphetamine **2** LSD; ACID (*Narcotics*)

AA (pronounced as separate letters) **modifier:** *an AA barrage* *n* An anti-aircraft weapon, or anti-aircraft fire; ACK-ACK, FLAK (*WWI*)

abandominiums *n* Abandoned apartments or houses where addicts use drugs: *Abandominiums blighted the former middle-class neighborhood*

abbreviated piece of nothing *n* A worthless or insignificant person or thing: *Her unemployed neighbor is an abbreviated piece of nothing*

abc gum *n* Gum that has already been chewed: *There's abc gum under the desk*

abdabs (or **habdabs** or **screaming abdabs** or **screaming habdabs**) *n* Anxiety or nervous tension: *Starting any new project gives her the abdabs (1945+)*

Abe's cabc (or **abe**) *n phr* A five-dollar bill [Jive talk 1930s+ & rock and roll 1950s+; fr Lincoln's portrait on the bill, perhaps a shortening and repronouncing of "cabbage"]

A-bomb *n* **1** An atomic bomb **2** A car especially modified for quick acceleration and speed; HOT ROD (*Hot rodders*) **3** A combination of drugs, typically marijuana or hashish plus opium (*Narcotics*)

abortion *n* Something of very poor quality; a messy failure; Disaster:
That show is a real abortion

about that *See* SORRY ABOUT THAT

about town *See* MAN-ABOUT-TOWN

above one's head *See* IN OVER one's HEAD

abso-bloody-lutely *modifier* Absolutely: *He abso-bloody-lutely wanted to see her again*

absotively (posilutely) *modifier* Absolutely: *I absotively posilutely want to watch the basketball games*

academy *See* LAUGHING ACADEMY

Acapulco gold *n phr* Marijuana of high quality grown near Acapulco, Mexico, and having leaves with a golden hue (*Narcotics*)

accident *n* A person born from an unplanned pregnancy; an unplanned pregnancy: *At 50, this third one was an accident (1900+)*

accidentally on purpose *adv phr* As if by accident, but really by intention: *She missed the meeting accidentally on purpose*

accommodation collar *n phr* An arrest made to fulfill a quota, usu in response to pressure for strong police action against crime (*Police*)

account *See* NO-ACCOUNT

accounting *See* CREATIVE ACCOUNTING

AC-DC (Variations: **AC/DC** or **ac-dc** or **ac/dc**) *adj* Practicing both heterosexual and homosexual sex; bisexual *adv*: *I think she does it*

AC-DC [fr the abbreviations for the two types of electrical current, alternating and direct; an appliance that can operate with either type is marked *AC-DC*]

ace *adv*: *He did it ace every time* **modifier**: *an ace mechanic/ the ace professor* **n** 1 A person of extraordinary skill, usu in a specified activity: *poker ace/ the ace of headwaiters* 2 A combat pilot who has shot down five or more enemy aircraft (WWI) 3 An unusually pleasant, generous, and decent person, esp a male; PRINCE 4 A very close friend; BUDDY, PAL (*Black & street gang*) 5 A man who favors flamboyant, up-to-the-minute dress; DUDE (*Black*) 6 A marijuana cigarette; JOINT 7 A dollar bill 8 A hole scored in one stroke (*Golf*) 9 An unreturnable serve that scores a quick point (*Racquet games*) 10 A table for one; also, a single customer (*Restaurant*) 11 A grilled cheese sandwich (*Lunch counter*); **v** 1 To score by an ace: *He aced the fifth hole/ She aced him six times in one set* (*Sports*) 2 (also **ace out**) To make a perfect or nearly perfect score: *My sister aced the chemistry exam/ Ace the test and you go on to the next subject* (*College students*) [fr the name of the playing card] **See** COME WITHIN AN ACE, COOL AS A CHRISTIAN WITH ACES WIRED

◁**ace boon coon**▷ or **ace boon** or **ace buddy** **n phr** A very good friend; best friend (*Black*)

aced **modifier** Outscored; surpassed: *I was aced in the election runoff*

ace-deuce **n** Three, esp a three of playing cards

ace-high **adj** Of the best; first-rate: *His reputation is ace-high*

ace in **v phr** 1 To use strategy in getting oneself into a good or

profitable position **2** To understand; DIG

ace in the hole *n phr* Something held privately in reserve until needed, esp for a winning stroke; a hidden reserve or advantage [fr poker term *in the hole* for a card dealt face down in a stud game]

ace it *v phr* To score an “A” on an exam

ace of spades *n phr* ◀1▶ A black person, esp a very dark one ◀2▶ The female genitals [fr the color and shape of the playing-card symbol]

ace out *See* ACE

aces *adj* Of the very best quality; superior; finest: *I said it in this very sincere voice. “You’re aces.”*

aces wired *See* COOL AS A CHRISTIAN WITH ACES WIRED

ace up one’s sleeve *n phr* A hidden advantage, esp a tricky one [fr a common technique of magicians and cardsharps]

acey-deucey *adj* **1** Of mixed quality; having both good and bad, high and low; ambiguous: *an acey-deucey proposition* **2** So vague, generalized, or inclusive as to offend no one; satisfactory; mediocre; SO-SO [fr card games in which the **ace** is the highest and the **deuce** the lowest card in value]

acid modifier: *an acid party* *n* The hallucinogen LSD, which is chemically an acid; A (*Narcotics*) *See* BATTERY ACID

acid freak or **acidhead** *n phr* or *n* A person who uses LSD, esp one who uses the drug heavily or habitually: *He has suggested that some of our recent Presidents were acidheads (Narcotics)*

acid rock modifier: *acid-rock guitar n phr* A form of very loud rock music featuring electronic sound effects and often accompanied by stroboscopic and other extraordinary lighting to suggest the hallucinatory impact of LSD

acid test n phr A party at which LSD is added to food and drink **v phr** To provide special effects at a party, usu of a psychedelic sort: *He acid-tested his place with colored strobe lights* [Narcotics; punning adaptation of “a final and decisive test”]

ack-ack modifier: *ack-ack positions n* Antiaircraft gun or guns; antiaircraft fire; AA, FLAK (WWI)

across the board adj phr 1 Designating a bet in which the same amount of money is wagered on the horse to win, place, or show (*Horse racing*) **2** Designating an equal alteration to each member of a related set, esp an equal raising or lowering of related wages or salaries: *They got an across-the-board increase of a dollar an hour* **adv phr 1:** *Marcus bet \$2 across the board on Duck Giggle in the fifth 2:* *The fees were lowered across the board* [fr the totalizator board that shows the odds at horse-racing tracks]

act n 1 A display of pretended feeling; an affected pretense: *His elaborate grief was just an act 2* A dramatic mimicking; SHTICK, TAKEOFF: *You oughta see my Brando act* **See a** CLASS ACT, CLEAN UP **one's** ACT, DO THE DUTCH, GO INTO **one's** ACT, SISTER ACT

acting jack n phr An acting sergeant; a soldier wearing the insignia of and having the authority of a sergeant but without the official rank

action *n* **1** Gambling activity; a crap game or other game of chance: *Most people now go to Atlantic City for the action* **2** Activity or entertainment: *looking for the local action* **3** The, or a, sex act: *He was ogling the girls, looking for a little action* **4** Illegal activity; criminal acts: *She's into some action in New York City* **See** a PIECE OF THE ACTION, WHERE THE ACTION IS

activated *adj* Intoxicated by alcohol; TIPSY: *They got a little activated after their team lost in the Elite 8*

◁**act like one's shit doesn't stink**▷ *v phr* To behave with self-assured haughtiness; show a sense of superiority

actor *n* An athlete who is good at pretending he has been hurt or fouled; esp, a baseball player who very convincingly mimes the pain of being hit by a pitch **See** BAD ACTOR

act up *v phr* To misbehave badly or improperly, esp to impress: *Her kids act up all the time (1900+)*

Ada from Decatur **See** EIGHTER FROM DECATUR

Adam **See** NOT KNOW SOMEONE FROM ADAM

add one's two cents in **See** PUT ONE'S TWO CENTS IN

adjectival (or adjective) *adj* Euphemistic substitute for an expletive adjective: *You adjectival idiot! (1850+)*

ad lib *adv*: *They danced ad lib until the conductor found his place again*
modifier: *an ad-lib gag/ a quick ad-lib put-down* *n phr* A passage or comment, etc, given spontaneously: *He forgot his lines and did a stupid ad lib* *v phr* To speak, play, dance, or otherwise perform a

passage not in one's prescribed plan, often with an original and spontaneous effect: *The Senator ad libbed for ten minutes waiting for the President to show* [fr Latin *ad libitum*, "as one wishes"]

adman *n* An advertising executive or copywriter (1900+)

admin *adj* Pertaining to administrative duties; short for administrative or administration (1940s+) **n** 1 The administrative work of a department or company 2 An administrative worker, esp an assistant [short for administration]

adult *adj* Euphemistically meaning unsuitable for children: *adult entertainment* (1950s+)

advantage *See* HOME-COURT ADVANTAGE

◀**African dominoes**▶ *n phr* 1 Dice 2 The game of craps; African Golf [fr the racist presumption that craps is a specialty and special weakness of blacks]

◀**African golf ball**▶ (or **African grape**) *n* A watermelon [fr the purported fondness for this by those of African descent]

Afro (or **fro**) *modifier: an Afro social club* **n** 1 A hairstyle worn by many blacks and some whites, usu with an exaggerated bouffant style of tightly curled hair 2 A black person

◀**Afro-Saxon**▶ *n* A black person who has assumed the behavior and values of the dominant white society; OREGO, TOM (*Black*)

after *prep* In pursuit of; wanting, desiring: *He is after her job* (1775+)

afterparty *n* A celebration among intimates following another party: *When the block party ended, we went to their house for an afterparty*

ag (or **aggro**) *modifier* Aggravated or annoyed: *He got aggro when the interview took longer than he planned*

against the wall *See* UP AGAINST THE WALL

age out *v phr* To reach an age, usu in the 30s or 40s, when drugs no longer have the desired effect, whereupon the user gradually stops taking them voluntarily (*Narcotics*)

ager *See* GOLDEN-AGER

aggie *modifier* Agricultural: *We visited the dairy bar at the aggie school*
n 1 An agricultural college, school, or university 2 A student at an agricultural school 3 An agate or imitation marble

a-go-go *adj* 1 Rapid and dizzying tempo: *our crazy a-go-go pace of life*
2 In the newest style; faddish; TRENDY: *his a-go-go opinions about sexual freedom* *modifier*: *a-go-go music* **n** A discotheque or other venue for rock-and-roll dancing [1960-1970s; fr French *à gogo* “galore,” used in the name of a Parisian club, *Whisky à Gogo*] *See* GO-GO

agreement *See* SWEETHEART CONTRACT

agricultural *adj* Ungraceful or clumsy: *She took an agricultural swing at the ball (1930s +)*

ah *See* OOH AND AH

AH (pronounced as separate letters) **n** ASSHOLE: *You are such an AH*

ahead *See* COME OUT AHEAD, STRAIGHT-AHEAD

A-head **n** 1 A frequent user of amphetamines 2 ACID FREAK (*Narcotics*)

ahead of the game *adv phr* In a winning or advantageous position:

Hard as I try, I can't seem to get ahead of the game

-aholic *suffix used to form nouns and adjectives* Addicted to and overengaging in what is indicated: *fuckaholic/ sleepaholic/ workaholic*

ain't, something or someone **negation** Something or someone emphatically is not • Said as a wry and intensive negator in a comparative statement: *My joint? Buckingham palace it ain't/ Well, she sings OK, but Barbra Streisand she ain't* [perhaps fr a Yiddish syntactic pattern]

ain't hay **See** THAT AINT HAY

air v To broadcast by radio or television: *to air a new miniseries* **See** a

BEAR IN THE AIR, DANCE ON AIR, FULL OF HOT AIR, GET THE AIR, GIVE **someone** THE AIR, GO UP IN THE AIR, GRAB A HANDFUL OF AIR, HOT AIR, SUCK AIR, UP IN THE AIR

air one's belly v phr To vomit

air one's dirty linen **See** WASH one's DIRTY LINEN

airhead or **airbrain** *n* A stupid or silly person; BUBBLEHEAD, DITZ: *The airheads got in trouble on Spring Weekend*

airheaded or **airbrained** *adj* Stupid; silly; vapid; BUBBLEHEADED, DITZY: *the delightfully airbrained Mickie*

airmail *n* Garbage thrown out of a window

air out v phr **1** To stroll; saunter (*Black*) **2** To leave; SCRAM, SPLIT

airplane *n* A tweezerlike clip for holding a marijuana cigarette stub;
ROACH CLIP

air quotes *n phr* A twitching movement of the first and second

fingers of each hand to quote another or emphasize or be sarcastic about a statement

airs *See* PUT ON AIRS

air time *n phr* The time a basketball player remains in the air while making a slam dunk

aisles *See* LAY THEM IN THE AISLES

◁**AK** or *ak*▷ (pronounced as separate letters) *n* **1** ALTER KOCKER **2** ASS-KISSER

aka (pronounced as separate letters) *prep phr* Also known as; alias:
He's an asshole, aka a big deal

Al or **Alfred** *n* The shoe width A (*Shoeshop*)

alike *See* LOOK-ALIKE

alkied or **alkeyed** (AL keed) *adj* Drunk

alky or **alki** (AL kee) *n* **1** Alcohol **2** Inferior or bootleg whiskey (1920s+) **3** A chronic alcoholic

all bases *See* TOUCH ALL BASES

all by one's lonesome *adv phr* Alone; solo: *She did it all by her lonesome*

all-clear *adv phr* Denoting authorization to proceed with something; a signal that there is no further danger (1930s+)

all ears *adj phr* Very eager to hear; acutely attentive: *Something juicy's coming, and they're all ears* (1860s+)

allergic *adv* Having a strong aversion to something or somebody •
Usu jocular: *Teachers have that effect on me. Quite frankly, I am*

allergic to them (1935 +)

alley *See* BACK ALLEY

Alley *See* TIN PAN ALLEY

alley apple *n phr* **1** A rock put into a stocking and used as an impromptu blackjack; GROUND BISCUIT **2** (also **road apple**) A piece of horse manure (1910 +)

alley cat *n phr* **1** A homeless cat; stray cat **2** A sexually promiscuous person, esp a woman

all-fired *adj*: *He's got an all-fired lot of nerve* *adv* To an extreme or extravagant degree: *Don't be so all-fired stupid* [1800s + ; a euphemism for *hell-fired*]

all fired up *See* FIRED UP

all get out or **all get up** *n phr* The extreme or absolute case of what is indicated: *overwhelmingly white, and affluent as all get-out* (late 1800s +)

all good, it's *sentence* It's all right; everything is cool: *Are you worried about the game? It's all good, man*

all Greek to *adv phr* Unintelligible (1600 +)

all hanging out *See* HAVE IT ALL HANGING OUT

all hang out *See* LET IT ALL HANG OUT

all hell broke loose *sentence* Things became very turbulent, dangerous, noisy, etc

all hollow *See* BEAT ALL HOLLOW

alligator *n* **1** An assertively masculine, flashily dressed, and up-to-the-minute male; DUDE, SPORT (*Black*) **2** An active devotee of swing and jive music, dancing, and speech (1930s + *Jive talk*) • The salutation “See you later, alligator” is common **3** A white jazz musician or jazz enthusiast (*Black jazz musicians*)

◁**alligator bait**▷ *n phr* A black person, esp one from Florida or Louisiana (*Black*)

alligators *See* UP TO ONE’S ASS IN something

all in *adj phr* Tired; exhausted; BEAT, POOPED (1900s +)

all in one piece or **in one piece** *adv phr* intact; unharmed: *She came out of it in one piece*

all (or all stuff) like that there *n phr* Other such things; etcetera: *They sold boots and shoes and all like that there*

all-nighter *See* PULL AN ALL-NIGHTER

all of a doodah *adj phr* Upset; nervous; confused (1900s + *British*)

all-originals scene *n phr* A party or other occasion where only blacks are present: *I dig you holding this all-originals scene at the track* (*Black*)

all-out *adj* Holding nothing back; sparing nothing: *an all-out effort*
adv: *He ran all-out for ten minutes*

all over *See* HAVE IT ALL OVER someone or something

all over someone *adj phr* **1** Very affectionate; eagerly amorous: *The wife went to get some popcorn and the husband was all over me* **2**

Aggressively smothering or battering; assaulting: *They broke through the line and were all over the quarterback*

all-overish *adv* Denoting an indefinite overall malaise (1830s+)

all over it *adv phr* Taking care of something quickly and efficiently: *Did you contact him? I'm all over it.*

all over the map (or **the ballpark** or **the lot**) *adv phr* Very unfocused and inconsistent; confused: *His answers are all over the map/ But otherwise, you were all over the ballpark*

all-pro *adj* Of first quality; blue-ribbon; stellar: *an all-pro team of Washington super-lobbyists* [fr the annual designation of certain professional football players to the putative team of the best]

all quiet on the Western front *adj phr* Calm; peaceful; uneventful [WWI; fr the title of a WWI novel by Erich Maria Remarque reflecting the stagnation and stability of trench warfare]

all reet (or **reat** or **root**) *interj* An exclamation of approval: “*All reat*” is the rug-cutters’ way of saying “*all right*” (1930s+)

all-right *adj* Good; commendable; of the proper sort • Most often used of persons: *all-right guys trying to make a living*

all right (aw RĪT) *affirmation* Yes; I agree: *All right, I'll go when you want* *interj* An exclamation of strong approval, esp of something well done or successful; WAY TO GO

all right already *interj* A comment protesting that one has heard or had enough or a bit too much [fr Yiddish, translating *genuk shoyrn*]

all righty *affirmation* (Variations: **rightie** or **rightee** or **rightey** may

replace **righty**) A humorous or deliberately cute and childish way of saying “all right”

all she wrote *See* THAT'S ALL SHE WROTE

all shook up or **all shook** *See* SHOOK UP

all six *See* HIT ON ALL SIX

all stuff like that there *See* ALL LIKE THAT THERE

all one's switches *See* NOT HAVE ALL one'S SWITCHES ON

all that *adj* Very cool: *Keir is all that*

all that jazz *n phr* Other such things; etcetera: *baseball, apple pie, Chevrolet, and all that jazz*

◁**all that kind of crap**▷ *n phr* (Variations: **shit** or **stuff** or **bull** may replace **crap**) Other such stupid and boring things; the depressing remainder: *they demand retractions, and all that kind of crap*

all the marbles *See* GO FOR BROKE

all the moves *See* HAVE ALL THE MOVES

all the rage *adv phr* The current or latest fashion: *Crop tops are all the rage (1785+)*

all there *adj phr* Intelligent; TOGETHER: *At least Keir is all there* *See* NOT ALL THERE

all the way *adv phr* Without reservation; to the end: *I'll back her all the way* *See* GO ALL THE WAY

all thumbs *adj phr* Very awkward; inept: *I'm all thumbs when it comes to drawing*

all together See GET IT TOGETHER, HAVE IT ALL TOGETHER

all to hell See EXCUSE ME ALL TO HELL, PARDON ME ALL TO HELL

all washed up See WASHED UP

all wet *adj phr* Incorrect; wrong: *Your idea is all wet, I'm afraid*
(1920s +)

almighty *adj* Enormous: *There was an almighty fuss* (1820s +)

almost, the *n phr* Nearly the best or greatest person or thing: *He's not top line, but he's sure the almost* (1950s + *Beat & cool talk*)

alone See GO IT ALONE

along for the ride See GO ALONG FOR THE RIDE

alphabet soup *n phr* An array of initialisms or acronyms: *Their business-speak is alphabet soup*

already *adv* 1 Without further ado; such being the case: *Let's go already* **2** Right now; at once: *Shut up already* **3** Very specifically; precisely: *Drop dead already* • *Already* is used chiefly for a humorous exasperated effect and to suggest Yiddish speech patterns

also-ran *n* A person, competitive product, etc, that does not succeed; a person of mediocre talents; LOSER [fr the term for a racehorse who runs fourth or worse]

◁**alter cocker (or cocker)**▷ (AL tə KAH kər) ***n phr*** An old man, esp a disgusting and querulous one; AK: *You young bloods have got it all over us alter cockers* [fr Yiddish, literally “old shitter”]

altogether, the *See* IN THE ALTOGETHER

alum (ə LUM) *n* An alumnus or alumna

alvin or **Alvin** *n* A person who can be fooled or defrauded easily;

MARK, PATSY, SUCKER (*Carnival, circus & underworld*)

alyo *n* **1** Any routine task **2** A person not easily disconcerted; COOL HAND

3 A condition of calm or safety **4** An arrangement between criminals and the police giving the former immunity from arrest or harassment; the FIX [possibly fr Italian **aglio** “garlic,” in the idiom **mangiare aglio**, literally “to eat garlic,” meaning to be outwardly calm and placid although perhaps inwardly angry; perhaps related to the folk belief that garlic averts evil]

am *See* PRO-AM

-ama *See* -RAMA

amateur night *n phr* **1** Any occasion on which professionals do a

bad or mediocre job: *After the third inning it was strictly amateur*

night **2** A casual sex act done with a person who is not a prostitute

[fr the occasions when *amateurs* are allowed to perform at venues or on broadcasts]

ambidextrous *adj* Bisexual; AG-DC

ambisextrous *adj* Sexually attracted to both sexes; bisexual • Used

by or suitable for either sex. Jocular; a blend of ambidextrous and sex: *introduced her ambisextrous friend (1926+)*

ambulance chaser *n phr* **1** Any unethical lawyer, or one who is too

aggressive in getting clients; SHYSTER (*late 1800s+*) **2** A lawyer or

lawyer's helper who urges accident victims to sue for damages, negligence, etc (1900s+)

amidships *adv* Used to refer to the striking of a blow in the abdomen [1937+; fr earlier sense "in the middle of a ship," implying the most crucial or vulnerable part]

Am I right? *question* Isn't that right?: *You want a three-day weekend. Am I right?*

ammo (or **ammunition**) (AM oh) *modifier*: **The fat ammo barge rocked up and down** **n 1** Ammunition: *The platoon is out of ammo* (1930+) **2** Information and other material that may be used in a debate, campaign, exposé, etc: *Your shabby personal life gives lots of ammo to the opposition* **3** Toilet paper

amp **n 1** An ampere, the electrical unit of measurement **2** An audio amplifier, esp one used for electronic musical instruments **3** An ampoule of a narcotic

amped *adj* **1** Excited, possibly angry: *I got so amped, I almost started crying* **2** High on methamphetamine

amscray *v* To leave at once; BEAT IT, SCRAM [Pig Latin for *scram*]

◁**Amy-John**▷ *n* A lesbian, esp one who plays the dominant role; BUTCH, DIESEL DYKE [Homosexuals; origin uncertain; perhaps fr French *ami Jean* "friend John," or fr a corruption of *Amazon* "female warrior"]

anchorman *n phr 1* The student having the lowest academic standing in the class (1920s + *College students*) **2** (also **anchor**,

anchorperson) A television news broadcaster who has the principal and coordinating role in the program

ancient history *n phr* Something or someone from the past, esp an old romance: *Max is ancient history*

and *n* The second of two items that normally go together (*Lunch counter*) • “Coffee and” means “coffee and doughnuts,” “ham and” means “ham and eggs,” etc

and a half *n phr* Someone or something more than usual or expected: *Her bad timing is bad news and a half*

and change *n phr* An additional smaller amount: *It happened an hour and change before midnight/ That'll run the taxpayers \$6 billion and change* [fr dollars plus *change*, “coins”]

and Co. *n phr* Used to denote the rest of a group [1757 +; fr earlier use in the names of business companies]

and counting *adj phr* Plus more; gradually: *\$840 million and counting* [1960s +; first used in the countdown to a rocket launching]

and how *interj* An exclamation of emphatic agreement or confirmation: *Are we happy? And how! (1900s +)*

and one *adv* Getting fouled while shooting the ball into the basket, qualifying for a free throw (*Basketball*)

angel *n* **1** A person who contributes to a politician's campaign fund (1920 +) **2** A financial contributor to any enterprise, esp a stage production; BUTTER-AND-EGG MAN (1920s + *Theater*) **3** A thief's or confidence man's victim; MARK, PATSY (*Underworld*) **4** A homosexual

male (1930s + *Homosexuals*) **5** A vague and illusory image on a radar screen, often due to bird flights, rare atmospheric conditions, or electronic defects **6** A helicopter that hovers near an aircraft carrier to rescue aircrew who crash into the water (*Vietnam War Navy*) **v**: *My doctor angeled one of his friend's plays*

angel dust **n phr** **1** The powdered form of PCP, a tranquilizer used in veterinary medicine, which as a narcotic is either sniffed or smoked in a tightly rolled cigarette **2** A synthetic heroin

◁**angel teat** (or **tit**)▷ **n phr** **1** A mellow whiskey with a rich aroma: *Distillery workers smacked their lips over angel teat* **2** Any pleasant or easy task

angle **n** Something one does for profit or advantage, esp a devious action disguised as altruism: *That guy never does anything unless there's an angle*

◁**Anglo**▷ **n** A white person; PADDY (*Hispanics*)

animal **n** A brutal or aggressive person, esp one given to excessive sexuality or violence (1940s + *Army & students*)

ankle **v** To walk: *I ankled over to the bar* [perhaps in part from *angle*, cited fr 1890s in sense of "to walk"] **See** BEATEN DOWN TO THE ANKLES

ankle-biter **n** A child [1980s + ; fr children's height and sporadic outbursts of violence]

Ann **See** MARY ANN

Annie **See** BASEBALL ANNIE

Annie Oakley or **Annie** **n phr** or **n** A free ticket or pass to a game or

entertainment [fr the name of a 19th-century trick-shot artist who could riddle a playing card tossed into the air so that it looked like an often-punched ticket]

annihilated *adj* Very drunk or drugged: *After such a bad week, she just wanted to get annihilated*

another country (or county or precinct) heard from *sentence* Still another voice makes itself heard • Usual an irritated and contemptuous response to a new or unwanted contribution of opinion

another peep (out of you) *n* More complaints, comments, or talk: *Sit there. Not another peep out of you!*

another pretty face *See* NOT JUST ANOTHER PRETTY FACE

ante *See* PENNY ANTE, UP THE ANTE

ante up *v phr* To contribute money one is responsible for or is expected to give: *On April 15 we all ante up to Uncle Sam* [1800s+; fr the poker term for an initial contribution to the pot as a game begins]

anti (AN tī) *n* A person opposed to a particular plan, position, action, etc: *The vote showed three pros and six antis*

antifreeze *n* Heroin (*Narcotics*)

ants or ants in one's pants *n* or *n phr* 1 An unrelaxed, disturbed condition; anxiety; acute restlessness: *After two days at sea she began to get ants* 2 Sexual excitement; the HOTS

antsy *adj* 1 In an anxious, disturbed state; nervous; jittery: *But when*

things are quiet, I get antsy **2** Sexually aroused; lustful; HOT

A-number-1 or **A-number-one** *adj* Of the highest or best quality; first-class; excellent

anyhoo *adv* Anyhow • Mispronunciation used for presumed humorous effect

any old *adj phr* Having only ordinary or mediocre quality; of no special distinction: *Any old car will do me*

A-OK or **A-Okay** or **A O-K** *adj* Proceeding or functioning properly; giving no cause for worry; COPACETIC, GO: *Your X rays are A-OK* *adv*: *The plan's going A-OK (1960s + Space travel)*

A-1 or **A-one** *adj* A-NUMBER-1

ape *adj* **1** (also **ape-shit**) Stupid and destructive; irrational; berserk: *You acted like you were ape, pounding the wall* **2** (also **ape-shit**) Very enthusiastic; highly excited; BANANAS: *He's ape about my new car* **n** ◀**1** ▶ **A** black person **2** The best or greatest; the ultimate: *Her paintings are truly ape (Beat talk & rock and roll)* **3** An especially strong and pugnacious hoodlum; a strong-arm man or muscle man; GOON, GORILLA
See GO APE, HOUSE APE, RUG RAT

aped *adj* Drunk (1900s +)

ape hangers *n phr* High swooping motorcycle handlebars

◁**ape-shit**▷ *See* APE, GO APE

apparatchik *n* An aide, staff member, etc, esp of a bureaucratic sort; flunky; RUNNING DOG: *the politicians and their technocratic apparatchiki on both sides* [fr Russian, "member of the Communist party, or

apparat”]

apple *n* **1** A ball, esp a baseball **2** A street or district where excitement may be found (*1930s + Jazz musicians*) **3** Any large town or city (*1930s + Jazz musicians*) **4** A Native American who has taken on the values and behavior of the white community; UNCLE

TOMAHAWK **See** ALLEY APPLE, **the** BIG APPLE, HORSE APPLE, SMART APPLE, SURE AS GOD MADE LITTLE GREEN APPLES, SWALLOW THE APPLE, WISE GUY

Apple, the **See** **the** BIG APPLE

applejack cap *n phr* A round, usu knitted and bright-colored cap with a wide peak and a pompom; Bop Cap (*Black*)

apple-knocker *n* **1** Any fruit picker, esp a migratory orchard worker **2** A rural person; unsophisticated rustic; HICK [fr the practice of *knocking apples* out of trees]

apple-pie-and-motherhood *modifier* Having obvious and unexceptionable virtue: *They’ll always vote yes on an apple-pie-and-motherhood issue*

apple-pie order *n phr* A condition of neatness, correctness, and propriety: *Paul keeps the financial records in apple-pie order*

apple-polish *v* To flatter and pamper in order to gain personal advantage; curry favor; BROWN-NOSE, SUCK UP TO someone: *He started apple-polishing the captain as soon as he got on board*

apple-polisher *n* A person who apple-polishes [fr the traditional image of the pupil who brings the teacher a shiny red apple]

apples **See** HOW DO YOU LIKE THEM APPLES

applesauce *n* Nonsense; pretentious talk; BULLSHIT, BUNK: “*Ideologies*”
freely translated into American means “applesauce” [1900s+; fr the
fact that relatively cheap, hence worthless, **applesauce** would be
served instead of choicer food in boardinghouses]

apples to oranges *n phr* An unfair comparison

appropriate *v* LIBERATE (*WWI Army*)

AR (pronounced as separate letters) *n* Armed robbery (*Police*)

-arama *See* -RAMA

Archie Bunker *modifier*: *He has the support of the traditional
Republican establishment, and is adding the Archie Bunker vote* *n phr*
A bigoted lower-middle-class American; HARD HAT, REDNECK [fr the name
of the leading character of the television comedy series *All in the
Family*, who exhibited the traits indicated]

are we having fun yet? *sentence* Is this the fun you thought it
would be? This is not the fun you thought it would be

-arino *See* -ERINO

Arkansas lizard *n phr* A louse (*Hoboes*)

arm *n* A police officer *v* HIGHFLAG (*Cabdrivers*) [police sense fr **arm of
the law**] *See* AS LONG AS YOUR ARM, CROOKED ARM, ONE-ARM BANDIT, RIDE THE ARM, STIFF,
TWIST someone’s ARM

arm, the *See* PUT THE ARM ON someone, RIDE THE ARM, a SHOT IN THE ARM

arm and a leg, an *n phr* An exorbitantly high price: *The trip cost an
arm and a leg*

armchair general (or strategist) *n phr* A person who speaks authoritatively but not convincingly on matters where that person lacks practical experience; BLOWHARD, KNOW-IT-ALL

arm it *v phr* To convey a customer and collect the fare without using the meter; HIGHFLAG, RIDE THE ARM [Cabdrivers; fr original vertical *arm* of the taxi meter, turned horizontal to start the meter]

armored cow (or heifer) *n phr* Canned milk (WWII)

armpit *n* A very undesirable place; geographical nadir; THE PITS; ASSHOLE:
My home town is the armpit of the universe See PULL TEETH

Armstrong¹ or armstrong *n* A high note or run played on the trumpet [fr Louis **Armstrong**, who was among the first to exploit the high register of the trumpet in jazz]

Armstrong² or armstrong *n* A locomotive fired by hand [Railroad; fr the **strong arms** required for such work]

arm-twisting *n* Extremely strong persuasion: *With some arm-twisting, she went to the party*

arm-waver *n* An excitable or emphatic person

army chicken *n phr* Beans and frankfurters (WWII)

army game, the (or the old) *n phr* Any swindle or confidence game; a dishonest gambling game; FLIMFLAM: *It's nothing but the army game*

army strawberries *n phr* Prunes (WWII)

-aroo *See* -EROO

-arooney or -erooney *suffix used to form nouns* A suffix added to

imply familiarity or humor: *This little cararooney's got only 10,000 miles on her*

around or **around the block**, someone has been *sentence* The subject is not naive, but is experienced and clever: *He may look innocent, but he's been around/ Having been around the block, Sylvia not only writes stories but dispenses advice/ Oliver's been around the block and won't be seduced by money (first variant 1920s + , second variant 1990s +)*

around the bend *adj phr* Insane; BONKERS: *Around-the-bend views from the nation's top critics* *adv phr* With most or the hardest part done; OVER THE HILL: *Two more days and we'll be around the bend on this project*
See ROUND THE BEND

around the bush *See* BEAT AROUND THE BUSH

around (or round) the horn *adj phr* Of throws from third base to second base to first base: *a brilliant round-the-horn double play* *adv phr* Legally detained on a minor charge but suspected and not yet charged for a more serious crime (1930s + *Underworld*) [Baseball; fr the length and circuitousness of a voyage around Cape Horn at the southern tip of South America]

around the world *See* GO AROUND THE WORLD

arrive *v* To successfully establish one's position or reputation (1880s +)

arrow *See* STRAIGHT ARROW

arse *n* ASS (1860 +)

art n A photograph or photographs of criminals, esp wanted criminals; MUG SHOT: *Art depicting the Most Wanted List is on post office bulletin boards (Police)* **See** STATE OF THE ART, TIT ART

article n A person, esp one considered to be clever, cute, or resourceful; NUMBER • Always preceded by an adjective or by the locution “Quite an”: *He is some slick article/ Your little sister’s quite an article*

artillery n 1 A weapon or weapons, esp a handgun carried by a criminal; HEAT (1900s + *Underworld*) **2** A drug user’s hypodermic syringe **See** HEAVY ARTILLERY

artist See BULLSHIT ARTIST, BUNCO ARTIST, CLIP-ARTIST, GYP, MAKE-OUT ARTIST, PUT-ON, RIPOFF, SACK ARTIST, SHORT-CHANGE ARTIST

artsy-craftsy or **artsy** or **arty adj** Pretentiously and self-consciously artistic; straining for esthetic effect: *an artsy-craftsy little boutique on Nantucket (1940s +)*

artsy-fartsy or **artsy-smartsy adj** Pompously or blatantly esthetic • The superlative degree of *artsy-craftsy*: *The pianist veers toward the artsy-fartsy*

asap or **ASAP** (pronounced either as separate letters or as an acronym, AY sap) **adv** Right away; immediately: *Our job is simple—to liberate US POWs from Asia, ASAP [Armed forces; fr as soon as possible]*

as close as stink on shit adv phr Extremely close; intimate: *new lovers close as stink on shit*

ash can n phr An antisubmarine depth charge (*Navy fr WWI*) **See**

KNOCK **someone** FOR A LOOP

ash cat *n phr* An engine stoker (*Railroad*)

ashes *See* GET one's ASHES HAULED

As if! *interj* That would be nice; I wish that were true! • Usual
sarcastic: *Straight A's? As if!*

ask for it (or trouble) *v phr* To behave in a way that invites and
deserves trouble; provoke: *I'm sorry you had that wreck, but with no
brakes you were asking for it (1900s+)*

ask me another *sentence* Used to indicate that one does not know
the answer to a question: *Am I ready? Ask me another. I am not in a
position to say (1910+)*

asleep at the switch *adj phr* Not attending to one's duty and risking
safety; unvigilant; inattentive (*Railroad*)

as long as your arm *adj phr* Very extensive; remarkably long: *The
guy's a jailbird, a record as long as your arm*

as per usual *adv phr* As usual

asphalt jungle *n phr* A city's paved landscape; a big city

as right as rain *modifier* Completely correct

◁**ass**▷ *n* **1** The buttocks; posterior; BUTT: *a kick in the ass* **2** The anus;
ASSHOLE: *You can take it and shove it up your ass* **3** A person regarded
solely as a sex partner or target; TAIL: *She looks like good ass* **4**
Sexual activity; sexual gratification: *He was out looking for ass* **5** The
whole self; the person • Used for emphasis and euphony: *Get your*

ass out of here pronto/ I'm out in Kansas for the first time, my ass drafted **See one's** ASS IS DRAGGING, **someone's** ASS IS ON THE LINE, BAG ASS, BARREL ASS, BET YOUR BOOTS, BURN **someone's** ASS, BUST **one's** ASS, CANDY ASS, CANDY-ASSED, CHEW **someone's** ASS, COLD AS HELL, COVER **one's** ASS, DEADASS, DRAG ASS, DRAG **one's** TAIL, DUMB-ASS, FALL ON **one's** ASS, FLAT-ASS, FLAT ON **one's** ASS, GET **one's** ASS IN GEAR, GET **one's** HEAD OUT OF **one's** ASS, GET OFF **one's** ASS, GET THE LEAD OUT, GIVE **someone** A PAIN, GO POUND SALT, GRIPE **one's** ASS, **one** HAS HAD IT, HAUL ASS, HAVE A BUG UP **one's** ASS, HAVE **someone's** ASS, HAVE **one's** ASS IN A SLING, HAVE **one's** HEAD PULLED, HAVE **one's** HEAD UP **one's** ASS, HAVE LEAD IN **one's** PANTS, **one's** HEAD IS UP **one's** ASS, HORSE'S ASS, IN A PIG'S EYE, JUMP THROUGH **one's** ASS, KICK ASS, **a** KICK IN THE ASS, KISS MY ASS, KISS **someone's** ASS, MAN WITH A PAPER ASS, MY ASS, NO SKIN OFF MY ASS, NOT HAVE A HAIR ON **one's** ASS, NOT KNOW **one's** ASS FROM **one's** ELBOW, ON **one's** ASS, OUT ON **one's** ASS, **a** PAIN IN THE ASS, PIECE OF ASS, PISSY, PULL **something** OUT OF **one's** ASS, PUT **one's** ASS ON THE LINE, RAGGEDY-ASS, **a** RAT'S ASS, RATTY, SHAG ASS, SHIT-ASS, SIT ON **one's** ASS, SIT THERE WITH **one's** FINGER UP **one's** ASS, SMART-ASS, SOFT-ASS, STAND AROUND WITH **one's** FINGER UP **one's** ASS, STICK IT, SUCK ASS, TEAR OFF A PIECE, THROW **someone** OUT ON **someone's** ASS, TIRED-ASS, UP THE ASS, UP TO **one's** ASS IN **something**, WHATS-HIS-NAME, WILDASS, WORK **one's** ASS OFF

◁**-ass** or **-assed**▷ *suffix used to form adjectives* 1 Having buttocks of the specified sort: *big-ass/ fat-assed* *suffix used to form adjectives and nouns* 2 Having a specified character or nature to a high degree: *badass/ wildassed/ silly-ass*

◁**ass backwards**▷ *adj phr: The whole plan is ass backwards* *adv phr*
In a reversed position or confused manner: *You installed it ass backwards/ She had it all ass backwards*

◁**assbite**▷ *n* A strong rebuke; reprimand: *I took the assbite without*

looking at him

ass-chewing *n phr* A bawling out; verbal annihilation

◁**assed**▷ *See* HALF-ASSED, PUCKER-ASSED, RED-ASSED

◀**assfuck**▶ *n* An act of anal intercourse *v* To do anal intercourse;
BUGGER,¹ BUNGHOLE

◁**asshole or butthole**▷ *n* **1** The anus; rectum **2** A despised person;
BASTARD, SHITHEAD: *Teenagers can be such assholes/ Better not, you
butthole (1930s +)* **3** ASSHOLE BUDDY **4** The most despised and
loathsome part; ARMPIT: *This town's the asshole of the North* *See* BLOW IT
OUT, BREAK OUT INTO ASSHOLES, FLAMER, TANGLE ASSHOLES

◁**asshole or buttfuck) buddy**▷ *n phr* A very close friend; best
friend; PAL • Usu with only a humorous connotation of
homosexuality: *He assumed the mail was going to be the friendly
asshole buddy e-mail that one gets from colleagues*

◁**asshole deep**▷ *See* UP TO one's ASS IN something

as sin modifier To the extreme: *guilty as sin; ugly as sin (1900 +)*

◁**ass in a sling**▷ *See* HAVE one's ASS IN A SLING

◁**ass is dragging, one's**▷ *sentence* The subject is very tired; one is
exhausted and hence sluggish

◁**ass is grass, one's**▷ *sentence* The subject is in trouble; one will be
ruined, undone, etc: *Give me a title, in short, or your ass is grass
(1940s +)*

◁**ass is on the line, someone's**▷ *sentence* Someone is at risk;
someone has taken a perilous responsibility: *A friend's ass is on the*

line and I promised I'd talk to you/ I better be right this time, because my ass is on the line [fr the notion of a *line* separating hostile persons, such that encroaching on it is a challenge and a risk]

◁**asskicker**▷ *n* **1** An energetic person, esp an officer who harasses subordinates **2** Something that functions very well: *That little motor's a real asskicker* **3** An exhausting experience (*Army*)

◁**asskicking**▷ *adj* Functioning or performing well: *That's an asskicking little heater (Army)*

◁**ass-kisser**▷ *n* (Variations: **licker** or **sucker** may replace **kisser**) A person who flatters and serves obsequiously to gain favor with a superior; sycophant; AK, BROWN-NOSE, YES-MAN

◁**ass-kissing** or **ass-licking**▷ *n* Flattery; currying favor with superiors; BROWN-NOSING: *It's a short step from lip service to ass-kissing*

◁**ass man**▷ *n phr* **1** A man with an extraordinary and consuming interest in doing the sex act; lecher; satyr; COCKSMAN **2** A man whose favorite part of female anatomy is the buttocks

◁**ass (or buns or tail) off, one's**▷ *adv phr* Very hard; one's best; to one's utmost: *I worked my ass off for that ungrateful jerk/ listen to that drummer play his buns off*

◁**ass over tincups (or teacups or teakettle)**▷ *adv phr* In or into helplessness; head over heels: *She's so beautiful she'll knock you ass over tincups* [a variant of the early 20th-century British *arse over tip*, "head over heels"]

◁**ass peddler**▷ *n phr* A prostitute, of either sex

as sure as hell *modifier* Absolutely certain; most certainly: *As sure as hell she called again (1970s +)*

◁**ass-wipe or ass-wiper or butt-wipe**▷ *n* 1 Toilet paper or something similarly used 2 Idiot, fool; ASSHOLE

◁**assy**▷ *adj* Malicious; nasty; mean; BITCHY (*Homosexuals*)

astronomical *adj* Inconceivably large: *an astronomical price for that car*

-ateria *suffix used to form nouns* (Variations: **-teria** or **-eria** or **-eteria**) Place or establishment where the indicated thing is done or sold: *bookateria/ caviarteria*

at liberty *adv phr* Unemployed

at loose ends *modifier* Discombobulated or without a clue: *at loose ends when they aren't around*

-atorium or -torium or -orium *suffix used to form nouns* Place where an indicated thing is done: *drinkatorium/ lubritorium/ printorium*

at sixes and sevens *modifier* In a state of confusion and disorder [1670+; fr the earlier phrase “set on six and seven,” leave to chance, possibly a fanciful alteration of “set on cinque and sice” (= five and six), a gambling term denoting hazarding everything on throwing a five and a six at dice]

attaboy or attagirl *interj* An exclamation of approval or encouragement; WAY TO GO [fr *that's the boy*]

at the switch *See* ASLEEP AT THE SWITCH

attitude *n* A resentful and hostile manner; pugnacity (*Black & prison*)

See HAVE AN ATTITUDE

attitude-adjuster *n phr* A police officer's club or stick

attract *v* To steal: *attracted some lumber and built a garage (1891 +)*

attrit *n* An expected rate of loss or attrition: *Attrit can refer to an expected rate of loss or attrition (Air Force)* *v* **1** To dispose of or dispense with gradually; subject to attrition: *Workers never retire, resign, or die—they are attritted* **2** To kill: *Well, counterattacks are a useful way to attrit the enemy*

aunt or **Aunt** *n* **1** The madame of a brothel **2** An elderly male homosexual

Aunt Flo *n* A woman's menstrual period: *my visit from Aunt Flo*

auntie¹ *n* Any elderly, esp black, woman (*1800s +*)

auntie² *n* An antimissile missile [Air Force; fr humorous mispronunciation of **anti**]

Aunt Tom *n phr* A woman who does not support or sympathize with the women's liberation movement [fr the analogy with *Uncle Tom*]

ausgespielt (OUS kee speelt) *adj* Thoroughly exhausted; enervated; FRAZZLED, PLAYED OUT [fr German, "played out"]

Aussie *adj*: *the Aussie movie industry* *n* An Australian

autopilot *n* Something done automatically, without much self-awareness: *She is on autopilot when driving them to school*

avoid like the plague *v phr* Evade or elude at any cost; shun: *avoid*

him like the plague (1936 +)

avoirdupois (AV əɾ də pɔɪz) **n** Body weight; fat or fatness: *I have too much avoirdupois, so I'm dieting*

aw **interj** An exclamation of entreaty, disappointment, disbelief, regret, and various other uncomfortable feelings • Used either alone or before certain fixed expressions like “come on,” “hell,” “man,” “shit,” or “shoot”

awash **adj** **1** Full of a liquid; full to surfeit: *Dr Johnson was awash in tea, drinking thirty cups each day* **2** Overwhelmed with; drowning in: *The dean was awash in niggling student complaints* **See** DECKS AWASH

away **adv** **1** Out: *Two away in the top of the eighth (Baseball)* **2** In prison (*Underworld*)

awesome **adj** Excellent; wonderful; outstanding; COOL, NEAT (*Teenagers*)
interj Excellent! Great!: *You fixed it? Awesome!*

awful **adj** Extremely unpleasant or objectionable **adv** Very; intensely: *I feel awful bad about that* **See** GODAWFUL

awfully **adv** Very; very much: *It's awfully dark here*

AWOL or **awol** (pronounced either as separate letters or as an acronym, AY wawl) **adj** Absent without leave **n** A person who is absent without leave (*Armed forces fr WWI*)

aw right **See** ALL RIGHT

aw shucks **interj** An exclamation of embarrassment, self-abnegation, regret, and various other mildly uncomfortable feelings • Usual used in imitation of rural or extremely naive, boyish males **v phr**: good-

ole-boy aw shucksing • Euph for *aw shit*

awshucksness *n phr* Modesty; self-abnegating embarrassment: *Young Crosby displayed all the easygoing awshucksness of his late father*

ax or **axe** *n* **1** Any musical instrument, esp the saxophone: *He played his ax at the casino (1950s + Jazz musicians)* **2** A guitar (*Rock and roll*) **v** **1** To dismiss someone from a job, a team, a school, a relationship, etc; CAN, FIRE: *who suggested to Reagan that Deaver be axed* **2** To eliminate; cut: *They axed a lot of useless stuff from the budget* [musical instrument sense fr the resemblance in shape between a saxophone and an ax, and possibly fr the rhyme with *sax*]

ax, the *See* GET THE AX, GIVE someone THE AX

axle grease *n phr* Butter

axman *n* A guitarist, especially one who plays in a band or group: *learned guitar from Fats Domino's axman* [1976 + Jazz and rock music]

Aztec two-step *n phr* Diarrhea; MONTEZUMA'S REVENGE, TURISTA

azul (ah z^{oo}l) *n* **1** A police officer; COP **2** The police; FUZZ [fr Spanish "blue"]

B

b *See* SON OF A BITTCH

B n 1 Benzedrine™; BENNY (1950+) 2 BEE² (1970s+) 3 The game of Frisbee (1990s+ *Students*)

babe n A girl or woman, esp a sexually desirable one; CHICK, DOLL • Used almost entirely by men and considered offensive by many women; strong resurgence of use in the 1990s (1915+)

babelicious adj Very sexually attractive: *Beyonce is connected with the word babelicious* [1992; coined in the film *Wayne's World*]

babe magnet or **chick magnet n** A male or one of his possessions that attracts females, esp beautiful ones: *The 350Z is definitely a babe magnet*

baboon n An uncouth or stupid person: *Outta my way, you baboon!*

baby n 1 A wife, girlfriend, or other cherished woman; also, less frequently, a husband, boyfriend, or cherished man: *My baby don't love me no more* (1900s+) 2 Any cherished or putatively cherished person • A shortening of earlier *warm baby* (1900s+) 3 A mean and dangerous man; TOUGH GUY • *Babe*, “a tough; a rowdy; blackguard,” is attested in the 1860s: *I did not want them babies to think they had me under contract* (1930s+) 4 A term of address for a man or a

woman; BUD, MAC, PAL • In stereotype, much used by showbusiness people: *And this is maximum security, baby (1910+)* 5 Anything regarded with special affection, admiration, pride, or awe: *Those babies'll turn on a dime/ What we had heard was the firing of those big babies a mile and a half from shore (1900+)* 6 A thing referred to, esp something one does not know the name of; GADGET, SUCKER: *What's this baby over here supposed to do? (1930s+)* **See** BOTTLE BABY

baby blues *n phr* Blue eyes: *lookin' up into the baby blues of some sweet-faced Army nurse (1970s+)*

baby boom *modifier*: the millions of baby-boom couples who work for wages **n phr** A significant rise in births, esp after 1945 (1960s+, despite an isolated occurrence 1941+)

baby boomer *n phr* A person born during the baby boom following World War II (1970s+)

babycakes or **honeycakes** *n* A sweetheart or other cherished person • A term of endearment: *Hey, babycakes, let's see those pecs/ "Ain't that right, baby?" "Sure is, honeycakes" (1960s+)*

baby doll *n phr* A pretty woman, esp one cherished by a man as his own (1900s+)

baby-kisser *n* A politician [fr the practice of candidates kissing babies, shaking hands, etc]

baby-sit *v* 1 To attend and care for a child, or by extension, for anyone or anything: *Which is why she has one of us baby-sitting twenty-four hours a day (1940s+)* 2 To be a guide and companion to someone undergoing a psychedelic drug experience [1960s+

narcotics; back formation from *baby-sitter*, “nursemaid, nanny,” attested before 1940]

baby-sitter *n* A destroyer that guards an aircraft carrier (*Navy fr Vietnam War*)

baby split *n phr* A split where two pins are left standing side by side (*Bowling*)

bach or **batch** *n* A bachelor (1850s +) **v** (also **bach it**) Of a man, to live alone (1860s +)

bachelor girl modifier: a bachelor-girl apartment **n phr** An unmarried young woman, usu with a career or a profession; Career Girl (1890s +)

back *adv* As a chaser: *She wants whiskey with water back* (1980s +) **n** (also **backup** or **backup for a beef**) Someone who will support and assist; a trusty ally (1980s + *Teenagers*) **v** **1** To give one’s support to some effort or person: *I’ll back your application* (1500s +) **2** To bet on: *He backed Green Goo in the eighth* (1600s +) **3** To contribute money for; **BANKROLL**: *My cousin backed the rock show in the park* (1880s +) **See** FISHYBACK, GET one’s or someone’s BACK UP, GET OFF someone’s BACK, GET THE MONKEY OFF, GIVE someone THE SHIRT OFF one’s BACK, KNOCK BACK, LAID-BACK, MELLOW-BACK, MOSSBACK, ON someone’s BACK, PIGGYBACK, PIN someone’s EARS BACK, RAZORBACK, YOU SCRATCH MY BACK, I SCRATCH YOURS

back alley modifier: a back-alley saloon/ back-alley language **n phr** An alley or street in a mean and disreputable neighborhood; slum street or area (1860s +)

backassed modifier In a backward or awkward manner: *Why would*

he attempt that in such a backassed way?

backasswards *adv* ASS BACKWARDS

backbencher *n* An occupant of a rear seat in a legislature; an obscure legislator • Still chiefly British: *No one I know of in modern times has gone from being a backbencher to being this much in the center of things in that short a time (1874 + British)*

backbone *n* Integrity and courage; fortitude: *If you had any backbone, you would deal with him*

backbreaker *n* A very difficult job or task; BALL-BUSTER, BITCH, PISSER (1900s +)

back-burner *modifier: a back-burner project v* To put a project, idea, suggestion, etc, in reserve: *Shall we just back-burner that one? (1980s +)*

back burner *See* ON THE BACK BURNER

backchannel *n* A secret conduit for information: *Clinton's backchannel during the trouble was the Russian Embassy (1990s +)*

backchat *n* Impertinent and provocative replies, esp to a superior, elder, etc; BACK TALK, SASS (1800s + *British military*)

backdoor *adj* Dishonest; dubious • Earlier senses were “secret, clandestine” and “illegitimate, bastard”: *a sleazy little backdoor business (1900s +)*

back door *n phr* 1 A devious, shady, and perhaps illegal means: *The US Government may be able to use a “back door” into Microsoft Windows to infiltrate computers worldwide (1581 +)* ◀2▶ The anus;

ASSHOLE (1600s +)

backdoor man *n phr* A married woman's lover; JODY (1960s + *Black*)

backdoor trots *n phr* Diarrhea (1700s + *British, now chiefly Canadian*)

back down *v phr* To retreat from one's position; surrender; retract:
He wouldn't back down even when they beat him up (1850s +)

backgate (or backdoor) parole *n phr* The death of a prisoner from natural causes (1920s + *Prison*)

backhander *n* 1 A blow made with the back of a hand, esp to the face 2 Secret payment

backhouse *n* An outdoor toilet house without plumbing; outhouse;
FIRELESS COOKER, PRIVY (*mid-1800s +*)

back in the saddle *adj phr* Operational again; restored to function:
The economy is back in the saddle/ I have aspirations to get back in the saddle [1940s + ; fr a popular cowboy song "Back in the Saddle Again"]

back number *n phr* Someone or something out of date; HAS-BEEN: *Mr Stale is a back number (1880s +)*

back off *v phr* 1 To stop annoying or harassing someone • Often a command or threat 2 To soften or moderate; relent: *The president backed off a little from his hardnosed line* 3 To slow down; go easier:
Hey, back off a little, I don't get you (primary sense "retreat" 1930s +)

back someone off *v phr* To order someone to leave; eject someone:
The bouncer backed him off real quick

back out v phr To cancel or renege on an arrangement; CRAWFISH, FINK
OUT: *We can't back out just because we're scared (1800s +)*

back passage n phr The rectum: *reached his back passage (1960 +)*

back-pedal v To retreat, esp from a stated position; BACK OFF, BACK OUT:
This news caused the candidate to back-pedal hastily (1900 +)

backroom adj Having to do with political expediency; from the inner
circles of party affairs: *a backroom decision/ backroom motives*
[1940s +; fr *See what the boys in the back room will have*, suggesting
a secret conclave in the rear of a saloon] **See** BOYS IN THE BACKROOM

backscratch or backscratching n A helping or accommodating of
one by another: *It's got to be a mutual backscratch (late 1800s +)* **See**
YOU SCRATCH MY BACK, I SCRATCH YOURS

back seat See TAKE A BACK SEAT

backseat driver n phr A person who gives unwanted and officious
advice; KIBITZER (1920s +)

backside n The buttocks; rump: *slapped her on the backside*

back-slapper n A demonstratively friendly person: *Bob and Bill,*
they're back-slappers (1924 +)

back-slapping adj Demonstratively friendly: *the back-slapping jocosity*
that passes for humor here (1777 +)

back talk n phr Impudent response; impertinent comment; SASS
(mid-1800s +)

back teeth are floating, one's sentence One needs very urgently to
urinate (1890s +)

back to square one *adv phr* Returned to the starting point, usu having wasted a great deal of effort; no farther ahead: *Which means we're basically back to square one* [1960s+ British; origin uncertain, perhaps fr one of various board games] **See** GO BACK TO SQUARE ONE

back to the (old) drawing board *sentence* The matter must be reconsidered; it's time to start again: *So back to the drawing board. Find another way to go* [fr the caption of an early 1940s Peter Arno *New Yorker* cartoon showing a crashed airplane]

back to the salt mines *adv phr* Returned to hard work and unremitting discomfort after a period of relative ease and pleasure: *I had a week off, then back to the salt mines* [1920s+; fr the tradition of Russian penal servitude in Siberian salt mines]

back-track **See** BOOT

back someone up *v phr* **1** To confirm what someone says; support what someone does: *If you want to go in to complain, I'll back you up* (1860s+ British) **2** To be someone's substitute; be in reserve: *We've got three other drivers to back him up* (1950s+) **3** To play behind a fielder to retrieve balls that might be missed (1940s+ Baseball)

backwash *n* Something drunk that is regurgitated or spit back out *v*
To regurgitate or spit back out liquid

back yard, the *n phr* The performers as distinguished from the management (1950s+ Circus)

bacon **See** BRING HOME THE BACON

bad *adj* Good; excellent; admirable: *real bad licks/ bad man on drums*

• The use is attested from slavery times, when this sense was marked by a lengthened vowel and a falling tone in pronunciation (1920s+ *esp black teenagers*) **See** SO BAD one CAN TASTE IT

ba da bing, ba da boom *interj* An exclamation describing something that happens quickly and easily: *went in to get a tattoo—ba da bing, ba da boom*

bad actor (or actress) *n phr* 1 A malicious or deceitful person 2 A habitual criminal 3 A vicious animal (1900+)

◁**badass**▷ *adj* 1 Difficult to deal with 2 Excellent; wonderful; RAD, SLAMMIN' (1980s+ *College*) *n* A belligerent and worthless person; BAD ACTOR, BAD EGG, BUM: *It's the badasses who don't want him back (1950s+)*

bad books **See** IN someone's BAD BOOKS

bad boy *n phr* An impressive and perhaps dangerous device; PUPPY, SUCKER: *You have written plenty of checks for your Harley, maybe even a few while right in the saddle of your bad boy (1980s+)*

bad business *n phr* 1 A morally questionable activity: *He has some bad business going on with the guys from the 'hood* 2 Poor business conduct: *That is just bad business to have ill-groomed servicepeople*

bad cop **See** GOOD COP BAD COP

bad day at Black Rock *n phr* An unhappy time: *It will be a bad day at Black Rock when the players gather for the last time* [fr the 1955 cowboy-suspense movie *Bad Day at Black Rock*]

baddie or baddy or bad guy *n* 1 Someone or something that is bad, esp a movie, television, or sports villain 2 A criminal or other

habitually reprehensible person; **BAD MAN** (1930s + *Motion pictures*)

bad egg n phr A villain, criminal, or other deplorable person; **BAD ACTOR, BADDIE** (1855 +)

badge n A police officer (1920s + *Underworld*)

badger game n phr **1** A method of extortion in which a woman entices the victim into a sexually compromising situation, whereupon a male accomplice appears and demands payment for keeping the situation quiet (1880 +) **2** A means of blackmail, extortion, or intimidation, esp one based on a sexually compromising situation [fr earlier *badger*, a thief who crawled through the detachable wall-panels of a panel house to rob the man bedded with his accomplice]

bad hair day n phr The sort of day when nothing goes right; the sort of day that is not one's day: *They had a bad hair day, a bad CD-ROM day, who knows?* [1990s +; fr the notion that one's well-being depends on whether one's hair looks good]

bad man (or guy) n phr A villain; a desperado: *supposed to pick up a vehicle containing a suitcase full of cash this morning from a "bad guy"* (mid-1800s + *Western*)

bad-mouth n phr: *If you can't say anything good, at least don't be a bad mouth v phr* To disparage; denigrate: *He bad-mouthed everybody* (1930s +)

bad news n phr **1** The bill for goods or services, esp a restaurant check; **BEEF** (1920s +) **2** Any unfortunate or regrettable situation or event: *That meeting was strictly bad news* (1930s +) **3** An ominous

person; a menace: *Their big new linebacker is bad news* (1960s +) 4
An unpleasant or depressing person, esp a persistently annoying
one: *Isn't she bad news since her old man left her?* [1970s +; all
senses extended from the literal]

bad paper *n phr* 1 Worthless or counterfeit money, checks, etc: *They passed some bad paper* (1940s +) 2 A less-than-honorable discharge from military service (1970s + *fr Vietnam veterans*)

bad patch *n phr* A period of difficulty, suffering, etc: *You went through a real bad patch, a shaky time* (1920s + *British*)

bad rap *n phr* 1 An erroneous conviction or sentence; wrongful punishment; BUM RAP (*Underworld*) 2 Any unjustified condemnation: *Microsoft gets a bad rap for a reason*

bad scene *n phr* Something unpleasant, esp a displeasing and depressing experience or situation [1950s + and popularized by the 1960s counterculture; *fr the jazz sense of scene, "center of activity for musicians"*]

◁**bad shit**▷ *n phr* 1 Something menacing and nasty: *A lot of bad shit goes down at the track, man* (1950s +) 2 Bad luck: *Breaking my leg was just bad shit* (1950s +) 3 A toxic or contaminated narcotic: *But it's bad shit, or too strong* (1960s +)

bad time *n phr* Time spent in the guardhouse and therefore not a part of one's required period of service (*Armed forces fr WWII*)

bad (or bum or down) trip *n phr* 1 A frightening or depressing drug experience, esp a nightmarish time with LSD (1960s + *Narcotics*) 2 Any unpleasant occasion or experience; BUMMER, DOWNER: *The party was*

a real bad trip (1960s + Counterculture)

bafflegab *n* The pompous and opaque prose style affected by bureaucrats and certain scholars [coined by Milton Smith of the US Department of Commerce, fr standard *baffle* and slang *gab*, first attested in January 1952]

bag *n* <1> The scrotum (1920s +) <2> A condom; RUBBER, SCUMBAG (1950s +) 3 The cushionlike marker that serves as a base (*mid-1800s + Baseball*) 4 A portion of narcotics, often wrapped in a paper or glassine envelope: *They found three nickel bags of marijuana on him (1960s + Narcotics)* <5> A woman's breast • *Bag* has long meant an animal's udder (*mid-1600s +*) 6 An unattractive girl or woman; ugly woman (1920s +) 7 That which one prefers or is doing currently; KICK, THING • Said to be fr *bag of tricks (1950s + Jazz musicians)* 8 One's preference; something suited to one's preferences or talents: *Archaeology is her bag, man* 9 An environment; milieu; SCENE: *That fox comes out of a very intellectual bag (1950s + Jazz musicians)* **v** 1 To get or capture: *to bag a gold medal/ They bagged the mugger in the next block (1814 +)* 2 To arrest; BUST, COLLAR: *You don't have to bag nuns (1800s +)* 3 To discharge; CAN, FIRE, SACK: *Just say the author was willing to bag an old friend (mid-1800s +)* 4 To suppress; get rid of; discard: *Let's bag the whole notion, okay? (1960s +)* 5 (also **bag it**) To avoid; not attend; SKIP: *We can bag gym class/ Like bag this movie, for sure (1892 + Students)* 6 (also **bag it**) To abandon; cease; give up: *I had to bag it. I had to give up all that stuff (1980s + Students)* 7 To include; categorize; group with: *We're always bagged in England with bands*

like *Iron Maiden* (1960s +) **8** To break into for a clandestine investigation; do a black-bag job on: *we picked up conversations by traveling execs, then “bagged” their hotel rooms to rummage through attaché cases* (1990s +) **9** BAG ON someone (1990s +) **10** To inhale fumes of an intoxicating substance: *the dangers of inhaling, sniffing, and “bagging” such chemicals* (1960s + *Narcotics*) **See** BROWN-BAG, DIME BAG, DITTY BAG, DOGGY BAG, DOUCHE BAG, FAG BAG, FLEABAG, GRAB-BAG, HAIR BAG, HALF IN THE BAG, HAVE A BAG ON, IN THE BAG, JIFFY BAG, LET THE CAT OUT OF THE BAG, NICKEL BAG, OLD BAG, RUM BAG, SANDBAG, SLEAZEBAG, SLIMEBAG, STASH BAG, TIE A BAG ON, WINDBAG

bag and baggage *adv phr* Entirely; leaving nothing; with all one's possessions: *We threw her out bag and baggage/ It all went up in smoke, bag and baggage* (1600 + *British military*)

◁**bag ass**▷ *v phr* To leave quickly; get out; hurry; HAUL ASS (1960s + *Navy*)

bagel *n* A tennis set won 6-0 • The term, said to have been coined by Eddie Gibbs, has spread to other sports, where it often means “zero, zip” [1980s + ; fr the shape of a *bagel*, fr Yiddish *beygl*, of uncertain origin but attested fr the early 1600s]

baggage **See** EXCESS BAGGAGE

bagged *adj* **1** Drunk (1950s +) **2** Prearranged; FIXED **3** Exhausted; BEAT, POOPED: *I'm too bagged to breathe* [1940s + ; fr the phrase *in the bag*] **See** HALF-BAGGED

bagger **See** BROWN BAGGER, DOUBLE-BAGGER, FOUR-BAGGER, ONE-BAGGER, THREE-BAGGER, TWO-BAGGER

baggies *n* **1** A pair of loose-cut boxer-type men's bathing trunks: girls in bikinis and boys in baggies (1960s + *Surfers*) **2** A pair of full

trousers with cuffs, resembling those of the 1930s: *Then comes a pair of “baggies,” very baggy trousers (1970s +)*

bag it! *interj* Shut up!: *Bag it! I’m watching my show* **v phr** To bring one’s lunch in a brown paper bag; bring lunch from home

bag job *n phr* A theft or burglary, esp of files, documents, etc • Became current during the early 1970s Watergate affair: *Someone had done a bag job on his precious files/ They’re calling it a bag job (1970s +)*

bag lady or **shopping-bag lady** or **bag woman** *n phr* **1** A woman who goes about the streets collecting discarded objects and taking them home in shopping bags: *a bag lady whose tiny room was crammed with garbage (1970s +)* **2** A homeless woman, often elderly, who lives in public places and carries her possessions in shopping bags: *bag ladies, the Big Apple’s discarded, homeless women*

bagman *n* **1** A person who collects money for bribers, extortionists, mobsters, etc: *And he was meeting the bagman and it went haywire (1920s + Underworld)* **2** A person who peddles drugs; PUSHER (1960s + *Narcotics*)

bag (or load) of wind *n phr* WINDBAG (1890s +)

bag of worms *See* CAN OF WORMS

bag on someone **v phr** (also **bag**) To criticize someone; insult; DUMP ON, PUT DOWN: *He’s not like smart. I’m not trying to bag on him/ Far be it from us to bag, but we must say Madonna’s book leaves something to be desired (1980s + College students)*

bags n 1 Trousers (*mid-1800s + British*) <2> A woman's breasts; TITS (*mid-1600s +*) **3** A great quantity: *He's got bags of money* (1920 +) **See** MONEYBAGS

bags of mystery n phr Sausages [1860s + ; fr the uncertain nature of the ingredients]

bag some rays v phr To sunbathe (1980s +)

bag that interj Forget that!: *You want me to cook again? Bag that!*

bag your face sentence Conceal your face; you are repulsive • A generalized insult, perhaps related to *bag your head*, "shut up," attested fr the mid-1800s (1980s + *High-school students*)

bag Zs See COP ZS

bail v To leave; CUT OUT, SPLIT: *Bruce has bailed from the scene entirely/ Most of my friends had bailed to stay with other relatives* [1970s + college students; fr *bail out*] **See** JUMP BAIL

bail on someone v phr 1 To break a date with someone; STAND someone UP **2** To tease someone; speak spitefully about someone; criticize someone (1980s + *College students*)

bail out v phr To abandon an effort, project, relationship, etc, in order to minimize losses: *She has bailed out of doing more projects at this time* [1940s + ; fr the 1920s aviation use, "to parachute from an aircraft"]

bail someone out v phr To get someone out of a difficult plight; relieve someone of debt, embarrassment, etc: *I'll bail you out this time, but next time bring enough money* [1970s + ; fr paying

someone's *bail* for release fr confinement]

bail out on *v phr* To leave someone behind or in the lurch: *bailed out on the book project*

bait money *n phr* Money given to a thief containing a device that will dye the money and the thief (1990s +)

bake and shake *n phr* A search, esp a body search for narcotics (1980s +) *v phr* To cremate a body and scatter the ashes: *It's going to be tough to bake and shake that guy; he must weight 400 pounds* [1990s +; slang variation on a brand name of prebaking food coatings]

baked *adj* 1 Intoxicated with narcotics; HIGH, STONED (mid-1980s +) 2 Sunburned: *I got baked on the deck today* *See* HALF-BAKED

Baker flying *See* HAVE THE RAG ON

baking *adj* Extremely warm and damp: *baking inside the laboratory with no windows* (1786 +)

balderdash *interj* Nonsense!: *pure balderdash* [1674 +; originally denoted a frothy liquid or an unappetizing mixture of drinks]

baldy or **baldie** *n* 1 A bald man (mid-1800s +) 2 A worn automobile tire (1970 +)

ball *n* <1> A testicle; NUT (1300s +) 2 A dollar, esp a silver dollar • Attested in the late 1980s as high-school student use (1890s + *Underworld*) 3 The game of baseball (1860s +) *v* <1> To do the sex act; copulate with; SCREW (1940s + *Jazz musicians*) 2 To have an especially good time; enjoy oneself in a relaxed and uninhibited

way: *A good-time town, where everybody comes to ball (1940s + Black)* **See** BALL UP, BEANBALL, BUTTERFLY BALL, CANNONBALL, CARRY THE LOAD, FIREBALL, FORKBALL, FOUL BALL, GET ON THE BALL, GO FOR THE LONG BALL, GOOFBALL, GOPHER BALL, GREASEBALL, GREEDBALL, HAVE A BALL, JUNK-BALL, KEEP **one's** EYE ON THE BALL, MEATBALL, NOT GET **one's** BALLS IN AN UPROAR, NUTBALL, ODDBALL, ON THE BALL, PLAY BALL, PLAY CATCHUP, SLEAZEBAG, SLIMEBAG, SOFTBALL, SOURBALL, THAT'S THE WAY THE BALL BOUNCES

-ball combining word 1 A person who is obnoxious or strange because of what is indicated: *oddball/ goofball/ dirtball/ dizzball/ sleazeball* **2** Baseball of a specified sort: *Billyball/ greedball* [1970s + ; first sense probably fr 1930s *screwball*, “eccentric person,” fr late 1920s name of a baseball pitch, suggesting *screwy*, “crazy, eccentric”; second sense fr the kind of baseball played by the teams of the manager *Billy Martin*]

ball, a *n phr* An especially good time; a loud, funny party: *The concert was a ball/ Man, we had us a ball (1930s + Black college students)*

◁**ball-and-chain**▷ *n* One's wife; OLD WOMAN (1920s +)

◁**ball-buster**▷ (Variations: **breaker** or **wracker** may replace **buster**)
n **1** Something that is very difficult to accomplish; a Herculean task; KILLER (1950 +) **2** Someone who assigns and monitors extremely difficult tasks: *a real ball-buster of a skipper (1970 +)* **3** An intimidating man; ruffian; ENFORCER, GORILLA: *It had been a mistake allowing these two ball-breakers in (1970s +)* **4** A woman who saps or negates a man's masculinity; castrating female (1970s +)

◁**ball-busting**▷ *adj*: *thanks to all those ball-busting fans out there* *n* The sapping or destruction of masculinity; NUT-CRUNCHING (1970s +)

balled up *adj phr* In a thoroughly confused and futile condition; erroneous and useless because of perverse incompetence; FUCKED UP, SCREWED UP: *Things were totally balled up when the alarm went* [1880s + ; probably fr the helplessness of a horse on a slippery street when its shoes have accumulated *balls* of ice; somehow the term has come to be associated with the testicles, as the related term *bollixed up* shows]

ball game *n phr* **1** A given set of conditions; complex of circumstances; situation: *What we do and what they do isn't the same ball game* (1960s +) **2** A competition; rivalry: *It's NBC ahead in the network ratings ball game, NBC says/ Goodbye, ball game, he said* (late 1960s +) **3** The decisive element or event, esp in a competition or encounter; the NAME OF THE GAME: *The third ward vote is the ball game in this town* (late 1960s +) **See** THAT'S THE BALL GAME, a WHOLE NEW BALL GAME

balling *n* Fun, esp of an uninhibited sort (1930s + *Black*)

ball is in someone's court, the *sentence* The next action, decision, response, etc, belongs to the person or persons indicated: *That's my offer. The ball is in your court* [1960s + ; fr tennis]

ballocks or **bollocks** *interj* Rubbish; nonsense (mid-1800s +) *n* The testicles

ball of fire *n phr* A dazzling performer; spectacularly successful striver; overachiever; GO-GETTER, HOT SHOT [1900 + ; perhaps fr earlier *ball of fire*, "a very fast train"]

ball of wax **See** the WHOLE BALL OF WAX

balloon *n* **1** A hobo's bedroll; BUNDLE (1920s +) **2** A condom (1960s +)
3 A dollar bill; one dollar: *It'll cost you six balloons* (1970s +) **4** A platoon (1970s + *Army*) **5** The floating blob with a line to a speaker's mouth, used to show speech in comic strips (1840s +) **v**
To lose one's lines completely during a performance; BLOW UP, GO UP (1920s + *Theater*) **See** LEAD BALLOON, TRIAL BALLOON, WHEN THE BALLOON GOES UP

balloonhead *n* A stupid person; AIRHEAD (1930s +)

balloonheaded *adj* Stupid; oafish: *Listen, you balloonheaded fool* (1930s +)

balloon room *n phr* A room where marijuana is smoked; Beat Pad [1960s + narcotics; probably because one gets high in such a place]

balloons *n* A woman's breasts, esp large • Possibly offensive to women

ballot box **See** STUFF THE BALLOT BOX

ballpark or **park** *n* Claimed or designated special territory; TURF:
Aren't you a little out of your ballpark here?/ I've played mostly your game. But now we're in my park (1963 +) **See** ALL OVER THE MAP, IN THE BALLPARK

ballpark figure (or **estimate**) *n phr* A rough numerical approximation: *I'd say forty, but that's a ballpark figure* (1960s +)

balls *interj* An exclamation of incredulity, disappointment, or disgust (1940s +) *n* **<1>** The testicles (1300s +) **<2>** Courage; nerve; GUTS:
They have balls but not soul/ I admire a woman with the balls to snowboard (1920s +) **3** Nonsense; POPPYCOCK • Frequently an interj of

disbelief, contempt, etc: *That story is just such patent balls that I've written a letter/ He was talking high-minded balls. Twaddle! (chiefly British 1880s +)* **See** BLUE BALLS, BUST **one's** ASS, **the** CAT'S MEOW, DOES HOWDY DOODY HAVE WOODEN BALLS, FREEZE THE BALLS OFF A BRASS MONKEY, GRIPE **one's** ASS, HAVE BRASS (**or** CAST-IRON) BALLS, HAVE **someone** BY THE BALLS, HAVE THE WORLD BY THE BALLS, NOT GET **one's** BALLS IN AN UPROAR, PUT BALLS ON

◁**ballsiness** or **balliness**▷ **n** Courage; BALLS, GUTS: *a dangerous ethic of ballsiness in international affairs (1950s +)*

balls-out **adj** Very great; extreme; total: *That was more like a crazy, balls-out terrain, a whack course [1940s + ; probably fr balls to the wall]*

balls to the wall **adj phr**: *They are not the cigar-chomping "balls to the wall" warmongers of popular perceptions* **adv phr** At or to the extreme; at full speed; ALL-OUT, FLAT **our**: *She is driving balls to the wall in that Mini [1960s + Air Force; fr the thrusting of an aircraft throttle, topped by a ball, to the bulkhead of the cockpit to attain full speed]*

balls-up **n** A confused and inept blunder; FUCK-UP: *a world-class balls-up (late 1930s + British)*

◁**ballsy**▷ **adj** Courageous; spunky; GUTSY: *Angelina Jolie's a very ballsy lady (late 1950s +)*

ball the jack **v phr** **1** To move or work very rapidly **2** To gamble or risk everything on one stroke or try [fr railroad term meaning "to go full speed"]

ball up **n** Confusion; blundering: *The ball-up abroad has been*

supervised by Harry's advisers (1900 +) **v phr 1** To confuse; mix up; lead astray: *This guy has balled me up totally* • Attested fr 1856 in the sense “to fail an examination” **2** To wreck or ruin by incompetence; botch; **BOLLIX UP, FUCK UP, SCREW UP:** *I managed to ball up the whole project (1880s +)*

ball-wracker *See* BALL-BUSTER

bally *n* and **v** BALLYHOO

ballyhoo *modifier:* *a ballyhoo expert* **n** Advertising or publicity, esp of a raucous and colorful sort; **FLACK, HYPE:** *to peddle a product with sheer ballyhoo* **v:** *They ballyhooed him right into office [1908 +; “a short sample of a sideshow, presented with a barker’s spiel”]*

ballyhooed *adj* Much publicized; **HYPED:** *two ballyhooed mergers between telephone companies and cable-TV outfits (1920s +)*

balmed or **balmy** *modifier* Intoxicated with alcohol

balmy *modifier* Crazy; insane *See* BARMY

baloney or **boloney** **n 1** Nonsense; pretentious talk; bold and deceitful absurdities; **APPLESAUCE, BULLSHIT, HOOEY:** *No matter how you slice it, it’s still baloney* **2** A stupid person: *You dumb baloney* **v:** *And don’t try to baloney me, either [late 1920s +, perhaps fr Irish *balonie*, “nonsense”; about 1920 the word meant “an unskilled boxer; palooka”]*

Baltimore chop **n phr** A batted baseball that hits the plate or close in front of the plate and bounces high in the air (*Late 1890s +*)

bam¹ *interj* (also **bamm**, **bammo**) An exclamation imitating a hard

blow: *I got tested and bammo! The bad news* **n** The sound of a hard blow: *It struck the desk with a resounding bam* **v** To strike or hit: *Heads may be biffed or bammed (1918 +)* **See** WHAM-BAM THANK YOU MA'AM

bam² n A mixture of a depressant with a stimulant drug, esp of a barbiturate with an amphetamine [1970s +; fr *barbiturate* + *amphetamine*]

◁**bam³ or BAM**▷ **n** A woman marine [WWII; fr *broad-arsed marine*]

bam-and-scam n A hit-and-run accident (1990s +)

bambi n 1 A deer that appears out of nowhere, as on a highway **2** A person very new to something; newbie [fr being like a deer in the headlights]

bambino n 1 A baby or young child **2** A ruffian; an intimidating man; GORILLA, TORPEDO • In the mid-1800s *babe*, “rowdy, blackguard,” is attested; the identification of infant and goon is durable [1920s +; fr Italian, “baby,” literally “silly little one”]

bamboo curtain n phr The barrier of secrecy and exclusion that once cut the People’s Republic of China and other Asian Communist countries off from the rest of the world [modeled on *iron curtain*]

bamboozle v To hoax; trick; swindle; FLIMFLAM: *My worthy opponent thrives by bamboozling the public* [Underworld 1700s +; origin unknown and much disputed; some claim a Romany source]

bamboozled modifier Confused; mystified (1800s +)

banana n 1 A comedian, esp in a burlesque show • These performers were ranked as “top banana,” “second banana,” etc (1950s + *Show*)

business) **2** A sexually attractive light-skinned black woman • Considered offensive by the women to whom this term is applied (1940s+ *Black*) <3> The penis (1916+) <4> An Oriental sympathetic with and part of the white majority society • Because white on the inside though yellow on the outside (1980s+) **5** A patient with jaundice (1980s+ *Medical*) <6> A fool; an idiot • Attested as college slang in 1989, probably based on *bananas* (1920+) <7> A crazy person; LOONY (1970s+) *See* HAVE one's BANANA PEELED, TOP BANANA

banana ball *n phr* A hit or thrown ball that curves off to the right: *can go to a golf course and hit a banana ball supreme* [1960s+; fr the shape of a *banana*]

bananahead *n* A stupid person (1950s+)

banana oil *n* Nonsense, esp when used to flatter and mislead; BUNK [1910+; perhaps fr the oily smoothness and fruity odor of *banana oil*, amyl acetate]

<**banana republic**> *n phr* A small country, esp Central American, dominated by foreign companies [1930s+; fr the fact that such places were typically under the control of the United Fruit Company and grew bananas]

bananas *adj* **1** Crazy; NUTS: *I could see that my calm was driving him bananas* (1970s+) **2** Very enthusiastic; highly excited; APE (1960s+) **3** Homosexual (1930s+ *Underworld*) *See* GO BANANAS

band *See* BIG BAND, TO BEAT THE BAND

Band-Aid *modifier*: a *Band-Aid expedient* *n* A temporary or stopgap

remedy: *All they did to rectify the problem was to put a Band-Aid on it* [1960s + ; fr *Band-Aid*, trademark for a brand of small adhesive bandages]

bandbox *n* A small or rural jail, esp one that seems easy to escape from [1930s + prison; fr the lightly built box formerly used by ladies to carry bits of finery]

B and D *n phr* Bondage and discipline; sadomasochistic sexual practice; S AND M (1960s +)

bandit *n* **1** An enemy aircraft (WWII) **2** An aggressive homosexual who often resorts to violence (1970s + *Prison*) *See* LIKE A BANDIT, MAKE OUT LIKE A BANDIT, ONE-ARM BANDIT

bandwagon, the *modifier: the bandwagon phenomenon* *n phr* The strong current popularity and impetus of a person, idea, party, etc: *the Reagan bandwagon/ the antinuke bandwagon* (1890s +) *See* GET ON THE BANDWAGON

bang *adv* Precisely; exactly: *bang on the hour* (1820s +) *n* **1** A very pleasurable sensation; surge of joy; thrill; KICK, RUSH: *This'll give you a big bang* (1930 +) **2** An injection of a narcotic, esp an intravenous shot of heroin (1910 + *Narcotics*) **3** The sex act: *The wedding night, you idiot. The first bang. How was it?* **4** An exclamation point; SHRIEK: *Let's stick a bang on it to dress it up* (*Printers* 1930s + , *computer* 1980s +) **5** A drink of liquor; SHOT: *Give me a bang of Jaeger Meister* (1990s +) **1** To do the sex act with or to; copulate with: *He banged her twice and left happy* (1916 +) **2** To be in a youth gang; be a gangbanger [late 1980s + Los Angeles gangs; from the rhyme, but influenced by *gang bang*, "serial sex act done by a group

of males to one woman”] **See** BIG BANG, GANG BANG, GET A BANG OUT OF someone or something, GO OVER WITH A BANG, WHIZBANG

bang away v phr **1** (1840s +) **2** To fire a gun or guns: *The hunters banged away at the fleeing wolf* **3** To attack as if by shooting: *The defense kept banging away at the lack of an eye-witness*

banger n **1** A cylinder in an automobile engine: *a souped-up four-banger (1950s + Hot rodders)* **2** A car, esp an old and decrepit vehicle; HEAP, JALOPY: *this wonderful banger (1960s +)* **3** The front bumper of a vehicle **4** GANGBANGER: *Lots of bangers living here (1980s + Los Angeles gangs)* **See** BIBLE-BANGER, BIT BANGER, FOUR-BANGER, WALL BANGER

bangers and mash n phr A minor car accident; BUMPER-THUMPER, FENDER-BENDER [1990s +; an adaptation of the British food phrase *bangers and mash*, “sausages and mashed potatoes,” probably triggered by *banger*, “a car”]

bang for the buck n phr Value for what one pays: *You get the best bang for the buck right here/ Yet the bang we are getting for our buck is worth whimpering about* [late 1960s +; fr a frivolous way of referring to the national defense budget and the destructive power it produces]

banging modifier **1** Good and wonderful; exciting and energetic: *that banging chick at the bar* **2** Loud and relentless: *banging band at the fraternity*

bang on adv Precisely, exactly: *Her picks for the tournament came bang on* • Also used as adj.

bang out v phr To make or compose something, esp to write

something, in a hurry; cobble up (1940s +)

bang people's heads together *v phr* Used to denote forcing a group of people to cooperate (1957 +)

bangtail *n* A racehorse [1920 + ; fr the manner of cropping and tying the *tail* of a racehorse as if it were chopped square in a *bang*; *bangtailed* is attested fr 1861]

bang to rights *See* DEAD TO RIGHTS

bang-up *adj* Excellent; superior: *I have some bang-up gin/ You've done a bang-up job on that report, Smythe* (1830s + British)

banjax *v* To defeat utterly; CLOBBER • Popularized in Great Britain by the Irish broadcaster Terry Wogan in the 1970s: *She upped and banjaxed the old man* [1939 + ; origin unknown]

banjo hitter *n phr* A player who gets hits weakly just past the infield and usu has a low batting average: *Banjo Hitter Plunks Brewers* (1930s + Baseball)

bank *n* Money (late 1980s + Teenagers)

bankable *adj* Having a reputation or influence that ensures the success of a project: *after a decade when bankable stars have all but monopolized movies/ She had established herself as the most bankable female actress in Hollywood* (1960s +)

banker's hours *n phr* Short working hours, e.g., 9 AM to 3 PM: *kept banker's hours*

bank on *v phr* Depend or rely on: *You can bank on his word* (1880s +)

bankroll *v* To finance; put up the money for, esp for a theatrical production; ANGEL: *Whoever bankrolled this turkey will go broke* (1920s +)

banner *See* CARRY THE BANNER

bar *See* HERSHEY BAR, NUTBALL, SIDEBAR, SISSY BAR

Barbie Doll *modifier*: *Our Barbie Doll president with his Barbie Doll wife* *n phr* A mindless man or woman; a person lacking any but typical, bland, and neatly attractive traits: *a Barbie Doll programmed to sing, dance, and fall in love* [1970s +; fr the trademark of a very popular teenage doll for children]

barbs *n* Barbiturates (*late 1950s* +)

barby or **barbie** *n* A barbecue: *Put a shrimp on the barby for me/ which is sure to have Aussies everywhere ducking under their barbies* (1980s + *Australian*)

◁**bare-ass** or **bare-assed**▷ *adj* Naked; BUCK NAKED (1930s +)

bareback *adj*: *a bareback lay* *adv* Without using a condom (1950s +)

bareback rider *n phr* A man who does the sex act without using a condom (1950s +)

bare-bones *adj* Unadorned; spare; minimally accoutered: *as it attempts to upgrade its image from a bare-bones discounter* [1970s +; fr the phrase *bare bones*, “mere skeleton,” which is attested fr the 1600s]

barefaced or **bareface** *adj* Bold; shameless; unscrupulous • Nearly always seen in *barefaced lie* or *barefaced liar*, attested from 1850

(late 1600s +)

barf *interj* An exclamation of strong disgust: *You want to know what I think of it? Barf!* (1970s +) **v** **1** To vomit (1950s + chiefly students) **2** To respond strangely or with an error warning after unacceptable input: *This machine barfs when I ask for a simple sort* [Computer 1980s +; probably echoic]

barfaroni *n* Something or someone who makes one feel like vomiting: *That pre-cooked turkey breast is barfaroni*

barf bag *adj* Disgusting: *his barf-bag vocal stylings* **n** *phr* **1** A paper bag provided on airplanes, ambulances, etc, to catch and hold vomit (1960s +) **2** A disgusting person; something disgusting; DOUCHE BAG, SCUMBAG (1980s + Teenagers)

Barf City *adj phr* Disgusting; loathsome; YUCKY (chiefly 1980s + Students)

barfly *n* A heavy drinker; LUSH, SOUSE (1910 +)

barf me out *interj* An exclamation of disgust; YUCK (1980s + High-school students)

barfola *n* An unattractive woman; DOG, DOUBLE-BAGGER (1980s + College students)

barf-out *n* A very displeasing person or thing: *restaurant was a real barf-out*

bargain *See* NO BARGAIN

bargaining (or gambling) chip *n phr* Something to be offered, conceded, threatened, etc, in negotiations: *He is using his*

information like a bargaining chip/ The boy isn't just a gambling chip, Walter [1960s+; fr the chip used in gambling]

bar-girl *n* B-GIRL

barhop *v* (also **bar crawl** or **pub crawl**) To go drinking from bar to bar (*first form 1940s+; third 1915+*)

barking dogs *n phr* Tired or sore feet (*1930s+*)

bark up the wrong tree *v phr* To be mistaken; be seeking in the wrong direction: *You're barking up the wrong tree if you think the cause is entirely economic (1830s+)*

barmy or **balmy** *adj* Mildly crazy; CRACKED: *One of your balmier notions [first form chiefly British 1600+, second 1800s+; fr barm, "froth on fermenting beer," hence "flighty, ditsy"; fell in with balmy, said to be fr St Bartelemy, the patron of mad folk, perhaps because the words are homophones in British English]*

barn *See* someone CAN'T HIT THE SIDE OF A BARN

barn-burner *n* Anything sensational or exciting; a great success: *They may have a barn burner of a natural gas well or a dry hole/ George's Bank has proved to be, in the words of one oil-company executive, "no barn-burner" (1940s+)*

barney *n* **1** A prizefight or race whose outcome has been prearranged; a fixed fight or race: *looked like a barney, as if there were some collusion (mid-1800s+)* **2** A despised person; NERD [*1980s+ college students; second sense fr the name of a character in the TV show The Flintstones*]

barnyard golf *n phr* The game of horseshoe pitching (1920s +)

barracks bag *See* BLOW IT OUT

barracks lawyer *See* LATRINE LAWYER

barracuda *n* A predator; a treacherous person: *barracudas at the casino*

barrel or **barrel along** *v* or *v phr* To speed, esp to drive a car very fast (late 1920s +) *See* CRACKER-BARREL, IN THE BARREL, LIKE SHOOTING FISH IN A BARREL, OVER A BARREL, SCRAPE THE BOTTOM OF THE BARREL

◁**barrel ass**▷ *v phr* To barrel: *We're barrel-assing toward Van Nuys* (1950s + *Hot rodders*)

barrelhouse *modifier*: *barrelhouse jazz/ barrelhouse beat* *n* 1 A cheap saloon, esp one in combination with a brothel: *Barrelhouse kings, with feet unstable* (1880s +) 2 A jazz style marked by strong beat and ensemble improvisation; also, music in this style (1920s + *Jazz musicians*)

barrelhouse bum *n phr* Skid Row Bum (1920s + *Hoboes*)

barrel of fun *n phr* A great amount of fun; a person who is a lot of fun: *the hibachi chef is a barrel of fun*

bar the door *See* KATIE BAR THE DOOR

base *See* GET TO FIRST BASE, OFF BASE, OFF **one's** BASE, TOUCH BASE WITH **someone**

baseball *See* OLDER THAN GOD

baseball Annie *n phr* A young female baseball fan, esp one who courts the players: *He was a big hit even with the Baseball Annies memorialized in Bull Durham/ the groupies known as Baseball Annies*

who hang around the players' hotels (1960s +)

basehead *n* A narcotics addict, esp one who uses freebase cocaine (1980s +)

bases *See* TOUCH ALL BASES

bash *n* **1** A party, esp a good, exciting one: *Her little soiree turned into a real bash (1940s +)* **2** An attempt; CRACK, WHACK: *Let's have a bash at moving this thing (1940s + British)* **v** **1** To hit; CLOBBER, SOCK (1860s +) **2** To criticize, esp destructively: *bashing Google more than Microsoft now*

bashed *modifier* **1** Crushed **2** Intoxicated with alcohol: *went out and got bashed*

-basher *combining word* A person who harasses or beats the person or item indicated: *Japan-basher/ fag-basher/ honkybasher (1880s + British)*

-bashing *combining word* Hating and attacking what or who is indicated: *Bush-bashing/ faggot-bashing/ geezer-bashing/ gringo-bashing/ Paki-bashing (esp since late 1950s +)*

basket *n* **1** The pit of the stomach; BREADBASKET: *a blow flush in the basket (late 1800s +)* **2** The male genitals, esp when prominently displayed in tight pants: *the yogis had baskets (1940s + Homosexuals)*

basket case *n phr* **1** A helpless, hopeless, distraught person: *If I worried after a decision I'd be a basket case* **2** Anything ruined and hopeless: *Those are only the best-known corporate basket cases/ the*

reconstitution of the East Wing as an autonomous nation and international basket case [1960s+; fr a 1919 term describing a person, usu a wounded soldier, without either arms or legs, who needed to be carried in a *basket*; use revived in 1939 by Dalton Trumbo's novel *Johnny Got His Gun*]

◁**bassackward** or **bassackwards**▷ **adj** Backwards; reverse; ASS

BACKWARDS: *sort of bassackward hydraulic gimcrackery* **adv:** *He got it all bassackwards* (1930s+)

◁**bastard**▷ **n** 1 A man one dislikes or disapproves of, esp a mean, dishonest, self-serving man; PRICK, SON OF A BITCH (*late 1600s+*) 2

Anything unpleasant or arduous; BITCH: *Ain't it a bastard the way it keeps raining* (1930s+)

baste **v** To strike violently and repeatedly: *he basted the dog after it misbehaved* (1530s+)

basted **adj** Drunk (1920s+)

bastille (ba STEEL) **n** A jail or prison [1880s+; fr the former French royal prison]

bat **n** ◁1▷ A prostitute; a loose woman • Probably so called because she works at night (1600s+) ◁2▷ OLD BAT ◁3▷ A woman, esp an ugly one (1880s+) 4 A spree; carousal; BINGE (1840s+) **See** GO TO BAT

AGAINST, GO TO BAT FOR, HAVE BATS IN one'S BELFRY, LIKE A BAT OUT OF HELL, RIGHT OFF THE BAT, TAKE OFF LIKE A BIGASS BIRD

bat an eye, not See NOT BAT AN EYE

bat around **v phr** To do nothing in particular; go about in idle pursuit of pleasure; FART AROUND, GOOF AROUND: *I want the kids home*

instead o' battin' around the street [late 1800s+ ; perhaps fr the erratic movements of a *bat*]

bat something around v phr To discuss the pros and cons of an idea, project, etc; **KICK something AROUND:** *We batted around the notion of a sick-out (1940s+)*

bat boy n phr A person who beats homeless people [1990s+ ; fr the *bat boy* who looks after bats for a baseball team]

batch See BACH, LAY A BATCH

ba(t)ch (it) v phr To enjoy the life of a bachelor: *With his wife on a trip, he bached it for a week*

batch out v phr To start and accelerate a car from a standstill (1950s+ *Hot rodders*)

bat one's gums v phr (Variations: **beat** or **hump** or **flap** may replace **bat**; **chops** or **jaw** or **jowls** or **lip** may replace **gums**) To talk, esp idly or frivolously: *He didn't mean it—he was just batting his gums/ Well, you weren't just flapping your lip that time (WWII)*

bath See TAKE A BATH

bathroom humor n phr Very gross and puerile wit: *But bathroom humor, especially vile bathroom humor illustrated in full and graphic detail, has never appealed to me*

bathtub gin n phr Gin made at home by mixing alcohol with flavoring, often literally in a bathtub (1920s+)

bat out v phr To write something more quickly than one ought; **WHOMP UP:** *He kept batting out scenes/ Bat me out a memo, please (1940s+)*

bats or batty *adj* Crazy; NUTS: *He was grinning like he was bats/ funnier than you'd expect, fairly batty (first form 1920 + , second form 1900 +)* **See** HAVE BATS IN **one's BELFRY**

bats in the belfry *n* Crazy: *she has bats in the belfry (1900 +)*

batted *adj* Drunk: *got completely batted on light beer*

batten down the hatches *v phr* To get ready for trouble; take precautions; BUCKLE YOUR SEAT BELTS: *So we batten down the hatches and wait it out [late 1800s + ; fr the action of a ship's crew securing wooden battens over the hatches in anticipation of a gale]*

battery acid *n phr* Coffee (*WWII armed forces*)

bat the breeze *v phr* To chat; converse, esp easily and idly; RAP, SHOOT THE BREEZE: *a couple of cops batting the breeze (WWII armed forces)*

battle-ax *n* An ill-tempered woman, esp a mean old woman; virago (1890s +)

Battle of the Bulge *n phr* The constant struggle to keep slim, to eliminate the bulge around one's waist [1960s + ; fr the name of the Ardennes campaign of late 1944 in World War II]

battle royal *n phr* A general quarrel or fight; BRAN-NIGAN, DONNYBROOK: *What began as a mild disagreement escalated into a battle royal (1670s +)*

battlewagon *n* **1** A battleship (1920s + *Navy*) **2** A police patrol wagon (1920s + *Underworld*)

batty **See** BATS

bat one's wings v phr To be futile; waste one's effort: *I've got to get people away from denial. Until I can do that I'm kind of batting my wings* (1990s +)

bawl someone out v phr To reprimand severely; rebuke; CHEW someone OUT (1900s +)

bay window n phr A protuberant stomach; paunch; POTBELLY: *He's lean and mean, no bay window and no patience* (1870s +)

bazillion n A very large number; a zillion: *lavished bazillions of dollars* (1980s +)

◁**bazongas or bazoongies or bazookas**▷ (bə ZAHN gəz, bə ZŌŌN geez) **n** A woman's breasts; BAZOOM, JUGS: *What difference would it make that her bazongas were twice the size of mine?* [1970s +; all based on *bazooms*]

bazoo (bə ZŌŌ) **n** The mouth, esp regarded as a speech organ • The meaning shifted from "horn, trumpet" in phrases like "blow one's own bazoo" and "the silvery tinkle of his bazoo," attested in the mid-1800s: *if you would close that big bazoo* [1900s +; apparently fr Dutch *bazuin*, "trumpet"] **See** SHOOT OFF one's MOUTH

bazooka¹ (bə ZŌŌ kə) **n 1** A small antitank rocket launcher (*WWII Army*) **2** A very successful enterprise; BLOCKBUSTER: *its big bazooka, Home Improvement* [1990s +; first sense fr its resemblance to a tubular musical instrument played by the 1940s comedian Bob Burns, who invented and named it in 1905]

bazooka² **n** A marijuana cigarette impregnated with bazuco, a cheap cocaine paste [1980s + Narcotics; fr Sp *bazuco*, "bazooka"]

◁**bazoom** or **bazooms**▷ (or **bazoongies** or **bawangos**) (bə ZŌŌM) **n**

A woman's breast or breasts: *Whatever she wants to do with her bazooms is OK with me* [1950s + ; fr comic mispronunciation of *bosom* and association with the excitement of *zoom*]

bazuco or **basuco** **n** A cheap cocaine paste: *Also on the horizon are "croak" and "basuco," a cocaine derivative* [1980s + Narcotics; fr Sp *bazuco*, "bazooka," suggesting the effect of the drug]

B-bag *See* BLOW IT OUT

B-ball **n** Basketball: *pickup b-ball*

b-boy **n** **1** A devotee of rap music • Originally applied to mid-1980s *break dancers: b-boys with business cards* **2** A stylish dresser [1980s + ; perhaps abbreviation of *break boy*, perhaps of *beat boy* or *bad boy*]

beach blanket bingo **n phr** Sexual activity on the beach [1960s + ; fr the title of a 1965 movie]

beach bum **n phr** A man who frequents beaches, esp one who is a surfer, who conspicuously shows his muscles, etc (1960s +)

beach bunny **n phr** A girl who, whether or not a surfer, spends time with surfers; GREMLIN (1960s +)

beached whale **n phr** A very obese person, esp one who cannot get out of bed or a chair without assistance (1980s + *Medical*)

bead *See* GET A BEAD ON something or someone

beady eye *See* GIVE someone THE FISH-EYE

be a friend of Dorothy's v phr (also know **Dorothy**) To be homosexual [1990s+ Canadian students; fr *Dorothy*, the main character in *The Wizard of Oz*, played in the movie by Judy Garland; the actress is a great favorite of many homosexuals]

beak n 1 A mayor, magistrate, or trial judge • Still current in British slang (1830s+) **2** The nose: *The beak-buster in the opening round was the first punch Moore had thrown*

be-all and end-all n phr Something regarded as the most important element: *the be-all and end-all of series finales* [1605; fr Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, "That but this blow Might be the be all, and the end all."]

be all over someone v phr To show great or excessive affection: *People magazine always describes celebrities as being all over each other* (1912+)

beam, the See OFF THE BEAM, ON THE BEAM

beam me aboard or up v phr (also **beam me up, Scotty**) (1980s+ *Students*) **v phr 1** Tell me what is happening; BRING ME UP TO SPEED, Clue Me In **v phr 2** Get me away from here [fr the TV series *Star Trek*, in which a character called *Scotty* teleported other characters by means of a "transporter beam"]

bean n 1 A five-dollar gold piece (1850s+ *Underworld*) **2** A dollar: *without a coat on his back or a bean in his pocket* (1900+) **3** A poker chip (1900+ *Gambling*) **4** The head, esp the human head and brain: *Whistling at a crook is not near as effective as to crack him on the bean with a hickory stick* (1900+) ◀5▶ A person of Spanish-

American background, esp a Chicano (1920+) **v** To strike someone on the head, esp to hit a baseball batter on the head with a pitch:

Not the first time I've been beaned (1910+) **See** FULL OF BEANS, JELLYBEAN,

LOOSE IN THE BEAN, MEAN BEAN, SPILL THE BEANS, USE **one's** HEAD

beanball *n* A baseball pitch that hits or nearly hits the batter's head and is sometimes used to intimidate the batter: *Mr Bender places much reliance on the bean ball* (1900+)

bean counter *n phr* A statistician or arithmetical clerk in government or business; an accountant; GNOME, NUMBER CRUNCHER: *Even in Britain, the bean counters couldn't tolerate a negative cash flow forever/ The bean counters always spoil our fun* [1970s+; In the mid-1800s a popular comedian called Mose the Bowery Boy ordered pork and beans: "Say, a large piece of pork, and don't stop to count de beans," which became a much-quoted line]

bean-counting *modifier* Having to do with bureaucratic statistics and calculations: *We have our bean-counting ways; they have their bean-counting ways/ This bean-counting approach is an easy way to score debating points*

bean-eater *n 1* A resident of Boston (1800+) **◀2▶** A person of Hispanic background, esp a Chicano; BEAN (1920+)

◀beaner▶ *n* A person of Hispanic background, esp a Chicano; BEAN, BEANEATER: *I was called a wetback, a beaner, a spic*

beanery *n* A restaurant or diner, esp a cheap one: *a beanery in Hell's Kitchen* (1890s+)

bean head or **beanhead** *n* A stupid person; an oaf: *You are such a*

beanhead

beanpole *n* A tall, thin person; HATRACK: *She was tall, but no beanpole (1830s +)*

beans *interj* An exclamation of disbelief or contempt (1900s +) *n* Nothing; a minimal amount; DIDDLY: *I wouldn't give you beans for that idea/ She would get all of her famous friends to appear and pay them beans [1830s +; A bean in this sense is attested fr the 1200s. Semantically the same as *bubkes*] See FULL OF BEANS, A HILL OF BEANS, KNOW one's ONIONS, NOT KNOW BEANS*

bean-shooter *n* A small-caliber pistol; POPGUN (1940s +)

bean time *n* Time for the evening meal; dinnertime

Bean Town *n phr* Boston, Massachusetts (1900 +)

bear *n* **1** A capsule containing a narcotic (1960s + *Narcotics*) **2** A difficult school or college course (1960s + *Students*) **3** Anything arduous or very disagreeable; BITCH: *It's been a bear of a morning • Bear is attested fr 1915 in a similar sense, "doozie, humdinger" (1950s +) **4** BEARCAT: *Stokovich was a bear for records* **5** A large, gruff man [1700s +; sense perhaps influenced by 1930s jazz musicians' use, "an unhappy state or condition; impoverishment," in which it was rhyming slang for "nowhere"] *See* DOES A BEAR SHIT IN THE WOODS*

Bear *See* SMOKEY BEAR

bear cage *n* A police station: *town bear cage*

bearcat *n* **1** A durable and determined person; tough fighter or worker: *a bearcat for jobs like this* **2** Something remarkable,

wonderful, superior, etc; BEAUT, HUMDINGER (1916 +)

beard *n* **1** An up-to-the-minute, alert person; HIPSTER (1950s + *Beat & cool talk*) **2** A person used as an agent to conceal the principal's identity: *Use him as a beard, is what Donny thought he'd do/ He's the beard. That's what they call the other man who pretends to be the lover* (1980s + *Gambling*) **3** A bearded man, esp someone of apparent dignity and authority: *I can't believe the sainted beards would bang me with a manufactured case* (1700s +) ◀**4**▶ The pubic hair; BEAVER, BUSH (late 1600s +) *v*: *She says Rollins was supposed to beard for him*
See GRAYBEARD

◀**bearded clam**▶ *n phr* The vulva (1960s +)

bear hug *n phr* **1** A crushing embrace (1930s +) **2** A takeover bid so enticing that directors are forced to accept it (1970s + *Business*)

bear in the air, a *n phr* A police officer in a helicopter [mid-1970s +; fr Smokey Bear]

bearish *adj* Showing a negative and unhopeful attitude; disheartening • Often used with “on” or “about”: *He's quite bearish on our chances/ She's not entirely discouraging but rather bearish* [fr the stock-market term *bear market*, “market in which price, sales, etc, tend to decrease”]

bear trap *n phr* A police radar trap for speeders [1970s + *Citizens band*; related to Smokey Bear, “policeman”]

beast *n* ◀**1**▶ A cheap prostitute (*esp WWII Armed forces*) ◀**2**▶ (also **beastie**, **beasty**) An especially unattractive woman (1940s + *Teenagers*) **3** Any woman whatever, but esp a young, attractive one

(1960s + Jazz musicians) 4 A crude or sexually aggressive male; animal 5 Anything regarded as difficult and misbegotten: *But that is part of the beast that was created* (1860s +)

beat *adj* 1 Very tired; ALL IN, POOPED: *You have been on the go right around the clock. You look beat* (1830s +) 2 Alienated from the general society and expressing this by a wandering life, the avoidance of work, the advocacy of sexual freedom, the use of narcotics, a distinctive style of dress and grooming, and the adoption of certain aspects of Far Eastern religions: *the beat generation/ beat poets* (1950s + *Beat talk*) 3 Boring; stupid; LAME (1980s + *Teenagers*) *modifier: anything I knew that I hadn't told the beat man at the news conference* *n* 1 A loafer; drifter; DEADBEAT, MOOCHER (*mid-1800s* +) 2 News printed or broadcast first, before one's competitors; SCOOP: *The News scored an important beat* (1900 + *News media*) 3 The area or subject matter that one is assigned to handle: *cop on his beat/ a reporter on the courthouse beat* (1700s +) 4 The basic meter of a piece of music, esp the insistent percussive rhythm of some jazz styles and rock and roll (1930s +) 5 BEATNIK 6 A short pause; heartbeat: *I waited a beat, then started for the garage/ It may take a couple of beats to absorb the shock of this new length* (1950s + *Theater*) *v* 1 To baffle; nonplus: *It beats me how she can do so much* (1830s +) 2 To avoid a fine or conviction: *He beat the burglary rap* (1920s + *Underworld*) 3 To rob or defraud: *I sure got beat when I bought that old clunker* (1850 +) **See** DOWNBEAT, OFFBEAT, UPBEAT

beat a dead horse *v phr* To continue arguing, discussing, or broaching a matter that is settled or proved unavailing [mid-

1800s + ; *Dead horse* as something not revivable is attested fr the mid-1600s]

beat all v phr To surprise one; be a wonder: *Doesn't it beat all how Fred is always first in line?* (1830 +)

beat all hollow v phr To defeat easily; surpass completely: *His story beats mine all hollow* [mid-1800s + ; *Beat hollow*, “beat entirely, clobber” is attested fr 1769]

beat around (or about) the bush v phr To avoid speaking directly and precisely; evade; tergiversate (*mid-1500s +*)

beat one's brains out v phr 1 To labor strenuously with the mind, often with a sense of having failed: *I beat my brains out getting ready for it, but flunked anyway* (*late 1500s +*) **2** To beat someone severely: *threatened to beat my brains out*

beat someone or something by a country mile v phr To win or prevail by a comfortable margin: *Her cherry pie beats mine by a country mile/ He beat the throw by a country mile* (1940s +)

beat-down n 1 A quick body search for weapons, drugs, etc: *What you gonna do, give me a beat-down right here?* (1990s +) **2** A beating given to a member who decided to leave the gang: *So I didn't have to go through the beat-down or be jumped out* (1990s + *Street gang*)

beaten down to the ankles adj phr Totally exhausted; BEAT, POOPED (1950s +)

beaten-up See BEAT-UP

beater n A car, esp an old and junky one: *when he's stolen the beater*

off the streets (1980s +) **See** EGGBEATER, GUM-BEATER, WORLD-BEATER

beat one's gums v phr To talk excessively: *she wastes all her time beating her gums* **See** BAT ONE'S GUMS

beat someone in v phr To initiate someone into a gang by assaulting them: "When you're getting 'beat in' or 'quoted'", one female "G" explained (1990s+ Street gang)

beating **See** GUM-BEATING, TAKE A BEATING

beat something into someone's head v phr To teach something persistently and rigorously: *How often must I beat it into your head that dragons are dangerous? (1880 +)*

beat it v phr To go away; depart; SCRAM • Often a command: *When the cop told us to beat it we didn't waste any time (1900s +)*

◁**beat one's meat**▷ **v phr** (Variations: **flog** or **pound** may replace **beat**; **dummy** or **log** may replace **meat**) To masturbate (1960s +)

beatnik n A person who is beat in the sense of alienation from society, etc [1950s +; See *beat* and *-nik*; coined by San Francisco newspaper columnist Herb Caen in 1958]

◁**beat Off**▷ (also **ball off**, **jack off**, **jag off**, **jerk off**, **wack off**, **wank off**, **whack off**) **v** To masturbate (1960s +)

beat-out adj Tired; exhausted; BEAT, POOPED (1870s +)

beat someone out v phr To surpass or best someone, esp by a narrow margin: *She just beat me out for the job, probably because she had more schooling (1840s +)*

beat something out v phr To play or use a keyboard: *she beat the manuscript out*

beat someone out of something v phr To take something away by cheating or fraud: *He was so simple they beat him out of his money before he knew it (1880s +)*

beats me sentence I don't know; I have no idea; I don't understand: *Why was he hired? Beats me/ Why don't they take the whole investigation? Beats the shit out of me (1880s +)*

be at square one See GO BACK TO SQUARE ONE

beat the band v phr To surpass everything: *if that doesn't beat the band* • often used in expressions of surprise (1897 +)

beat the bushes v phr To search diligently; seek ardently: *You beat the bushes and beat the bushes for years [1940s + ; fr the practice of driving game out by beating the bushes]*

beat the drum v phr To broadcast emphatically and constantly; insistently feature: *He's beating the drum for that pet idea (1600s +)*

◁**beat the hog**▷ **v phr** To masturbate (1970s +)

beat the rap v phr To go unpunished; be acquitted: *Every time they arrest him he beats the rap (1920s + Underworld)*

◁**beat the shit out of someone or something**▷ **v phr** (Variations: **bejabbers** or **bejesus** or **daylights** or **hell** or **kishkes** or **living daylights** or **living shit** or **stuffing** or **tar** or **whey** may replace **shit**; **kick** or **knock** or another term denoting assault or punishment may replace **beat**) To defeat or thrash thoroughly;

trounce; **CLOBBER**: *tried to blackmail him, he's beat the shit out of you/ He went up against palooka and they beat the stuffing out of him/ "I'll sue the shit out of her," vowed Professor Gold (entry form 1950+; others generally earlier)*

beat the socks off someone **v phr** To defeat decisively; trounce;
CLOBBER: *In a surprising upset, Hart beat the socks off Mondale (1970s+)*

beat someone to the draw (or to the punch) v phr To act sooner or quicker than someone else; forestall: *If we beat 'em to the punch, they're not going to look too good*

beat to the ground adj phr (Variations: **a frazzle** or **the socks** may replace **the ground**) Totally exhausted; **POOPED**: *Frankie Machine, looking beat to the ground, brushed past (entry form 1940s+; second form 1900s+)*

beat-up adj Battered and damaged, esp by age and use: *He drove a beat-up Volvo/ an old beat-up dog (1930s+)*

beat up on v phr To attack and damage; criticize harshly; trounce;
CLOBBER: *a message to people who beat up on the public programs (1900+)*

beat one's way v phr To travel without paying; travel in the cheapest possible way (1870s+)

beauhunk or **bohunk n** A handsome male: *I want to meet that beauhunk over there*

beaut (BYOOT) **n** A person or thing that is remarkable or

extraordinary; HUMDINGER, LOLLAPALOOZA: *While the president doesn't go off on these tangents often, when he does, they are beauts/ That black eye was a beaut (1860s +)*

beautiful *interj* An exclamation of approval and gratification (*mid-1800s +*) **n** A good-looking woman • Used in direct address: *Where've you been all my life, beautiful? (1920s +)*

beautiful people, the **n phr** People who are fashionable, wealthy, admired for style and opulence, etc; the JET SET (*1960s +*)

beauty *adj* Excellent; superior; GREAT: *I thought the guy was beauty (1970s + Canadian)*

beauty contest **n phr** A canvass or occasion that reveals preference, without the force of an election: *the mini-convention billed as a beauty contest for those seeking the presidential nomination/ Today's primary is considered a beauty contest because no delegates to the convention will actually be chosen (1960s +)*

beauty sleep **n** Sleep required to feel refreshed: *Not tonight, honey. I need my beauty sleep*

beaver **n** **1** A bearded man (*1900s + British*) **2** A full beard (*1900s + British*) <3> The female genitals, esp with a display of pubic hair • First attested when the cry *Beaver!*, usu uttered at the sight of a bearded man, was uttered at the sight of a woman's pubic hair, seen through a keyhole (*1920s + British*) <4> Pornography: *The editor lovingly runs his beaver one column over from his furious tirade (1960s +)* <5> (also **beaver movie** or **beaver flick**) A pornographic film; SKIN FLICK (*1960s +*) <6> A woman (*1970s +*)

Citizens band 7 A person who works hard and diligently (*mid-1800s +*) **See** SPLIT BEAVER

◁**beaver loop**▷ *n phr* A pornographic filmstrip in a coin-operated viewing machine (*1960s +*)

◁**beaver-shooter**▷ *n* A man obsessed with peering at female genitals: *A beaver shooter is, at bottom, a Peeping Tom (1960s +)*

◁**beaver shot**▷ *n phr* A photograph showing the female genitals prominently, esp one focusing on the vulva (*1960s +*)

be big on someone or something *v phr* To be enthusiastic about or laudatory of someone or something: *The boss is very big on this guy, as of now (1960s +)*

bebop **See** BOP

be caught dead, not **See** NOT BE CAUGHT DEAD

be caught short *v phr* To not have enough: *was caught short at the ticket window*

bed **See** GO TO BED, GO TO BED WITH someone, HOTBED, MUSICAL BEDS, one SHOULD HAVE STOOD IN BED

bedbug **See** CRAZY AS A LOON

bed-bunny *n* A promiscuous female; nymphomaniac: *After her, he wanted a bed-bunny*

beddy *n* A pretty young girl, esp one considered sexually complaisant: *A group of pretty teenage girls skips down the sidewalk. "Hey, look at those little beddies" (late 1980s + California)*

beddy-bye *n* Sleep; time to go to sleep [1867 + ; fr earlier use as a

sound to lull a child to sleep]

bed of roses *n phr* A luxurious situation; a highly agreeable position:
his life's a bed of roses

bedpan commando *n phr* A medical orderly (*WWII armed forces*)

bedposts *See* the DEVIL'S BEDPOSTS

bedrock *modifier: a bedrock discussion/ bedrock decision n* The basic facts; the crucial elements; the BOTTOM LINE, the NITTY-GRITTY [1870s +; fr *bedrock* "the solid rock underlying strata and detritus"]

bedroom or **come-hither eyes** *n phr* Seductive eyes: *I left them holding hands and gazing at each other with bedroom eyes (1940s +)*

bee¹ *n* BEE IN ONE'S BONNET (*mid-1800s +*)

bee² *n* 1 Enough narcotic to fill a penny matchbox, a unit used in selling drugs; B 2 An obsession with something [1960s + Narcotics; fr *box*] *See* PUT THE BEE ON someone, PUT THE BITE ON someone

beef *n* 1 A complaint; grievance: *Her mother called up to register a beef (1890s +)* 2 A criminal charge or indictment: "*What was your beef, Jim?*" "*Robbery*" (1910 + *Underworld*) 3 A quarrel; argument: *I've got no beef with you, buddy (1930s +)* 4 A customer's bill or check; BAD NEWS, DAMAGE (1930s +) 5 Muscle; strength; huskiness (*mid-1800s +*) 6 Bulkiness; fleshiness; mass: *The old chorus girls had lots of beef, not like now (mid-1800s +)* ◀7▶ The penis (1890 +) **v** 1: *The hospital beefed when the city announced plans (1880s +)* 2 To quarrel: *We started beefing with each other (1930s +)*

beef about someone or something **v phr** To complain about someone or something: *They beef about dinner constantly*

beefcake **n** A photograph or photographs of a muscular male body with little or no clothing; a muscular handsome man: *The actor has no objections to male cheesecake, or beefcake as it is called in Hollywood* [1940s+; based on *cheesecake*]

beefcaker **n** Photography showing the nude or nearly nude male body (1940s+)

beefeater **n** An Englishman; LIMEY [1600s+; fr the preeminence of beef, esp roast beef, in the traditional English diet]

beefier **n** 1 A complainer; malcontent (1930s+) 2 A police informer; STOOL PIGEON (1890s+)

◁**beef injection**▷ **n phr** (also **hot beef injection**) The sex act; penile penetration; BOP, SCREW: *Maybe she care to try my famous African beef injection/ He asked if my boyfriend had ever slipped me the hot beef injection* [1980s+; fr *beef*, “penis,” and *injection*, attested in this sense by the 1740s]

beef up **v phr** To strengthen; reinforce • *Beef up!* is attested as an exhortation to use more strength by 1890: *The Patriots beefed up their defense by adding an all-star lineman (WWII armed forces and industry)*

beefy **adj** Heavy-set; strong; bulky: *I tried to avoid the three beefy characters just ahead/ Reborn for a new calling, the beefy bikes came to be known as “clunkers” (mid-1700s+ British)*

bee in one's bonnet *n phr* A particular idea or notion, esp a fantastic or eccentric one; obsession: *He's got a bee in his bonnet about wheat germ curing all the world's ills* [mid-1800s+; attested as *bee in one's head* fr early 1500s]

beeline *n* A direct and speedy route [1830; fr the notion that bees take the most direct route in returning to their hives]

beely bopper *See* DEELY BOPPER

beemer *n* A BMW automobile

been around (the block) *adv phr* Sexually experienced: *She'd been around the block before he met her*

been (or was) had *adv phr* **1** Mistreated or cheated; outwitted: *been had by the neighbors* **2** Been bribed: *senator cannot be had*

been there, done that *sentence* That is nothing new; tell me something else; SO WHAT ELSE IS NEW [1990s+ College students; *Been there*, "experienced" is attested fr 1870]

been to hell and back *v phr* To have survived an ordeal or trouble: *been to hell and back with the kids*

beep *n* **1:** *The car gave a few hearty beeps* (1920s+) **2** A usu high-pitched short burst of sound emitted by an electronic device on a satellite, rocket, telephone answering machine, etc: *Please leave your message when you hear the beep* (1950s+ Aerospace) *v* **1** To sound the horn of a car (1920s+) **2** To notify someone by a beep that attention or action is needed: *So I called the doctor and they beeped him and he called me* [1970s+; echoic]

beeper *n* **1** A tiny radio receiver that gives a coded signal to a person being notified of a telephone call, a voice message, or other summons: *Beepers proliferate, tolling for many besides the doctor* **2** Any very small electronic device used to control garage doors, car doors, etc: *The gate was open, but I could see that one could close and open it with a beeper (1970s +)*

beer *See* CRY IN **one's** BEER, DRINK **one's** BEER, SLING BEER, SMALL POTATOES

beer and skittles *See* NOT ALL BEER AND SKITTLES

beer belly *n* **1** A protuberant paunch **2** A man with a prominent paunch (1940s +)

beerbong or **beer bong** *n* **1** A large funnel used to consume large amounts of an alcoholic beverage very quickly, the point being to increase and speed the intoxication process **2** A can of beer drunk in one gulp

beer bust (or blast) *n phr* A party where beer is the featured drink; BREWOUT: *It was supposed to be a party, a beer bust (1910 +)*

Beer City or **Beertown** *n* Milwaukee, Wisconsin: *tiny minimum-security prisons right in the midst of Beertown (1940s +)*

beer goggles or **beernoculars** *n phr* Impaired vision and judgment due to drunkenness: *I must have had beer goggles on last night to think he was handsome (late 1980s + College students)*

beer gut *n* Paunch created by drinking a lot of beer: *looks like a beer gut to me (1976)*

beer jerker *n phr* A person whose work is drawing draft beer and

serving it: *waiter girls, popularly known as “beer-jerkers” (1870+)*

beer joint *n phr* A tavern or bar serving primarily beer (1940s+)

beer run *n phr* A venturing out to buy beer: *a proud holder of three drunk-driving convictions, really had to go on a beer run (1990s+)*

beerslinger *n* A bartender (late 1800s+)

beer up *v phr* To drink a lot of beer, esp enough to get drunk: *the mechanics, beering up with the guys and driving off to Detroit (1920s+)*

bees *See* the BIRDS AND THE BEES

bee’s knees *n* An excellent person or thing (1923+)

beeswax *n* Business; concern: *If they did, that’s their own beeswax (1940s+)*

beetle *n* 1 A girl; young woman: *We could find plenty of nice beetles to rub ourselves against (1920s+)* 2 A racehorse; ROACH: *some beetle whose neck will feel the caress of a floral horseshoe (1930s+ Horse racing)* 3 Trademark of a model of Volkswagen car, with a squat body curving down at front and rear (*mid-1940s+)*

beeveedees *n* BVDS

beezer *n* The nose (1915+ *Prizefight*)

beggar’s velvet *n phr* GHOST TURD, HOUSE MOSS, Slut’s Wool (1860s+)

be good *interj* A parting salutation • Later expanded with “if you can’t be good, be careful, and if you can’t be careful, don’t name it after me” (1908+)

behind *n* The buttocks; rump; ASS: *her broad, plain face, absence of waistline, and enormously broad behind (1830+)*

behind bars *adv* In jail or prison: *put him behind bars*

behind the curve *adj phr* Lagging; not abreast of current things
(1990s+)

behind the ears *See* NOT DRY BEHIND THE EARS

behind the eight ball *adv phr* In a losing or endangered position: *He was sick and broke, right behind the eight ball [1930s+; fr the position of a pool player behind the black eight ball, which he must not hit]*

Behind you! *interj* Look out! Someone's coming from behind!: *The waitress bellowed "Behind you!"*

beige *adj* Boring; insipid; HO-HUM (1980s+ *High-school students*)

be in someone's face *v phr* To confront and bother someone • The expression may come from the aggressive confrontations of basketball players: *He was totally in her face/ I was in his face about raking the leaves (1980s+)*

be in on the act *v phr* To be involved in an activity, esp an exciting one: *Now ABC's gotten into the act (1947+)*

be in the swim *v phr* To be fashionable, up-to-date, etc: *Don't use stale slang if you're in the swim (1869+)*

be in the weeds *v phr* To be in difficulty; be struggling: *The corporation that issues your hubby's paycheck is in the weeds [1980s+; probably fr the plight of a golfer who has sent the ball*

into the rough]

be in the zone *v phr* To play effortlessly and without concentrated thought (*mid-1980s + Sports*)

belch *n* **1** A complaint; BEEF (1900+) **2** A beer, esp of poor quality *v*
1: *All she did was belch about how bad he treats her* **2** To inform;
SQUEAL: *I feel good that I didn't belch on my friend* (1900+
Underworld)

belcher *n* A beer drinker [fr the belching made by such a drinker]

belfry *See* HAVE BATS IN one's BELFRY

believe *See* YOU BETTER BELIEVE something

believer *See* MAKE A BELIEVER OUT OF someone

Believe you me! *interj* This is something you cannot dispute: *Believe you me, he is going to be mad*

bell *See* DUMBBELL, HELL'S BELLS, RING A BELL, RING someone's BELL, RING THE BELL, SAVED BY THE BELL, WITH BELLS ON

bellcow *n* A pitcher who can both start and win a game: *the one with the time and the talent to be that "bellcow" remains* *Al* (1980s+
Baseball)

bellhop *See* SEAGOING BELLHOP

bellied *See* YELLOW-BELLIED

bells *See* HELL'S BELLS, WITH BELLS ON

bells and whistles *modifier:* *If you are a bells and whistles guy, you will probably find these cars to be of more value* *n phr* **1** Nonessential

elements, esp when impressive and decorative; frills: *the latest “bells and whistles,” as high-tech frills are called/ you strip away the technological bells and whistles* **2** Accessories and accoutrements, esp of the flashier sort; refinements; adornments; finishing touches: *Maserati, with all the bells and whistles (1970s +)*

bells go off *sentence* Alarming recognitions and associations emerge: *What started to slow me down, though, was the little bells going off at the sight of a young black guy (1950s +)*

belly *n* BELLY LAUGH (1920s +) *See* AIR one's BELLY, BEER BELLY, JELLY-BELLY, POTBELLY, POTBELLY STOVE, SOURBALL, SOW-BELLY, YELLOW-BELLY

bellyache *n* A complaint; BEEF, BELCH **v** To complain, esp to do so habitually; BITCH: *You may exit the theater bellyaching about the show's unsubtleties (1880s +)*

belly-buster *See* BELLY-WHOPPER

belly button *n phr* The navel (1870s +)

belly-crunch **v** To be in intimate embrace: *candle light, chilled wine, soft music, you and me belly-crunching in front of the fire (1990s +)*

belly flop *n phr* A dive in which one strikes the water stomach first; BELLY-WHOPPER (1930s +)

belly-flopper *See* BELLY-WHOPPER

bellyful *n* The limit of what one can stand; an overplus; surfeit: *I've had a bellyful of your bellyaching (1830s +)*

belly gun *n phr* A short-barreled pistol inaccurate at any long range, but quite effective at very close range, like a shot in the belly:

about .32 caliber, a belly gun, with practically no barrel (1920s +)

belly laugh *n phr* An especially loud, vigorous, and appreciative laugh; BELLY, BOFFOLA [1920 + ; coined by the writer Jack Conway of *Variety*]

belly out *v phr* BELLYACHE: *Dixon had bellied out his trouble to somebody (1980s +)*

belly-robber or **belly-burglar** *n* A cook or a mess sergeant [WWI armed forces; Cowboys had a very similar term, *belly-cheater*]

belly-smacker *See* BELLY-WHOPPER

belly stove *See* POTBELLY STOVE

belly up or **belly-up** *adj phr* Dead or ruined; bankrupt: *The whole project's belly-up* *v phr* To die; be down and out; collapse; GO BELLY UP: *were the schools to belly up tomorrow (1870s + Cowboys)*

belly up to *v phr* To push or come up close to, esp to a bar for a drink: *the men bellied up to the bar (1900s + Cowboys)*

belly-wash *n* Any drink one holds in contempt; SWILL (1900 +)

belly-whopper (Variations: **-buster** or **-flopper** or **-smacker** may replace **-whopper**) *n* 1 A sled ride begun by running with the sled held at one's side, then leaping onto it stomach down (*entry form 1940s +*) 2 BELLY FLOP

below the belt *adj phr* Nasty; malicious; DIRTY: *That remark was below the belt/ his below-the-belt tricks* *adv phr* Not according to decent and usual practice; unconscionably irregular: *to hit below the belt/ aim below the belt* [1890 + ; fr boxing, where blows to the lower

part of the body are forbidden] **See** HIT SOMEONE BELOW THE BELT

belt *n* **1** A blow; stroke; WHACK: *She gave it a good belt (1900+)* **2** A thrill; transport of pleasure; KICK: *You'll get a belt out of this one (1930s+)* **3** A marijuana cigarette; JOINT (1950s+ Narcotics) **4** A drink; swig; swallow: *He handed me the bottle and I took a belt at it (1920s+)* *v* **1** To hit; strike; SOCK: *Ed belts him in the kisser/ He belted the ball a mile (1830s+)* **2** (also **belt down**) To drink, esp vigorously and often: *I seen him come in this joint lots of times and belt them down until he's cross-eyed (1800s+)* **See** BORSCHT BELT, TIGHTEN one'S BELT

belt around *v phr* To travel or move fast: *As for Godfrey's belting around in Air Force planes (1890s+)*

belt out *v phr* To sing in a loud and vigorous style (1950s+)

belt up *v phr* To hold one's peace; be quiet; SHUT UP: *Maybe he can get Pauline Kael to belt up once in a while (chiefly British 1930s+ air force)*

Beltway *modifier* Connected with the federal government or the huge complex it occupies [1980s+; fr the *Beltway*, the peripheral Washington, DC, highway that is supposed to help one avoid the city's traffic] **See** INSIDE THE BELTWAY

Beltway bandit *n phr* One of the horde of businesses, consultants, lobbyists, etc who cluster about the federal government (1980+)

be my guest *sentence* Do as you please • Often an ironic acquiescence to something ill advised: *You want to tell the cop he's wrong? Be my guest (1950s+)*

bench v 1 To take someone out of active play in a sporting event:
coach benched him after one foul **2** To remove someone from an activity: *Don't bench the staff for that decision*

bench jockey n A person who mainly sits on the sidelines and offers advice: *The bench jockeys were annoying*

benchwarmer n phr A person not among the most active and important members of an enterprise; esp a substitute athlete who seldom plays (1880s + *Theater*)

bend n BENDER (1870s +) **v** To slur a note: *They alter pitch and they call it "bending" (1940s + Jazz musicians)* **See** AROUND THE BEND

bend someone's ear v phr To talk to someone insistently and at length: *He was bending my ear about his new car (1940s +)*

bender n 1 A spree, esp a drinking spree; BAT, BINGE: *That three-day bender left Jim hurting all over/ a carrot-juice bender (1840s +)* **2** A stolen car [*Underworld* 1940s +; first sense fr *hell-bender*, "alligator," of obscure origin, which came to mean "anything spectacular and superior" and was applied to a great spree in the mid-19th century] **See** EAR-BENDER, ELBOW-BENDER, FENDER-BENDER, MIND-BLOWER, PRETZEL-BENDER

bending See ELBOW-BENDING, MIND-BLOWING

bend (or lean) over backwards v phr To make every effort; strive mightily; GO OUT OF ONE'S WAY: *I bent over backwards trying to be fair (first form 1940s +, second form 1920s +)*

bends, the n phr Caisson disease, a painful result of rapid decompression after a deep dive (1900 +)

bend the (or one's) elbow (Variations: **crook** or **tip** may replace **bend**) **v phr** 1 To drink frequently and heavily, esp whiskey: *They cautioned him that maybe he was bending the elbow a little too often* 2 To have a drink: *We'll tip the elbow over at my place (1825 +)*

bend the law v phr To break the law a little; to cheat: *bent the law, but did not break it*

bend the rules v phr To alter the rules slightly; to interpret loosely: *Let's bend the rules a bit and have another dessert (1970s +)*

bend the throttle v phr To drive or fly very fast (*Air Force fr WWII & 1940s + Teenagers*)

Benjamin or Benji n A hundred-dollar bill [fr Benjamin Franklin's image on the bill]

bennies or benies n Employer benefits such as health care, insurance, etc; FRINGES, PERKS: *I like the pay, but the bennies stink (1970s +)*

benny or bennie modifier: *The kid was a benny addict* **n** Any amphetamine pill, esp Bensedrine™ (1950s +)

bent adj 1 Intoxicated, either from alcohol or narcotics (1830s +) 2 Having very little money: *I'm not quite broke, but quite bent (1940s +)* 3 Eccentric; odd; CRACKED, WACKY (1940s +) 4 Homosexual (1930 +) 5 Sexually aberrant; KINKY: *Charley got bent bad over women. He was kinky when it came to ladies (1930 +)* 6 Dishonest; shady; CROOKED: *look a little bent, look like you were up for a little whoremongering and black-marketing and smuggling (1900s +)* 7 Stolen, said esp of a car (1900s + *Underworld*) 8 Angry; upset; BENT OUT OF

SHAPE (1970s + Air Force)

bent-eight *See* FORKED-EIGHT

bentnose *n* A criminal; a Mafioso: *this bentnose in their town, a crud with a long drug sheet/ Once Cifelli and his band of bentnoses were in, Lefcourt had less control than ever*

bent out of shape *adj phr* **1** Intoxicated; drunk; BENT, STONED **2**

Extremely upset; very angry: *He is so far bent out of shape by the press reaction/ Why are you bent out of shape? (1960s + Air Force and college students)*

benz *n* **1** Benzedrine (*Drugs*) **2** A Mercedes-Benz automobile

Benzo *n* A Mercedes-Benz car (1980s + Teenagers)

be on it *v phr* To be prepared to act; to act on something promptly:

I'm on it, boss

be on the lookout *v phr* To look for or establish surveillance on something or someone: *He's on the look out for babes*

Beotch *See* BITCH

be (or get) real *interj* An exhortation to be sane and sensible: *John, are you going fishing this weekend? Be real, Smitty, I have to study for a test (1980s + College students)*

Bernie *n* A crime victim who is armed and might resist [1980s + Police; fr *Bernhard* Goetz, who shot several young men he said threatened him on a New York City subway]

berries, the *n phr* **1** The best; an excellent person or thing; the MOST

2 Wine [1915+; fr early 1900s college slang *berry*, “something easy and pleasant, a good thing”]

berry *n* A dollar [1900s+; perhaps fr the notion of a small unit of something good, and alliterating with *buck*; see the *berries*]

berth *n* A job, appointment, situation, etc: *Dissatisfied with his prewar truck-driving berth (late 1700s + Nautical)*

Bertha *See* BIG BERTHA

beside oneself *adj phr* Undergoing a surge or transport of emotion, esp of anger; half-crazy: *She was beside herself when she found out he was cheating/ He was beside himself with despair (late 1400s +)*

best *See* someone’s LEVEL BEST

best bet *n* The most advantageous course of action: *Your best bet is to make all decisions yourself (1941 +)*

best bib and tucker *n phr* One’s best clothes; GLAD RAGS (*mid-1700s +*)

best bud *n* One’s best friend: *Paul’s my best bud*

bestest *adj* The very best: *Jim thinks the bestest thing to do with his time is take photographs*

best girl *n* One’s best girlfriend or lover; sweetheart: *Bring your best girl (1880s +)*

best shot *See* GIVE something one’s BEST SHOT

best (or greatest) thing since sliced bread, the *n phr* A person or thing that is superlative; a paragon; WINNER: *I thought she was the best thing since sliced bread (1960s +)*

bet See IF BET

bet one's boots v phr You can be absolutely certain: *bet your boots I'm comin'*

bet one's bottom dollar v phr To be absolutely sure of something; be totally convinced; BET THE FARM: *I'll bet my bottom dollar she'll be back (1860s + Western)*

betcha v phr Bet you: *I'll betcha I can jump higher (1922 +)*

Bete See PHI BETE

bet one's life v phr BET ONE'S BOTTOM DOLLAR (1840s +)

be there v phr To have the experience; learn firsthand: *You have to be there to know what I mean/ I can tell you, because I've been there myself (1880s +)*

be there or be square sentence One should attend an event or one will be considered an outsider: *The party? Be there or be square!*

be there with bells on sentence An expression of happiness about being someplace; I am eager and happy to be here: *I will be there with bells on*

better See GO something or someone ONE BETTER, YOU BETTER BELIEVE
something

better half n phr One's wife; occasionally, one's husband [late 1500s +; either because the beloved is more than *half* of one or is the superior part, the soul]

Better luck next time sentence Maybe you will have better luck on

the next try: *Missed the cutoff? Better luck next time*

bet the farm (or the ranch) v phr (Variations: **franchise** or **house** or **left nut** or **rent** or **shop** may replace **farm** or **ranch**) Bet everything one has; GO FOR BROKE, BET **one's** **BOTTOM DOLLAR**: *I wouldn't have bet the farm, but I'd sure bet the back forty/ I wouldn't bet the ranch that he'll be reappointed/ You can bet the rent the Jacksons will go where the big money is/ Horowitz says he'll bet his house that Ginsburg won't vote to overturn Roe v Wade/ nothing less than betting the franchise on this project (1980s +)*

betty n 1 A pretty girl, esp one regarded as sexually biddable; **BEDDY**: *Betty ...A beautiful woman* **2** An eccentric person; **FREAK** [1980s + Students; perhaps fr *Betty*, a character in the TV show *The Flintstones*]

between a (or the) rock and a (or the) hard place adv phr In a dilemma; baffled: *So a writer is caught between the rock and the hard place/ informants, caught between the rock of prison and the hard place of the snitch (1940s +)*

bet your boots v phr (Variations: **ass** or **sweet ass** or **bibby** or **bippy** or **bottom dollar** or **buns** or **left nut** or **life** or **shirt** or **whiskers** may replace **boots**) To be absolutely assured; count on it: *You can bet your boots I'll be there/ You bet your sweet ass it was easier at the museum/ I'll bet my left nut that's what was happening (entry form 1800s +, variants fr then until mid-1900s +)*

bfd or **BFD** (pronounced as separate letters) **n** Something or someone of importance • Usually said sarcastically or dismissively [fr *big*

fucking deal]

B-girl *n* A promiscuous girl or woman, esp one who works in a bar as a sort of hostess to stimulate the sale of drinks; BAR-GIRL (1930s +)

bhang *n* Marijuana; a marijuana cigarette: *old bhang in his car*

bi *adj* Bisexual; AC-DC *n*: *I think maybe Vi is a bi (1960s +)*

biatch *See* BITCH

bib *See* BEST BIB AND TUCKER

bibby *See* BIPPY

bible or **Bible** *See* SWEAR ON A STACK OF BIBLES, TIJUANA BIBLE

Bible-banger *n* (Variations: **-pounder** or **-puncher** or **-thumper** or **-walloper** may replace **-banger**) A strict religionist, esp a Protestant fundamentalist preacher: *to ensure it doesn't offend some Bible-banger in Mississippi/ Americans send millions of dollars to fast-talking TV bible thumpers (entry form fr Australian 1940s +, others 1880s +)*

◁**bicho**▷ (BEE choh) *n* The penis: *this little girl, she's leading you around by your bicho* [fr Spanish, literally "bug, beast," and more]

bicoastal *adj* **1** Active on both the Atlantic and Pacific coasts: *a pair of bicoastal type A males* **2** Bisexual; AC-DC, BI (1980s +)

bicycle *See* GET ON one's BICYCLE

biddle *See* BINDLE

bidy *n* **1** A woman, esp an old shrewish woman • Nearly always with "old": *Charley had met an old bidy named Zoe Winthrop (late*

1700s +) **2** CHICK (1780s +) [diminutive of the name *Bridget*]

biff *n* **1** A blow with the fist; SOCK • *Biff* as the sound of a blow is attested in 1847 (1890 +) **2** A stupid young woman (1980s + *College students*) *v* **1**: *He wouldn't quit, so she biffed him* (1890 +) **2** To fail; FLUNK (1980s + *College students*)

biffy *n* A toilet; bathroom: *the new biffies being installed at a dormitory* (1940s + chiefly Canadian)

big *adj* **1** Important; powerful: *the big names in this business/ the big guy* (late 1500s +) **2** Popular; successful: *If I do say so, we were very big/ The book's big in Chicago* (1910 +) *adv* Successfully; outstandingly well: *The wing-dancing and funny acts catch on big* (1886 +) **See** BIG WITH SOMEONE, GO OVER BIG, MAKE IT BIG, TAKE IT HARD, TALK BIG

Big *adj* Good; decent; admirable • Used as an epithet for an admired person: *Hey, what's up, Big Charlie?* **See** MISTER BIG

big ape or **baboon** *n phr* A large, dangerous man • Nearly always used affectionately of a man by a woman (1940s +)

Big Apple, the, or the **Apple** *n phr* **1** New York City • Popularized in the 1970s as a nickname: *New York is the Big Apple/ young musicians storming into the Apple* (1909 +) **2** A jitterbug dance of the mid-1930s [apparently fr jazz musicians' term **apple** for a city, esp a city in the North; the dance may be so called from a Harlem club of the same name]

◁**bigass**▷ *adj* **1** Pretentiously large: *Abraham opened the door of his bigass Cadillac* **2** Pretentious; self-important: *his goddam big-ass face* [1940s + fr black and WWII armed forces; in these and other

senses *-ass* and *-assed* are used virtually as intensifiers; they may be suffixed to nearly any adjective]

◁**bigass bird**▷ **See** TAKE OFF LIKE A BIGASS BIRD

big band modifier: *the big-band sound/ big-band era* **n phr** A large band of dance or swing musicians, esp like the Benny Goodman or Tommy Dorsey bands of the 1930s (1920s +)

big bang modifier: *the big-bang theory/ big-bang cosmology* **n phr** The primordial explosion by which the universe was hypothetically created [1950 +; The term was coined, or at least popularized, by the British astronomer Fred Hoyle in a 1950 book]

Big Bertha **n phr** Any very large cannon [fr WWI; said to be fr *Frau Bertha Krupp*, a member of the German armaments-making family]

Big Blue **n phr** IBM, International Business Machines Corporation [1980s +; fr the color of the company's logo]

big board **n** The New York Stock Exchange: *down 100 points on the big board* [fr the large display *board* that reports on stocks traded on the exchange]

big boy **n phr** 1 You there; man; MAC • A term of address variously used with the intention to challenge, flatter, attract, etc: *Want a little fun, big boy?* (1910 +) 2 An important man; **BIGGIE**, **BIG SHOT**: *He tried to shake down one of the big boys* (1920s +) 3 An adult male; grown-up man • Most often used in rebuke: *Cut that out—you're a big boy now*

Big Brother or **big brother** **n phr** 1 The faceless and ruthless power

of the totalitarian or bureaucratic state personified (1949+) 2 The tracking radar used by ground controllers (1970s+ *Airline*) [*Big brother*, “protector,” is attested fr at least the 1860s; first sense fr its use by George Orwell in his novel *Nineteen Eighty-Four*; second sense quite benign]

big brown eyes n phr A woman’s breasts; HEADLIGHTS

big bucks n phr A large amount of money; great sums of money;
MEGABUCKS: *That car would cost you big bucks today (1970+)*

big bug n phr An important person; BIG SHOT: *He was among the big bugs of his own Cabinet (1820s+)*

big butter-and-egg man See BUTTER-AND-EGG MAN

big buzz n phr Loudest current rumor: *The big buzz around Broadway is the announcement (1970s+)*

Big C n phr 1 Cancer (late 1960s+) 2 Cocaine (late 1950s+
Narcotics)

big cage, the n phr A state or federal prison or reformatory; the BIG HOUSE (1940s+ *Underworld*)

big cheese modifier: without the big-cheese attitude n phr 1 BIG BUG, BIG SHOT (1900s+) **See** the CHEESE 2 A stupid or rude man; lout (1920s+)

big D n phr LSD (1970s+)

Big D n phr 1 Dallas, Texas (1930s+) 2 Detroit, Michigan (1960s+)

Big Daddy or big daddy n phr 1 You there; man; BIG BOY, MAC • Term of address used to any man, usu with a view to flattering him

(1940s +) **2** DADDY (1920s + Jazz musicians) **3** DADDY-O (1940s + Jazz musicians)

Big Dance, the n phr The NCAA basketball tournament: *The prize will be an automatic bid to the Big Dance (1990s +)*

big deal modifier: *a big-deal salary/ a big-deal Boston wiseass dick; n phr 1* Anything very important; consequential event or circumstance • Often used ironically to deflate someone or something, esp in the retort “Big deal” after someone has made an earnest reference: *Getting good grades is a big deal around here/ So you just bought an Audi. Big deal 2* An important person; **BIG SHOT:** *Thinks he’s a big deal ‘cause he’s got that fucking paper backing him up [1940s + Students and WWII armed forces; probably fr the Yiddish sarcastic dismissal a groyser kunst, “some big art,” as translated and used, for example, by the comedian Arnold Stang] See MAKE A BIG PRODUCTION, NO BIG DEAL*

Big Dick n phr The point or roll of ten (1940s + *Crapshooting*)

Big Ditch, the n phr Various the Erie Canal (1823 +), Atlantic Ocean (1909 +), or Panama Canal (1915 +)

big do n phr An important or popular person: *He was the big do in Green Bay [1980s + ; perhaps a shortening of big doolie]*

big dog n phr An important and dominating person: *This is going to be the year of the Big Dog! (1840s +)*

bigdome n An important person, esp a manager or business executive; **BIG SHOT:** *if the NBA bigdomes are concerned about their image and popular appeal (1980s +)*

big doolie n phr An important person, esp a winning athlete; BIG SHOT: *I got a gold today, so I'm a big doolie* [1980s+; perhaps related to the earlier term *dooly*, "dynamite"]

Big Drink, the n phr Variousy the Mississippi River (1840s+) or the Atlantic Ocean (1880s+)

big drink of water n A very tall person: *Kyle is a big drink of water*
See LONG DRINK OF WATER

big drive n phr A heavy or comparatively pure injection of a narcotic: *that big drive hits* (1950s+ *Narcotics*)

Big Easy, the n phr New Orleans (1970s+)

big enchilada n phr The chief; the head person; BOSS: *The Big Enchilada is tied up with the Chief Honcho at the moment, but the Little Enchilada can see you now* (1970s+)

big eyes n Desire; lust (1950+ *Jazz musicians*)

big fat adj phr Embarrassingly obvious; blatant and humiliating: *I couldn't keep my big fat mouth shut/ His big fat trademark heart greets you in this show* (1970s+)

big fish (or frog or tuna) n phr An important person; BIG SHOT: *landed herself a big fish—an old guy with money and power/ the sports authoritarian and local big tuna* (1830s+)

big fish (or frog) in a little (or small) pond n phr An important person in a relatively unimportant place [1970s+; *big toad in the puddle* is attested fr 1877]

big foot modifier: *George Will used his Big Foot status to get himself*

invited to sessions that a mere sports-writer wouldn't have been allowed near **n phr** 1 A senior editor, important editorialist or columnist, etc: *an editor or pundit, a "big foot" (1980s + Newspaper office)* 2 BIG SHOT: *unlike the national policy big foot she is (1990s +)* **v:** *DeeDee Myers was relegated to the sidelines, a victim of David Gergen's Bigfooting in the White House [fr Bigfoot, one of the designations of Sasquatch, a large hairy humanoid creature thought by some to inhabit the forests of the Pacific Northwest, and probably applied to senior newspaper persons because of metaphorical size and menace]*

bigger (or other) fish to fry n phr Other and more pressing matters to attend to; more important things in prospect: *Anyway, we've got bigger fish to fry/ Tell him to relax, we've got bigger fish to fry*

biggie n 1 A prominent or stellar person; BIG SHOT: *Sullivan continues putting the bee on other Government biggies (1930 +)* 2 Something important and successful; BIG DEAL: *a tubular biggie, not only in LA and NY, but in Chicago, Detroit, and Atlanta (1940s +)* 3 Anything large and important: *what if a real biggie, like Brazil, went to the wall/ The next earthquake might be the biggie (1940s +)* **See** NO BIGGIE

biggity or biggidy adj Haughty; conceited; UPPITY **adv:** *Don't talk so biggity (1880 + chiefly black)*

biggums adj Overweight; obese • This reflects that *fat* is now generally avoided as a matter of sensitivity, and that it has taken on a new meaning, "cool, attractive," in youthful speech (1990s + Teenagers)

big gun *n phr* BIG SHOT (1830 +)

big guns *See* HEAVY ARTILLERY

big guy *n phr* Man; fellow • Used in direct address, usu with a flattering or genial purpose: *So, big guy, how's it going?/ How's it look up there, big guy? (1980 +)*

big H *n phr* Heroin (1950s + *Narcotics*)

big hair *n phr* A hairdo styled to add much volume and held in place with spray: *big hair is all the rage (1988 +)*

big hand, a *n phr* Enthusiastic applause: *Let's give the little lady a big hand, folks (1880s +)*

Big Harry *n phr* Heroin (1950s + *Narcotics*)

big hat, no cattle *n phr* 1 A pretender; a pompous poseur: *Most of 'em are only good at hanging around the Fort Worth Club. Big hat, no cattle (1980s + Western)*

bighead *n* A self-important, conceited person (1840s +)

big head, a *n phr* 1 Conceit: *The promotion gave him a big head (1850s +)* 2 The discomfort consequent upon drinking too much liquor; HANGOVER: *The rum gave me a big head next morning (1890 +)*

bigheaded *adj* Conceited (1940s +)

big heat *n phr* An ostentatiously important person: *I am into so many big things, such a big heat, that I must deal as I wheel (1980s +)*
[perhaps a synonym for *hot shot*]

big help *n* An unhelpful person or thing • usu sarcastic: *Your going to*

the gym for two hours was a big help while I was preparing dinner

big hole *n phr* The low gear of a truck (1940s + *Truckers*)

big house, the, or the Big House *n phr* A state or federal penitentiary; the BIG CAGE • The term meant “workhouse” in mid-1800s London: *to go to the big house for the rest of his life* (1915 + *Underworld*)

big idea, the *See* WHAT'S THE BIG IDEA

big jab *n* A lethal injection in carrying out a death sentence: *the governor put off the big jab*

big John *n phr* A police officer or the police (1960s + *Narcotics*)

big joint, the *n phr* the BIG HOUSE (1920s + *Underworld*)

big juice *n* 1 The person with all the power 2 A major criminal

big kahuna or kahoona *n phr* An authoritative person; the chief; BIG ENCHILADA, HONCHO: *Take the word “interim” out of Al Fisher’s job description and insert “big kahuna”* [1950s + ; fr Hawaiian *kahuna*, “shaman, medicine man, priest”; the term was apparently disseminated by surfers]

big-league *adj* Serious; important; professional: *No more fooling around, now it’s big-league stuff* (1940s +)

big-leaguer *n* BIG-TIMER (1910 +)

big leagues, the *n phr* 1 In baseball, the major leagues (1890s +) 2 The higher, more serious and arduous reaches of a profession, business, government, sport, etc; the BIG TIME, HARDBALL (1940s +)

big lie, the *modifier*: *the big-lie technique/ a big-lie approach n phr* A major political untruth, usu of a demagogic sort, uttered frequently by leaders as a means of duping and controlling the constituency [1940s +; fr a notion of Adolf Hitler in *Mein Kampf* (1924), that a *big lie* is often easier to foist on the masses than a little one]

Big Mac attack n phr A sudden, overpowering desire for fast food, like a Big Mac sandwich: *Hop in the car! I'm having a Big Mac attack*

big man n phr A male school or campus leader: *the prep school "big man" (1920s + Students)*

big man on campus n phr 1 A male college student leader; BMOOC (1930s + *College students*) 2 Any preeminent man: *Griffey is the Mariners' big man on campus (1990s +)*

big moment n phr One's sweetheart or lover (1930s + *Students*)

big money See HEAVY MONEY

bigmouth n 1 A person who talks constantly and loudly 2 A person who freely announces personal opinions and judgments; KNOW-IT-ALL, SMART-ASS 3 A person who can't keep a secret (1880s +) **See** HAVE A BIG MOUTH

big name modifier: *a big-name star/ They get a big-name fee n phr* 1 A celebrated person, personality, or entity, esp a star entertainer: *Hollywood figures only the big names are bankable* 2 A prominent reputation; fame: *The group has a big name in the Boston area (1920s +)*

big nickel n phr A \$5,000 bet (1950s + *Gambling*)

big noise n phr An important person; most influential person: *Who's the big noise around here? (1900s + British)*

big O, the n phr An orgasm (1960s +)

big of someone modifier Magnanimous or nice of someone: *It was big of you to pick me up when it started raining* • sometimes sarcastic

big on modifier Enthusiastic for: *big on yoga (1867 +)*

big one n phr 1 A thousand dollars, esp as a bet: *The hijackers are handed 50 cents a gallon, which is 15 big ones and OK for a couple hours' work/ The next time you want me to do the Today show, it's going to cost you ten big ones (1930s + Gambling)* **2** A serious heart attack: *not the same since the big one*

big picture, the n phr The large strategic situation as distinct from little details; inclusive of the surrounding circumstances (1970s +)

big pipe n phr A baritone saxophone (1950s + *Cool musicians*)

Big Pond, the n phr The Atlantic Ocean (1830s +)

big potatoes n phr Someone or something important or impressive: *Commencement is still big potatoes around here [1940s + ; a deliberate antonym of *small potatoes*]*

big production See MAKE A BIG PRODUCTION

big rag, the n phr the BIG TOP (1930s + *Circus*)

biggs, the n phr The major leagues in baseball or other areas; the BIG TIME: *When Backman was in the biggs, he wasn't your regular Mr. Sunshine (1960s +)*

big school, the *n phr* the BIG HOUSE (1920s + *Hoboes & underworld*)

Big Science *n phr* Scientific work that is extremely costly, productive of huge machines, etc (1960s +)

big score, the *n phr* Huge financial success; spectacular profits: *Jobs' entrepreneurial flair and his instinct for the big score* (1940s +)

big shot or **bigshot** *modifier* • Often used sarcastically: *a bigshot chest surgeon/ bigshot notions* *n phr* or *n* A very important person; influential person; leader; BIG CHEESE, BIGGIE • Thought to have been taken over from the idiom of Prohibition-age gangsters: *eight big shots of various farmers', manufacturers', or veterans' organizations/ "Hey, bigshot," his father would bellow on the telephone* (1920s +)

big sleep *n* Death [1938; popularized by the name of the novel *The Big Sleep* (1938) by Raymond Chandler, and probably coined by Chandler himself]

big (or big-time) spender *n phr* A person who is generous and extravagant, esp for lavish entertainment; HIGH ROLLER (1920s + *Nightclubs*)

big stiff *n phr* A large, rough man, esp one who is somewhat stupid as well • Sometimes used as a term of affection by a woman of a man (1890s +)

big stink *n* 1 A commotion or fuss; an argument: *her big stink about cleaning up his room* 2 A major issue or scandal: *Don't make a big stink about minor issues* (1800 +)

big talk *n phr* Boastful and extravagant talk; esp promises or claims

beyond one's capacity: *His promises were just big talk v: Don't big-talk a big-talker, man (mid-1800s +)*

big-tent *adj* Welcoming all sorts; hospitable: *NOW itself is a big-tent organization, abidingly tolerant of all attitudes (1990s +)*

big (or high) ticket *adj phr* Expensive; high-priced: *very low for the promotion of a big-ticket item/ More and more complete-text services are becoming available, especially in high-ticket fields like law n phr*
The sale of an expensive item: *He wrote up a couple of big tickets yesterday (1970s + Salespersons)*

big time *adj* Important; notable: *My book was big-time (1910 +) adv*
Very much; totally: *Where does it say that a congressman has the right to be on the take big time?/ It sticks big-time to any smooth surface (1970s + Army) [ultimately fr the outdated theater sense]*

big time, the *modifier*: a big-time outfit/ big-time crime n phr The upper reaches of a profession, business, government, sport, etc; the BIG LEAGUES (1920 +) [fr theater use of about 1910 designating certain important vaudeville circuits or houses]

big-time operator *n phr* A person conspicuously active in affairs where tradeoffs, special favors, private understandings, etc, are crucial; machinator; BTO, Macher, WHEELER-DEALER (1940s +)

big-timer *n* BIG-LEAGUER (1930 +)

big top, the *n phr* The main tent of a circus; also, the circus and circus life in general: *hypnotized by life under the big top (1890s + Circus)*

bi-guy *n* A bisexual male (1973+)

big wheel *modifier*: a big-wheel attitude/ Look at the big-wheel label on those jeans **n phr** An important person; BIG SHOT: *Up to that juncture I was boss man of the family and big wheel* [1940s+; probably connected with Chicago underworld use *wheels*, “gang chief, big shot,” attested in 1932]

bigwig *n* A very important person, often self-important: *bigwigs all over the restaurant* (1731+)

big with someone *adj phr* Popular with; preferred by; relished by: *That’s big with her* [In this sense *big* goes back to about 1910]

big Zs *n* Lots of sleep; restful sleep: *I need the big Zs during this project*

biker chic *n phr* The dressing style of motorcyclists: black leather garments and boots, menacing helmets, etc: *the ghosts of all the cattle that had died in the name of biker chic* (1990s+)

bilge *n* Nonsense; worthless and vain matter; TRIPE, BLAH (1900s+)
v (also **bilge out**) To fail or expel a student (1900+ *College students*) [short for *bilge-water*]

bilk joint *n phr* A business place, esp a shop, that overcharges and cheats its customers; GYP JOINT: *the Times Square tenderloin, the porno shops, the bilk joints, the freaks* [fr 17th-century *bilk*, “cheat, fraud,” plus *joint*]

bill *n* 1 A single dollar: *Can I borrow a couple of bills until tomorrow?* (1910+) 2 A hundred dollars: *I laid out four bills for that shearling* (1920s+) 3 A hundred yards of gain in football: *Coach Jackson told*

me I needed two bills to win (1990s + Football) See HALF BILL, PHONY AS A THREE-DOLLAR BILL

bill and coo v phr To kiss and cuddle like lovebirds: *bill and coo in the corner*

billies n Bills; currency; money (1980s + *High-school students*)

billy or billy-club n A club or truncheon, now esp one carried by the police • Associated with the police fr the 1850s, but a reference of the 1880s still describes only what would now be called a blackjack, definitely a criminal's weapon [1840s + ; said to be a burglar's pet or secret name for his crowbar, along with *Jemmy* or *Jimmy*; he also used it as a weapon]

billycan or billy n A container for heating water or for cooking (*Hoboes 1880s + Australian usage*)

bim n A girl or woman, esp one's girlfriend: *John took his bim to a dance (1920s +)* [fr *bimbo*]

◁**bimbette**▷ **n** A frivolous or stupid young woman; a man's plaything: *She was itching to play something more demanding than bimbettes and stand-by wives/ He could have any bimbette in the state of California* [1980s + ; fr *bimbo* plus French feminine suffix *-ette*]

bimbo n 1 A man, esp a mean and menacing one; BABY, BOZO: *The bimbos once helped pluck a bank/ one of them bimbos which hurls a mean hammer (1920 +)* **2** An insignificant person; NEBBISH: *Nobody listened to the poor bimbo (1920 +)* ◁**3**▷ A woman, esp a young woman of hedonistic aspect: *What kind of a bimbo did he think I am?/ a bimbo with legs that go all the way up (mid-1920s +)* ◁**4**▷ A

prostitute; HOOKER: *Some escort services are just fronts for prostitution that men call up and the service just sends out some bimbo in blue jeans from Brooklyn (1920s +)* [fr Italian, “baby, bambino”; see *babe*]

Bimmer *n* A BMW car: *Bum out a Bimmer driver. Unleash a Chevette (1980s +)*

bimmy *n* BIMBO: *What do you suggest instead? A bimmy? (1980s +)*

bin, the *n phr* LOONY BIN (1930s +) *See* WEENIE BIN

bind *n* A very tight and awkward situation; cleft stick; BOX, JAM: *This is a nasty sort of bind (mid-1800s +)* *See* IN A BIND

binders *n* The brakes of a car (1940s + *British*)

bindle or **biddle** *n* **1** A blanket-roll holding one’s possessions; BALLOON (1900 + *Hoboes*) **2** Any package or bundle (1900 + *Hoboes*) **3** A packet of narcotics, esp when folded as an envelope (1920 + *Narcotics*) [probably an alteration of *bundle*]

bindlestiff *n* **1** A migrant harvest worker, esp a hobo with his bindle: *I was a bindlestiff. That’s the class that will do some work once in a while* **2** Any hobo or derelict [1900s +; fr *bindle*, “blanket-roll, bundle,” and *stiff*, “worker, migratory worker”]

bing *interj* An exclamation in reaction to something sudden; BINGO (1900s +) *n* **1** A packet of narcotics; BINDLE (1920s +) **2** A prison cell used for solitary confinement; the HOLE (1950s + *Prison*)

binge *n* A spree, esp a drunken spree; BAT, BENDER: *with the studios on an economy binge/ one last Häagen-Dazs binge (mid-1800s +)* **v** To

carouse; consume inordinately (1900s +) [perhaps fr Lincolnshire dialect *binge*, “to soak”]

binged (BINGD) *adj* Vaccinated (*Armed forces fr WWI*)

binger¹ (BIN jər) *n* A person who goes on a spree or sprees:
situational sketches about stage mothers and food bingers (1900s +)

binger² (BING ər) *n* A home run in baseball (1980s +)

bingle *n* **1** (also **bingo**) A base hit in baseball, esp a single (1902 +)
n **2** A collision, esp an automobile accident (*Australian*)

bingo¹ *interj* An exclamation in reaction to something sudden and unexpected, or expressing sudden success: *Have your contracts and debts declared void and, bingo, you’re back in business* [echoic]

bingo² *n* Cheap wine [Canadian; fr late 1600s *bingo*, “brandy,” and US mid-1800s *bingo*, “liquor”]

bingo³ *n* A more or less benign gambling game (1930s +) *See* BEACH
BLANKET BINGO

binocs *n* Binoculars: *Get the binocs to look at the gopher (1943 +)*

bio or **biog** *n* A biography, esp a brief one in a yearbook, theater program, etc: *By now Jenny had read my bio in the program (first form 1950s +, second 1940s +)*

bioflick or **biopic** *n* A movie or television show based on some person’s life story: *stars in a bioflick on Charlie Parker/ a big-budget Hollywood biopic (1980s +)*

bionic *adj* **1** Having electromechanical body parts **2** Having extraordinary strength, powers, or capabilities; superhuman: *a*

bionic appetite [1900s; fr *bio-* and *electronic*]

biotch *n* **1** A woman one dislikes or disapproves of **2** An affectionate term for a girl or woman: *Olivia? She's my biotch* **3** A man who acts like a bitch, esp a wimpy man **See** BITCH

bippy or **bibby** *n* The buttocks; ASS (1960s +) **See** BET YOUR BOOTS

bird modifier <1>: *a gaggle of the guys in a Third Avenue bird bar (late 1800s +)* **2: a bird colonel** *n* **1** A person of either sex, usu a man and often elderly: *I'm a literary bird myself/ She was a tall old bird with a chin like a rabbit (mid-1800s +)* **2** Somebody or something excellent; BEAUT, LULU (mid-1800s +) **3** A young woman; CHICK • Much commoner in British usage; regarded by some women as offensive (1900 + *College students*) **4** An odd or unusual person; an eccentric; FLAKE, WEIRDO: *He was a funny bird in many ways (mid-1800s +)* <5> A male homosexual; GAY (late 1800s +) **6** The eagle as an insignia of a colonel's rank (*Armed forces fr WWI*) **7** Any aircraft, esp a helicopter (1918 +) **8** A rocket or guided missile (1950s + *Astronautics*) **9** A communications satellite: *A VTR operator in Vancouver is editing a local piece for The National. "Gotta make the bird," the guy says confidently/ an agreement to put Satellite News Channel up on its bird (1970s + Aerospace)* [homosexual senses may be based on or be revived by Yiddish *faygele*, "homosexual," literally "bird"] **See** EARLY BIRD, FOR THE BIRDS, GOONEY BIRD, HAVE A BIRD, JAILBIRD, LOVEBIRDS, OFF one'S NUT, RAILBIRD, TAKE OFF LIKE A BI-GASS BIRD, WHIRLYBIRD, YARDBIRD

bird, the *n phr* **1** A rude flatulatory noise made with the tongue and lips to express disapproval, derision, or contempt; BRONX CHEER, RASPBERRY: *Give him the bird, the raspberry (1860s + British)* **2** the FINGER

(1960s +) [first sense fr the mid-1800s expression *give the big bird*, “hiss someone like a goose”]

birdbrain *n* A person of meager intelligence; idiot: *whatever birdbrain is rendering one of the ditties of the day (1940s +)*

birdbrained *adj* Stupid: *Britney is unquestionably birdbrained (1940s +)*

bird colonel *n phr* CHICKEN COLONEL

bird dog *n phr* **1** A person, like a detective, talent scout, etc, whose job is to find something or someone (1930 +) **2** A chaperon at a dance or a third person on a date, appointed to be vigilant (1930s + *Students*) **3** A tactical officer, enforcing order and discipline (1930s + *Service academy*) **4** A fighter or interceptor aircraft **5** An aircraft that spotted and marked targets (*WWII Army Air Forces*) **6** The automatic direction-finding instrument of an aircraft (1970s + *Airline*) **7** A radar detector: *The cop is sitting there with a bird dog (1970s + Citizens band)* **v** **1** To act as a bird dog: *Leo Browne was doing some “bird-dogging” for the Yankees (1930 +)* **2** To seduce or go out with another girl’s boyfriend: *Sorry to bird-dog you, but the guy asked me to the spring concert (1990s + Teenagers)*

birdfarm *n* An aircraft carrier: *The days are gone when a carrier was called a flat-top. The craft is now a “birdfarm” (Vietnam War Navy)*

birdies or **bird legs** *n* Thin, bony legs (1950s +) **See** HEAR THE BIRDIES SING

birds **See** FOR THE BIRDS, LOVEBIRDS

birds and the bees, the *n phr* The basic facts about sex and

reproduction, esp as explained to children

birdseed *n* **1** A small amount of money: *That's just birdseed* **2**

Nonsense

◁**birdshit**▷ *n* CHICKEN SHIT

birds of a feather *n phr* People who share an interest or talent: *The teacher said birds of a feather flock together* (1545 +)

◁**birdturd**▷ *n* A despicable person; PRICK, SHIT: *Suppose those birdturds come back here today* (1950s +)

bird watcher *n* A male who enjoys watching females

birdy or **birdie** *adj* Strange, possibly crazy: *acts birdy during her period*

birthday suit *n phr* What one is wearing when completely nude; the state of nakedness: *Naked as a jaybird, with nothing on over his birthday suit* (1730s +)

biscuit *n* **1** The buttocks; ASS, BUNS (1930s + *Black*) **2** A small person; PEANUT (1980s + *Students*) **3** The human head: *there's nuthin' but air in that biscuit* **See** GROUND BISCUIT

biscuit-shooter *n* A cook, esp on a ranch (1890s + *Cowboy*)

bish *n* Mistake: *Oops. Big bish* (1937 +)

bison *v* To vomit [likely a play on *yak*]

bissel (BISS əl) *n* A bit; a little: *I'd hold onto your God's little acre a bissel longer* [fr Yiddish]

bistro (BEE stroh) *n* A restaurant or cafe [1940s + ; fr French]

bit *adj* Disappointed and resentful • Perhaps the same semantics as mid-1800s *bit*, “cheated” (1970s + *Teenagers*) **n** **1** A prison sentence: *Ferrati, whose “bit” was three to seven years (1860 + Underworld)* **2** (also **bit part**) A small part in a play or other show (1900s + *Theater*) **3** A display of pretended feeling or an outright imitation; ACT, SHTICK: *So he does his hurt-puppy-dog bit/ You should see my Jimmy Cagney bit (fr theater)* **4** A person’s particular set of attitudes, reactions, behavior patterns, etc; style; lifestyle; THING: *Zen never was my real bit (1950s + Beat & cool talk)* **See** FOUR-BIT, SIX-BIT, TWO-BIT

bit banger *n phr* **1** A programmer who works out details of a computer program, rather than a subordinate or assistant programmer **2** Assembly-language programmers as distinct from applications programmers (1980s + *Computer*)

bitch *n* **1** A woman one dislikes or disapproves of, esp a malicious, devious, or heartless woman • The equivalent of the masculine *bastard* as a general term of opprobrium: *a cold-hearted bitch (1400 +)* **2** A girl: *Some boys commonly use the word “bitch” as a synonym for “girl” (1990s + Black teenagers)* **3** A waspish or insolent male homosexual (1930s + *Homosexuals*) **4** The queen of any suit in playing cards (1900 +) **5**: *What’s your bitch today? (1910 +)* **6** Anything arduous or very disagreeable: *That wind’s a bitch (1814 +)* **7** (also **biatch**, **beotch**) A person who performs tasks for another and is usually treated in a degrading manner: *I’d like you to be my bitch today* **8** Buddy; cohort **v** **1** (also **bitch and moan**) To complain; gripe; BEEF, BELLYACHE: *College students always bitch about the food (1930 +)* **2** To cheat; CHISEL: *You never tried to bitch me*

out of anything (1920s +) **3** (also **bitch up**) To ruin; mess up
(1820s +) **See** IT'S A BITCH, SON OF A BITCH

bitch box *n phr* A public-address system; SQUAWK BOX (*Armed forces fr WWII*)

bitchin' or bitchen or bitching *adj* Good; excellent; superior: A *bitchen new single from Southern California has been riding the airwaves to the max this summer/ Because of your bitchin' body, I'm going to put you on hold for a couple of days (1950s + Teenagers)* **adv** Very; extremely: *That was a bitching good party*

◁**bitch in heat**▷ *n phr* A sexually predatory woman; promiscuous woman

bitch kitty *n phr* ◁1▷ An especially disliked or disagreeable woman (1930 +) **2** An especially unpleasant or difficult task: *Taking the rusty muffler off the car was a bitch kitty (1930 +)* **3** Anything especially pleasant or admirable; HUMDINGER: *a real bitch kitty of a performance (1940s +)* **See** IT'S A BITCH

bitch of a, a, or one bitch of a *adj phr* Very remarkable, awful, admirable, distressing, etc; a HELL OF A, SOME KIND OF: *Getting the thing together was a bitch of a job/ She's wearing one sweet bitch of a dress! (1960s +)*

bitch out *v* To complain at or denigrate: *He didn't call and she bitched him out*

bitch session *n phr* **1** A meeting where complaints and grievances are voiced, esp by labor-union representatives; GRIPE SESSION **2** BULL SESSION (1960s +)

bitch slammer *n phr* A women's prison: *life in the bitch slammer for Martha*

bitchy *adj* <1> Having the traits of a bitch; mean; nasty; vindictive (1930s+) 2 Good-looking; chic; CLASSY (1930s+) 3 Sexually provocative: *two bitchy strip queens* (1920s+)

bite *n* 1 One's share of, or the amount of, a sum owed or demanded: *We owe ten thousand, so what's my bite?* (1950s+) 2 A short excerpt or film-clip shown on television news (1980s+) *v* 1 To accept a deception as truth: *She said she was rich, and he bit* 2 To borrow money from; PUT THE BITE ON: *He bit me for six bills and left town/ You think I come here to bite you for money* (1920s+ Australian) 3 To anger; annoy; vex: *She wouldn't tell me what was biting her* (1900s+) 4 (also **bite on**) To appropriate; steal; take over: *to bite a popular expression* (1980s+) 5 SUCK (1970s+ Teenagers)

bite, the *n* Expense; charge; cost; DAMAGE: *It's a good place, but the bite is fierce* (1950s+) **See** PUT THE BITE ON someone

bite someone's ass *v phr* To anger; annoy: *How the hell should I know what's biting his ass?* (1950s+)

bite someone's head off *v phr* To react angrily; JUMP DOWN someone's THROAT • **Bite someone's nose off** is attested fr 1599, and **eat someone's head off** in 1703: *Don't mention the survey or she'll bite your head off* (1850s+)

bite me *interj* (also **bite it**, **bite moose**, **bite this**) FUCK YOU, GO TO HELL (1940s+) [these are all invitations to perform fellatio on the speaker, hence to be humiliated]

◁**bite my ass**▷ *interj* KISS MY ASS (1970s +)

bite off more than one can chew *sentence* To undertake more than one can do; overreach oneself (1870s +)

bite on someone *v phr* To copy someone else, esp to dress the same way: *Her sister was always biting on her*

biter *n* **1** Someone who copies another **2** A thief: *biters made off with his pencils* **3** Teeth • Used in the plural

bite the big one *v phr* **1** To be a total failure (1970s +) **2** (also **bite the big wazoo**) To perform fellatio; SUCK (1970s +)

bite the bullet *v phr* To accept the cost of a course of action; do something painful but necessary: *Will he bite the bullet and become the leader that Philadelphia's black community wants and needs?/ The only thing John can do is bite the bullet* [1700s + Military; fr the early surgical practice of having the patient bite hard on a bullet to divert the mind from pain and prevent screaming]

bite the dust *v phr* **1** To die or be killed (*mid-1700s* +) **2** To fail; be destroyed: *The ledgers showed too much red ink, and the company bit the dust* (1940s +)

bite one's tongue *v phr* To restrain one's speech, often with difficulty: *Hillary bit her tongue when asked that* (1500s +)

bite your tongue *sentence* Retract or be ashamed of what you just said

bit-grinding *n* The processing of data into a computer (1980s + *Computer*)

bit much, a *modifier* More than necessary or in good taste: *That outfit's a bit much, don't you think?*

◁**bit (or piece) of fluff**▷ *n phr* A girl or young woman; CHIT
(1840s +)

bit part *See* BIT

bitsy *adj* Very small: *a bitsy bikini*

bit thick *modifier* Overly dramatic: *she laid it on a bit thick* (1900 +)

bitty *See* LITTLE BITTY

biz *n* Business (1860s +) *See* SHOW BIZ, THAT'S SHOW BUSINESS

bizarro *adj* Bizarre: *along comes a bizarro piece of work like Trudy/ But subsequent experts on Bizarro World cinema rejected that view*
[1970s +; fr a character *Bizarro* in the "Superman" comic strips]

BJ *n* A blow job; act of fellatio: *offered him a BJ*

BK *n* A Burger King fast-food restaurant

blab *n*: *That's stupid, pure blab* (1400 +) **v** **1** (also **blab off**) To talk on and on, without necessarily making sense (mid-1500s +) **2** (also **blab off**) To say more than one ought; esp to incriminate oneself or others; SING, SQUEAL: *The gym lady blabbed to Todd/ anyone who might have something to blab to them would not be under the influence of the target's lawyer* (mid-1500s +)

blabbermouth *n* A person who talks too much, esp one who reveals personal or secret matters indiscreetly; BIGMOUTH • *Blabmouth* is found in the mid-1920s: *The blabbermouths are likely to have the whole*

wretched truth beat out of them (mid-1930s +)

black adj 1 Secret: *The plans for the Stealth bomber were kept in the military's black budget (1960s +)* **2** Of coffee, without cream or milk

See IN THE BLACK

black and blue modifier Beat up, physically or emotionally: *black and blue from all the book editing*

black and tan adj phr Occupied or patronized by both blacks and whites; interracial; SALT AND PEPPER: *My place was black and tan, for colored and white alike [1920s + ; perhaps fr the same phrase used to describe an 1860s faction of Southern Republicans who proposed proportional representation for black and white voters]*

black and white n phr 1 A capsule of an amphetamine and a sedative, or of two amphetamines (1970s + *Narcotics*) **2** A police car: *Hanger was patrolling Interstate 35 in his black-and-white (1960s +)*

black-bag job n phr A burglary or robbery done by government agents: *In the FBI he'd never had anything to do with the famous black bag jobs/ The involvement of foreign nations or companies in corporate black-bag jobs also has soared up (1970s +)*

blackball or blacklist v To punish someone by denial of work, boycotting of products, etc • Both terms come fr the 1700s and meant "to ostracize"; the modern specialized sense appears to have developed in the labor troubles of the 1890s: *Some members of the Twilight Zone movie crew say they are being blackballed*

black book See LITTLE BLACK BOOK

black box *n phr* Secrecy; classified material; intelligence interests: *I suspected the project might involve secret military operations. "I knew there was black box involved with it"/ A highly confidential annex, placed in a black box, contains selected "raw material" [1970s + ; fr the use by British intelligence agencies of a black box for highly secret material for the prime minister and the defense and foreign secretaries]*

black-collar worker *n* A person who wears black to the exclusion of other colors: *Greek ladies are black-collar workers*

black diamonds *See* DIAMONDS

black dog, the *n phr* Melancholia; the BLUES: *The black dog's got you chewed to the bone (1820s +)*

black eye *n phr* **1** An eye surrounded with darkened areas of contusion; MOUSE, SHINER (1600s +) **2** A bad reputation; an adverse and damaging public image: *That story gave me a black eye (1880s +)*

black gang *n phr* The fireroom and boiler-room crew of a ship (1890s +)

black hat *modifier: the black-hat rustler in the horse opera n phr* **1** A villain; HEAVY: *The only way I can do that is to make you the black hat/ This time, perhaps, there are black hats on both sides* **2** The badge or symbol of a villain: *Companies have this black hat on when they go to court v: They do not try to penetrate security systems or conduct clandestine tests... "There is no black-hatting" [1970s + ; fr the Hollywood tradition that villains in western movies always wore black hats]*

black hole *n phr* A place where things mysteriously disappear • An extension of the 1960s astrophysics term for a region of such extreme gravitational attraction that not even light can escape; in some minds also perhaps evoking the *Black Hole of Calcutta*, a prison cell in which some 179 Europeans were kept in 1756, and where most died: *Bureaucracy is the great black hole of both modern capitalism and modern socialism/ Banks have found a new black hole for their customers' money: leveraged buyouts (1990s +)*

blacklist *n* A list of banned or undesirable people: *the blacklist for the event* *v* To put someone's name on a list of the banned or undesirable: *blacklisted during college* **See** BLACKBALL

Black Maria *n phr* A patrol wagon used to carry police prisoners [late 1830s + ; origin unknown]

black money (or cash) *n phr* 1 Money obtained illegally, esp by politicians and organized-crime operations, that must be "laundered" before it can be used: *Money that derives from an illegal transaction is considered "dirty" or "black" cash* 2 Income not reported for tax purposes; SKIM (1970s +)

black-on-black *adj* Committed by black people against other blacks: *Damage is now being done by crack, AIDS, and black-on-black violence (1990s +)*

black operator *n phr* A secret agent: *At the Central Intelligence Agency, he was a "black operator" who never quite made it (1980s +)*

blackout *modifier* A period during which discount or favorable prices on airlines are arbitrarily canceled: *flight from LA to NYC for*

free (depending on availability, blackout dates and routings) (1990s +)

black out *v phr* **1** To faint; lose consciousness: *He slugged me with something and I blacked out (1930s + fr Aviation)* **2** To lose one's memory of something: *He totally blacked out that evening (1930s +)* **3** To exclude an area from television coverage, esp of a sports event: *The whole region was blacked out for the final game (1980s +)*

black stuff *n phr* **1** Opium (1940s + *Narcotics*) ◀**2**▶ (also **black velvet**) A black woman or women as sex partner(s), esp for a white man; POONTANG • *Black velvet* is found in Australian and New Zealand slang in the 1890s (1960s +)

black tar *n phr* Distilled and concentrated heroin; Tootsie Roll, SHRIEK (mid-1980s +)

blade *n* **1** A knife considered as a weapon; Switchblade • This sense dates back to the early 1300s (1940s + *esp underworld*) **2** A surgeon (1970s + *Hospital*) **3** A dashing young man **4** A homosexual male *v* To skate on in-line skates: *Concerned that Mrs Onassis' son was blading on the day before her funeral (1980 +)* [verb sense a shortening of *Rollerblade*TM]

blah (also **blah-blah** or **blah-blah-blah**) *adj* **1** (also **bla**) Unstimulating; bland; featureless; dull: *makes one ponder the value of crawling out of bed on such a blah day (1919 +)* **2** Tired; mildly depressed; enervated: *fever, chills, sore throat make for an allover "blah" feeling interj* An expression of disagreement, contempt, etc; BULLSHIT (1920s +) *n* Idle and meaningless talk; falsehoods and vanities; BALONEY, BUNK: *a lot of romantic blah (1918 +)* [echoic; but

first sense said to be fr French *blasé*, “indifferent, bored”]

blah-blah *n phr* Incessant talking: *Her mother-in-law is blah-blah, blah-blah-blah*

blahly *adj* In a tedious, colorless way; insipidly: *someone whose footsteps are blahly familiar (1970s +)*

blahs, the *n phr* A condition of dullness, fatigue, malaise, etc: *The radicals are suffering from a case of the blahs (late 1960s +)*

blamed *adj* DARN (*mid-1800s +*)

blame game *n phr* The reciprocal process of assigning blame; ritual exchange of accusations: *Charles was the clear loser in the royal blame game (1990s +)*

blame shifting *n phr* A tactic to always push fault on another person: *their whole family practices blame shifting*

blank *n* A weakened or diluted narcotic, or a nonnarcotic substance sold as a narcotic; FLEA POWDER (*1970s + Narcotics*) *v* **1** To hold an opponent scoreless; SCHNEIDER, SHUT OUT, SKUNK: *The hapless Tigers were blanked twice last week (1970s + Sports)* **2** To kill; RUB OUT, WHACK: *the woman Loftus was with the night he was blanked (1980s + Underworld)* [noun sense probably fr *blank cartridge*, “a cartridge without a bullet”] *See* DRAW A BLANK, SHOOT BLANKS

blank check *See* GIVE someone A BLANK CHECK

blanket *n* **1** A pancake; hotcake (*1950s +*) **2** A cigarette paper (*1950s +*) **3** An overcoat • A shortening of *blanket overcoat*, which is attested in the early 1820s (*1940s +*) *See* BEACH BLANKET BINGO,

blanket drill *n phr* Sleep; SACK TIME (1920s + Army)

blankety-blank *adj* or *n* or *v* A generalized euphemism substituted for a taboo or vulgar term; BLEEP, BLEEPING: *You blankety-blank idiot! / Stick it up your blankety-blank* (1880s +)

blap *n* Stroke; bit: *little blaps of revelation and no affect* *v* To strike; SOCK: *continually blapped about the head and shoulders with pig bladders wielded by clowns* [1960s +; echoic]

blast (or **blast it**) *interj* An exclamation of dismay, irritation, frustration, etc; an imprecation • (1630s +) *n* **1** A blow; SOCK: *a blast in the kisser* (1950s +) **2** In baseball, a long or strong hit, esp a home run (1950s +) **3**: *He figures the opposition's blast won't hurt him* (1940s +) **4** A single dose or portion of a narcotic or other stimulant; BELT, FIX: *Maybe it's a little early in the day for that first blast* (1950s + Narcotics) **5** A thrill; a transport of pleasure; CHARGE, KICK: *Meeting her was a blast* (1960s +) **6** A noisy and jolly party or other especially exciting occasion; BALL (1950s +) **7** Anything good or admirable; GASSER (1970s +) *v* **1** To hit: *She blasted him in the gut* (1950s +) **2** To shoot: *They blasted him with a sawed-off shotgun* (1920s +) **3**: *So the Babe blasts it right out of there* (1950s +) **4** To attack, esp with strong verbal condemnation: *He blasted the Secretary for saying that* (1940s +) **5** To defeat utterly; trounce; CLOBBER (1960s +) **6** (also **blast off**) To leave; BOOK, PEEL OUT, SPLIT: *He got in the Porsche and blasted out of there* (1930s +) **7** To take narcotics, esp to smoke marijuana; use: *start blasting opium from a water pipe* (1930s + Narcotics) *See* BEER BLAST, FULL BLAST

blasted *adj* and *adv* **1** DARN (late 1680s +) **2** Intoxicated by drugs or alcohol; STONED (1940s +)

blast from the past *n phr* GOLDEN OLDIE (1960 +)

blastissimo *adj* and *adv* Very, very loud; fortississimo: *You ought not to sing the berceuse blastissimo* [Musicians 1970s + ; modeled on *fortissimo*]

blast off *v phr* To ignite rockets and rise from the launchpad: *The shuttle blasted off cleanly* (1950s + Aerospace)

blather *n* Noisy nonsense; BULLSHIT (1780s +)

blaxploitation *modifier*: Most of the blaxploitation films have been shoddy ripoffs **n** The commercial exploitation of putative black experience, esp in films with blacks in sensational heroic roles of police officers, criminals, gamblers, etc [1970s + ; blend of *black* and *exploitation*]

blaze *v* **1** To speed; rush; BARREL: *She blazed around in it like Chuck Yeager, but it scared me half to death* (1980s +) **2** To leave; BOOK, SPLIT (1980s + Teenagers) **3** To set alight, esp a marijuana cigarette **See** LETS BOOGIE

blaze away *v phr* To shoot at, either literally or figuratively: *The cops blazed away at the villains/ The candidates blazed away on television and radio* (1770s +)

blazes **See** BLUE BLAZES

blazes, as or as hell or <as shit> *adv phr* To a very great degree; TO THE MAX: *the life now is hard as blazes/ cold as hell/ tough as shit* (first

form 1830s +)

blazing *adj* Seductive in dress and action; FRONTIN', HOT (1990s + *Black teenagers*)

bleached blonde *See* CHEMICAL BLONDE

blech (BLEKH or BLECH) *interj* An exclamation of disgust, revulsion, etc: *The House Democratic Caucus launched its response to Reaganomics: "BLECH!"* [1960s + ; perhaps fr the use of the term to lampoon Breck™ shampoo in a joke advertisement in *Mad* magazine]

bleed *v* To take someone's money by overcharging or extortion: *His creditors bled him to death* (1680s +)

bleeder *n* 1 A lucky or weak base hit; BLOOPER, TEXAS LEAGUER (1930s + *Baseball*) 2 A hemophiliac (1800 +)

bleed for someone *v* To feel sympathy for: *bleed for him, but that's all I can do*

bleeding heart *modifier*: a bleeding-heart wimpy liberal *n phr* A person regarded as unduly softhearted, esp towards idlers who do not merit sympathy • Very commonly used by the politically conservative to condemn the politically liberal [1950s + ; fr religious pictures showing the *bleeding heart* of Jesus]

bleed someone white or dry *v phr* To take all of someone's money, esp by extortion; exact everything: *It looks like they were bled white and dumped*

bleep or **bleeping** or **blipping** *adj* or *n* or *v* A generalized

euphemism substituted for a taboo or vulgar term; BLANKETY-BLANK:
*your bleeping black ass/ They're a bunch of arrogant bleeps who think
their stuff doesn't stink/ The movie ain't no blipping good* [1970s + ; fr
the practice of erasing objectionable material on a tape or in a
soundtrack with a high-pitched sound called echoically a *bleep*]

bletcherous *adj* Disgusting; nasty; ugly: *The whole design is
bletcherous* [1980s + Computer; fr *bletch* or *blecch*, a comic-book
expression of disgust similar to *yuck*]

blimey *interj* An expression of surprise or excitement: *Blimey! What a
ride!* [1889; contraction of (*God*) *blind me*]

blimp *n* An obese person [1940s + ; fr the WWI term for a nonrigid
dirigible, based on *limp*]

blimp out *v* Eat too much: *Let's blimp out on Dairy Queen*

blind *adj* **1** Very drunk; BLIND DRUNK, SNOCKERED, ZONKED (1630s +) **2**
Uncircumcised (1920s + *Homosexuals*) *adv* Completely; COLD • Most
common in the expression *rob someone blind: Goddam car was
eating me blind* (1900s + *esp students*) *See* STEAL SOMEONE BLIND

blind date *n phr* **1** An arranged appointment for a show, dance, etc,
where one's partner is a previously unknown person, usu the friend
of a friend **2** One's partner on such an occasion (1920s + *esp
students*)

blind drunk or **blinded** *adj phr* or *adj* Very drunk (1840 +)

blind pig (or **tiger**) *n phr* An unlicensed or illegal saloon; SPEAKEASY
(mid-1880s +)

blind-side (also **blind-pop**) **v** **1** To tackle or block someone from an unseen quarter: *have to worry about gettin' blind-popped from a corner blitz* **2** To be burdened or attacked unexpectedly: *Businessmen began to be blind-sided by enormous legal bills/ The state will be coming back sometime in the future to blind-side us (1960s + Football)*

blind tiger **n phr** BLIND PIG, SPEAKEASY [1850s + ; in order to evade liquor laws, the originator posted a sign by a hole in the wall “*Blind Tiger, ten cents a sight,*” and passed out a glass of whiskey when given a dime]

bling-bling **n** Jewelry, often gaudy or ostentatious: *keep trying to find some bling-bling for my right hand* [1990s + ; fr the sound it makes]

blinger (BLING əɾ) **n** Something remarkable, wonderful, superior, etc; HUMDINGER: *real blingers going through to the phase of secondary infection* [1900 + ; fr *bling*, “ring,” perhaps referring to ringing the bell in some carnival contest]

blink **v** To blink one’s eyes in a face-to-face confrontation, a sign of weakness; BACK DOWN: *NBC Entertainment President thinks ABC has blinked (mid-1980s +)* **See** ON THE BLINK

blinkers **n** The eyes (1816 +)

blinking modifier *Fucking: I hate the whole blinking lot of them • Euphemistic substitute for a strong expletive (1914 +)*

blip **adj** **1** Excellent; very good (1930s + *Jive talk*) **2** HIP (1950s + *Cool talk*) **n** **1** A luminous signal on a radar screen: *Birds can cause blips on radar screens (1940s +)* **2** A rapid increase and decrease;

quick peaking: *The bond bulls argue that commodities' rally is a blip/ despite temporary blips up and down (1980s +)* **v 1** To encroach upon, as one aircraft's image on a radar screen might enter the territory of another aircraft: *Cartridge-makers blip into Atari's airspace, attracted by the enormous profit potential (1980s +)* **2** To censor a taped word or passage by erasing it electronically from the tape and substituting a "bleep": *Occasionally Mr Carson's lines are "blipped" (1960s +)* [most senses fr earlier *blip*, "a sharp blow or twitch"]

blip (or ping) jockey n phr A person who monitors electronic detection devices (1970s+ *Armed forces*)

blip someone off v phr To kill, esp by shooting: *If he blipped Beno off, he knows me (1920s+ Underworld)*

blipping *See* BLEEP

blissed or bliss out v phr To become ecstatic; go into a mystic daze, esp under the influence of a guru: *Misty was blissed and became Dusty's instant lifelong fan/ Don't get high, don't space out, don't get blissed out (1970s +)*

blissed-out adj phr In a state of exaltation or complete contentment: *blissed-out young pilgrims/ lives a blissed-out life with Sue (1970s +)* **2** Intoxicated: *more than blissed-out*

bliss ninny n phr A person ecstatic to the point of seeming idiocy (1970s +)

blissout n A state of exaltation or ecstasy; mystic daze (1970s +)

blister *n* **1** An annoying person without whom one could do nicely: *He's not quite a jerk, just a blister (1800s +)* **2** A prostitute (*mid-1800s +*) **3** A bubble-shaped transparent covering on an aircraft cockpit, roof opening, etc (*1940s +*)

blithering *adj* Senseless or incoherent: *blithering idiot (1889 +)*

blitz¹ *v* To absent oneself from a class or examination; CUT, SHINE
(*Students around 1900 +*)

blitz² *v* To polish one's brass buttons, etc; prepare for inspection
[WWII armed forces; fr *Blitz Cloth*, trademark for a brand of metal-polishing cloth]

blitz³ *n* **1** Any heavy onslaught or attack: *His best strategy was a blitz of TV spots just before the election (1940s +)* **2** An electronic-mail (e-mail) message (*1990s +*) **3** A chess game that must be played within ten minutes (*1990s +*) *v* **1** To defeat without being scored upon; BLANK, SHUT OUT: *They blitzed the Mariners 12-zip (1970s +)* **2** To rush the quarterback in force, hoping to prevent him from completing a pass (*1960s + Football*) **3**: *We blitzed her with questions (1940s +)* [fr German *Blitzkrieg*, "lightning war," an overwhelmingly heavy and rapid attack, using tanks and other armor, bombers, etc]

blitzed (also **blitzed out**) *adj* **1** Drunk: *Where are they going to find room in overcrowded jails for a blitzed driver?/ We were pretty blitzed out by the time Lee walked in (1960s + College students)* **2** Completely exhausted; WIPED OUT (*1970s +*) [probably fr *blitz*³, perhaps influenced by *bliss out*]

blivit *n* Anything superfluous or annoying • Examples like the one following, though differing in the number of pounds, were ordinarily given as an explanation of the word, and the explanation was the fun: *Gerber's confession was what Keisman called a "blivit," four pounds of shit in a two-pound bag (WWII armed forces)*

blizzy *n* A marijuana cigarette

bloated *adj* Drunk (1920s +)

blob *n* **1** A mistake (1900 + *Students*) **2** A mass of viscous matter; an amorphous portion; GOB (1700s +) **3** A useless person; an oaf or wimp: *she is such a blob after work/ blobs into video games* **4** A very overweight person: *Get that blob off my couch* *v*: *He blobbed the second question*

block *adj* Stupid (1980s + *Students*) *n* The head (1630s +) **See** GAPER'S BLOCK, KNOCK someone'S BLOCK OFF, NEW KID ON THE BLOCK

blockbust *v* To persuade white property owners to sell their houses quickly by arousing a fear that blacks are moving into the neighborhood (1960s +)

blockbuster¹ *n* A great success; a lavish and popular film, show, etc: *A gangster movie can be a box-office blockbuster* [1950s +; fr the large high-explosive aerial bombs of World War II called *blockbusters*]

blockbuster² *n* A real-estate dealer who blockbusts (1960s +)

blockhead *n* A stupid person; KLUTZ: *No man but a blockhead ever wrote except for money* [mid-1500s +; that is, a *head* no more intelligent

than the *block* on which hats are made]

blogging *n* The creation of an online diary; a personal chronological log of thoughts published on a Web page: *blogging takes up much of his time (1998+)*

bloke¹ *n* A man; fellow; GUY • Chiefly British use: *Look at the bloke ridin'* [mid-1800s+; perhaps fr Celtic *ploc*, “large stubborn person”]

bloke² *n* Cocaine [narcotics 1970s+; probably echoic *blow*]

blonde and sweet *n phr* Coffee with sugar and cream (*WWII Navy*)

blond(e) moment *n phr* A lapse in one’s train of thought; an instance of acting dumb or scatterbrained: *I was having a blond moment* [fr the stereotype that blondes have less-than-average intelligence]

blood *n* **1** A fashionable and popular man: *crew cut like the college blood (1900s+ College students)* **2** A fellow black; BLOOD BROTHER: *Us cats, well, we was all bloods (Black)* *See* MAKE one’S BLOOD BOIL, SMELL BLOOD, TOO RICH FOR someone’S BLOOD

blood and guts *n phr* Great vigor, violence, or fierceness; acrimony • Can be adjective, which is hyphenated: *their arguments are blood and guts*

blood brother *n phr* A fellow black; BLOOD (1960+ *Black*)

blood chit *n phr* A cloth badge that identifies a military aviator as American and promises a reward for aiding him: *Seven crew members survived. One of them produced a “blood chit” (Korean War*

armed forces)

blood on the floor *n phr* The emotional residue of an intense struggle: *Women in the upper ranks of big companies are making it, but there's blood on the floor/ I don't know if there's blood on the floor after Clinton's NAFTA victory, but Democrats will reunite (1990s +)*

bloody (or blue) murder *adv phr* As if announcing general slaughter and universal destruction: *screaming blue murder on the arms of their seats (1850s +)* *n phr* A shattering defeat; total destruction: *After the second quarter it was bloody murder (1970 +)* **See** YELL BLOODY MURDER

bloody well *modifier* Certainly; definitely: *You know bloody well that I hate her (1921 +)*

blooey **See** GO BLOOEY

bloom *n* A glare from some white object in a television image; Womp (*Television studio*)

bloomer *n* A blunder; BONER, GOOF: *a "bloomer" by Truman and Marshall about a grave that was not there/ This dictionary, I'm afraid, is scarcely free of bloomers [Australian 1880s +; fr the phrase "a blooming error"]*

blooming *adj* and *adv* DARN • Chiefly British use [1880s +; fr the notion of full-blown or-bloomed]

blood *n* An unwanted sound in a recording (1930 +) **v** 1 To hit a ball relatively weakly and slowly: *He blooded a lob over her head (1940s + Baseball)* 2 To launch and land a long, curving blow: *Turner blooded a bolo to the heart (1950s +)*

blooper *n* 1 A blow with the fist, esp a long, looping punch: *So I could hang a blooper on your kisser* 2 A high, looping pitch, throw, or hit: *I poked an easy blooper over third (Baseball)* 3 A blunder; BONER, BOO-BOO: *He may have felt he pulled a blooper*

blot someone out *v* To kill someone: *They blot someone out every 10 minutes on that show*

blotter *n* 1 The daily record of arrests at a police station (1880s + *Police*) 2 (also **blotter acid**) A sheet of absorbent paper to which liquid LSD has been applied and then allowed to dry (1970s + *Narcotics*)

blotto *adj* Drunk: *The drivers who are blotto (1900s +)*

bloviate *v* To talk loudly and bombastically; BLOW OFF one's MOUTH, TALK BIG • This appears to be a revival of old frontier tall-talk coinage: *Just more bloviating by the Senator about cutting the budget/ Limbaugh chortles, crows, bloviates and denounces [mid-1800s + ; fr blow made into a fancy word by adding the suffix]*

blow *n* 1 To do or perform something, esp to do it well: *He blows great conversation (1950s + Beat & cool talk)* 2 Cocaine: *OK, he gets busted for blow eight times/ Hell, half the people doing blow are reacting to the cut (1960s + Narcotics)* *v* 1 To play a musical instrument, esp in jazz style and not necessarily a wind instrument: *There will be three kids blowing guitar, banjo, and washboard/ This music is the culmination of all my writing and blowing (1900s + Jazz musicians)* ◁2▷ To do fellatio or cunnilingus; SUCK OFF (1930s +) ◁3▷ To be disgusting, nasty, worthless, etc; BITE, SUCK: *This blows and*

you do too (1970s +) **4** To treat someone to something; buy something expensive or unusual for someone: *I blew myself to a new pair of shoes* (1870s +) **5** (also **blow** something **in**) To spend money, esp foolishly and all at once: *The state blew my money buying votes for Roosevelt/ And blow it in on smokes* (1890s +) **6** To take a narcotic, esp but not necessarily by inhalation: *Jimi blew every kind of dope invented/ I don't know how you can blow dust and eat* (1920 +) **7** To smoke marijuana; **BLOW SMOKE**: *He enjoys sex; he does not blow grass* (1960s + *Narcotics*) **8** To leave; depart; **SPLIT**: *I'm blowing, I got a job in Detroit* (1902 +) **9** To lose or ruin something by mistake, inattention, incompetence, etc; **BLOW IT**: *I blew the best chance I ever had* (1920 +) **10** To forget or botch one's part in a show (1920s + *Theater*) **11** **BLOW OFF** **12** To inform against someone; **SING** (1840s +) **13** To expose or publicize something secret, esp something scandalous: *Treat me right or I'll blow it about the love nest* (late 1500s +) **14** To lose one's temper; **BLOW** one's **TOP** (1900s +) **15** (also **blow off**) To brag; **TOOT** one's **OWN HORN** (1400 +) **16** To sing, esp to sing well (1980s + *College students*) **See** **BLOW** someone **AWAY**, **BLOW** one's **COOL**, **BLOW** someone's or something's **COVER**, **BLOW** someone's **MIND**, **BLOW OFF** one's **MOUTH**, **BLOW THE GAFF**, **BLOW THE LID OFF**, **BLOW THE WHISTLE**, **BLOW UP**, **BLOW UP A STORM**, **BLOW** something **WIDE OPEN**, **LET OFF STEAM**, **LOW BLOW**, **ONE-TWO**

Blow See **JOE BLOW**

blow a fix v phr To lose the effect of a narcotic injection by missing the vein (1960s + *Narcotics*)

blow a gasket v phr (Variations: **fuse** or **gut** may replace **gasket**) To lose one's temper, esp to the point of insanity; **BLOW** one's **TOP**: *The*

higher-ups blew a gasket when they heard/ He wants more than she will give and he blows a gasket/ If Barbara sees a subpoena notice, she'll blow a gut (1940s +)

blow away v phr To depart; BLOW, TAKE OFF (1950s +)

blow someone away v phr **1** To kill; assassinate; get rid of; OFF: *and boom, Jack Blumenfeld gets blown away (1900s +)* **2** To defeat utterly; trounce; CLOBBER: *And they blew away some of the best long-distance runners in the world* **3** To overcome, often with admiration; FRACTURE: *I read the book and it blew me away/ The cow connection just blew us away*

blow someone's brains out v phr To kill someone with a gun: *don't like movies where they blow someone's brains out*

blow by or past v phr To pitch a ball so hard and fast that the batter cannot hit it: *He blew it right by the slugger (1950s + Baseball)*

blow by blow adj: a blow-by-blow account **adv phr** In a complete and detailed way: *I'll tell you what happened blow by blow (1930s +)*

blow chunks v phr (Variations: **chow** or **cookies** or **grits** or **groceries** or **lunch** may replace **chunks**, and **lose** can replace **blow**) To vomit; BARF, TOSS one's COOKIES (1980s + *College students*)

blow cold v To show disinterest: *blows cold to his new ideas*

blow one's cool v phr To lose one's composure; become flustered, excited, or angry: *I always blow my cool when they honk at me (1960s + Counterculture)*

blow one's cork See BLOW one's TOP

blow someone's or something's **cover v phr 1** To ruin or nullify one's disguise or assumed role; reveal one's true identity: *The undercover cop had to blow his cover by pulling his gun when he thought they might have spotted him/ She called out my name, which blew my cover* **2** To reveal something, esp inadvertently or mischievously: *I'm not blowing the movie's cover story by giving you this information (1970s + Espionage & police)*

blow someone's **doors off v phr** To utterly defeat or surpass someone: *She blows the doors off the other lexicographers*

blower n A supercharger for a car or airplane engine; HUFFER (1920 +)
See MIND-BLOWER

blowhard n 1 A braggart; self-aggrandizer: *His reach often does exceed his grasp, in a town of blowhards* **2** An insistent and aggressive talker (1820s +)

blow hot and cold v phr To be indecisive; dither (1570s +)

blow in v phr 1 To arrive and enter, esp from a distance: *Look who just blew in from Sri Lanka (1890s +)* **2** To spend recklessly; squander: *He blew his whole month's pay in on that one pair of shoes (1880s +)*

blow something **in See** BLOW

blowing See MIND-BLOWING

blow it v phr To fail; make a botch; ruin one's chances: *We are winning. If we don't blow it/ I think I blew it. I talked too much and said too little (1920 +)*

blow it off *v phr* To fail to deal with or attend to something; neglect something deliberately: *He felt sort of blah, so he decided to blow it off and skip his morning classes (1970s + College students)*

blow it out *interj* (Variations: **your ass** or **your asshole** or **your B-bag** or **your barracks bag** or **your ear** or **your tailpipe** may be added) A generalized exclamation of contempt, anger, incredulity, etc • Most often uttered in challenge or rebuke (*WWII armed forces*)

◁**blow job**▷ *n phr* An act of fellatio or of cunnilingus: *whether a blow job from a married woman is the same as committing adultery [origin unknown; perhaps fr the use of the mouth]*

blow one's lines *v phr* To perform badly, esp by misspeaking: *Before the week was out he had blown his lines as President, and perhaps blown the Democratic Party out of office (1970s + Theater)*

blow someone's mind *v phr* To evoke deep feelings of awe, admiration, strangeness, etc; stir one profoundly: *The simplicity of the thing blew my mind (Narcotics & 1960s + counterculture)*

blown *adj* Having a supercharger: *a blown engine (1950s + Hot rodders)*

blown away *adj* Overwhelmed; extremely impressed: *We were blown away by her beauty*

blown-out *adj* In a state of narcotic intoxication, trance, or exhilaration; HIGH, STONED (*1960s + Narcotics*)

blowoff *n* **1** A climax; a final provocation: *She said I was late, and that was the blowoff (1900s +)* **2** A quarrel: *She and Hobart have had a*

big blowoff (1900s +) **3** Something very easy; PIECE OF CAKE (1970s + Teenagers)

blow off v phr To avoid or shirk; not attend or attend to; ignore: *I'm not going to tell you to blow off any standing-room-only events/ It was just something he was going through, so we blew it off* (1960s +)

blow someone off v phr To rebuff; slight; treat dismissively: *Before you blow them off with a snotty comment, examine yourself/ Mike blows off Sharon Stone* (1990s +)

blow off one's mouth or blow one's mouth off v phr (Variations: **trap** or **yap** may replace **mouth**) SHOOT OFF one's MOUTH (late 1800s +)

blow off steam See LET OFF STEAM

blowout n 1 A noisy, festive occasion; SHINDIG, WINGDING (1820s +) **2** An explosive rupture of a car tire (1900s +) **3** A massive defeat; LAUGHTER (1980s +)

blow someone out v phr To kill or destroy; BLOW someone AWAY: *The Redskins got blown out* (1860s +)

blow someone out of the water v phr 1 To defeat utterly; SHOOT someone DOWN IN FLAMES: *Are you afraid of being blown out of the water?/ Bradlee "blew him (Tavoulaareas) out of the water"* (1960s +) **2** To astonish utterly; KNOCK one's SOCKS OFF: *These kids just blow you out of the water with the work they've done* (1990s +)

blow one's own horn See TOOT one's OWN HORN

blow smoke v phr 1 To boast; brag; exaggerate: *cops sitting around drinking, blowing smoke, and kidding* (1940s +) **2** (also **blow smoke**

up someone's **ass** or **blow heat**) To mislead; confuse; deceive:
Anybody who tells you different's just blowing smoke up your ass
(1940s +) **3** To flatter; SWEET-TALK: *Do you mean it, or are you just blowing smoke?* (1940s +) **4** To smoke marijuana or hashish:
Everybody blew smoke there. You could buy hash (1930s +) [fr both the presumed effects of smoking opium and the confusing and concealing effect of making a smokescreen]

blow someone's **socks off** **See** KNOCK someone's SOCKS OFF

blow the gaff v phr To inform on someone; SING: *didn't mind if I blew the gaff on this "common practice"* [Underworld 1800s +; to reveal the concealed cheating mechanism of a carnival game]

blow the joint n phr To leave the place; get out, esp in a hurry: *blow the joint after running out of money*

blow the lid off v phr To expose a scandal, esp political or governmental corruption (1920s +)

blow the whistle v phr 1 To inform; SING: *She hadn't been Dutch Schultz's wife for four years not to know the penalty for blowing the whistle/ How come you're blowing the whistle?* (1940s + Underworld)
2 To expose or begin to resist wrongdoing: *The detective who blew the whistle was also transferred* (1950s +) [fr the *whistle* once used by police officers to signal "Stop!"; influenced by the signal of a sports official that an infraction, foul, etc, has been committed]

blow someone **to** something **v phr** To treat someone to something:
Let me blow you to dinner (late 1800s +)

blow one's **top** (Variations: **cork** or **lid** or **topper** or **stack** or **wig**)

may replace **top**) **v 1** To go insane; become violently mad **2** To become wildly excited or enthusiastic: *Here's an idea'll make you blow your cork* **3** To become violently excited by narcotics; FLIP, FREAK OUT **4** To become violently and suddenly angry; have a tantrum: *a "quiet, mild-mannered man" who "blew his lid"* [entry form 1920s+; perhaps fr the violence of an oil well that *blows* as a gusher]

blow town v phr To get out of town, esp in a hurry: *after the robbery, blow town*

blowup n 1 A fit of anger (1800s+) **2** A quarrel; violent rift between persons (1800s+) **3** A photographic or other enlargement: *He already has a blowup of your proverb on a wall of his breakfast room* (1930s+)

blow up v phr 1 To enlarge a photograph (1930s+) **2** BLOW one's TOP **3** BLOW one's COOL **4** To forget or garble one's lines on stage; BALLOON: *Barrymore "blew up" in his lines* (1900s+ Theater)

blow something up v phr To assign too much importance to; exaggerate; MAKE A FEDERAL CASE OUT OF something, PUMP UP: *He'll blow it up into a world-class scandal* (1970s+)

blow up a storm v phr 1 To play, esp jazz trumpet, cornet, clarinet, etc, with great skill and verve: *He was blowing up a storm* (1930s+ Jazz musicians) **2** PISS UP A STORM

blow something wide open v phr To expose a scandal, esp political or governmental corruption; BLOW THE LID OFF: *That'll be the perfect time to blow this thing wide open* (1970s+)

blow (or cut) Zs v phr To sleep; SACK OUT [Armed forces 1970s+; Z, “snore,” is attested from the 1920s]

BLT (pronounced as separate letters) **n** A bacon, lettuce, and tomato sandwich: *the Lodge where MTV V.J.’s get B.L.T.’s A.S.A.P. (1950s+)*

blubber n Fat; AVOIRDUPOIS (1700s+) **v** To weep; snivel (1300s+)

◁**blubber butt**▷ **n phr** A very fat person, esp one with big buttocks; BUFFALO BUTT, FAT-ASS: *We can’t have blubber butts like her on the payroll (1950s+)*

blubberhead n A stupid person; FATHEAD (1870s+)

blue adj **1** Drunk: *When you were blue you got the howling horrors (1800s+)* **2** Lewd; rude; suggestive; DIRTY • The term covers the range from obscene to slightly risqué: *Blue humor has long been a staple of black audiences (1840+)* **3** Melancholy; depressed; woeful: *I feel a little blue and blah this morning (1500s+)* **n** ◁**1**▷ A very dark-skinned black person (1920s+) **2** A police officer: *By the time the first blues got there, there’s like maybe ten people milling about (1860s+)* **3** An IBM™ computer (1980+ *Computer*) **4** A blue drug or pill, esp an amphetamine or Valium™ **See** HEAVENLY BLUE

blue-and-white n A police car, esp in New York City; BLACK-AND-WHITE: *those blue-and-whites rolling slowly up and down in front of her house (1970s+)*

blue around the gills See GREEN AROUND THE GILLS

◁**blue-ball**▷ **n** A sexually frustrated male: *he and a fellow blue-ball did things to each other that they wanted the girls to do to them*

(1970s +)

◁**blue balls**▷ **n phr** **1** A turgid and painful condition of the testicles due to sexual excitement and frustration: *Sex will relieve testicular congestion, or blue balls* (1900s +) **2** Any of various venereal diseases, esp gonorrhea or lymphogranuloma inguinale (1930s +)

blue blanket n phr A personal possession that gives a sense of safety;
SECURITY BLANKET: *I like my stick closer to me; it's my blue blanket*
(1970s +)

blue blazes adv phr Like hell: *lying blue blazes n phr* Hell: *What in blue blazes are you up to?* [1800s +; fr the sulfurous *blue blazes* of hell, an extreme environment]

blue bomb or bomber n phr A tablet of Halcion™, a sleeping pill:
"Time for a blue bomb," he announces before naps (1980s +)

bluebook n A college examination: *I'm cramming for a bluebook in Econ* [College students 1890s +; fr the color of the examination booklet]

blue box n phr An electronic device enabling one to make long-distance telephone calls without paying: *the alleged use of an electronic "blue box" to avoid telephone tolls* (1970s + *College students*)

blue cheer n phr LSD [1960s + *Narcotics*; fr *Blue Cheer*™ laundry soap]

blue-chip adj Of the best sort; first-rate: *a blue-chip stock/ a blue-chip school* (1920s +) [fr the color of the highest denomination of

gambling chip]

blue chipper *n phr* A person or thing of the highest quality, ability, etc, esp an athlete: *But the crop does not contain many blue chippers/ He did not necessarily appear to major colleges as a blue-chipper (1970s +)*

bluecoat *n* A police officer: *He told the damn bluecoat he'd punch him all over the corner (1870s +)*

blue-collar *modifier* Working-class: *a blue-collar neighborhood/ blue-collar concerns [1940s +; fr the color of the traditional workshirt]*

blue-collar ballet *n phr* Professional wrestling (1990s +)

blued *See* SCREWED, BLUEED, AND TATTOOED

blue darter *n phr* A low, hard-hit line drive: *A hard line drive is a blue darter, frozen rope, or an ungodly shot (1940s + Baseball)*

blue-devil *See* BLUE HEAVEN

blue devils *n* 1 Low spirits; depression: *blue devils after giving birth* 2 Delirium tremens

Blue Dog *n phr* An economic conservative in the Democratic Party: *GOP leaders are courting a group of 21 House Democrats, the self-proclaimed Blue Dogs (1990s +)*

blue-eyed *adj* Innocent: *all blue-eyed about it*

blue-eyed boy *See* FAIR-HAIRED BOY

blue-eyed soul *n phr* Black music with its style and mannerisms, as performed by white musicians: *Boz came on like an inspired amateur*

of blue-eyed soul/ a composer devoted to extending the chromatic vocabulary of blue-eyed soul (1970s + Musicians)

blue flags *n phr* LSD (1970s + Narcotics)

blue flick *See* BLUE MOVIE

blue flu *n phr* A mythical disease epidemic during a police job action when numbers of officers telephone to say that they are ill; SICK-OUT (1960s +)

blue funk *n phr* **1** A profoundly timorous or nervous state **2** A profoundly depressed state (1860s + British)

bluegrass modifier: *the bluegrass sound/ bluegrass mandolin by Bob Applebaum* *n* Music based on the songs and dances of the Southern Appalachians and played usu at a fast tempo by a string group [fr the nickname of Kentucky, the *Bluegrass State*]

blue-hair *n* An old woman; WRINKLY: *One old blue-hair even struggled up the steps with her walker* [1980s + ; fr the *blue hair* tint of those who use a blue haircolor rinse on gray or white hair]

blue heaven or **blue-devil** *n phr* or *n* A capsule of Amytal™, a type of barbiturate [1950s + Narcotics; perhaps fr a 1920s popular song “My Blue Heaven”]

blue hell *n phr* An extremely nasty and trying situation; UNSHIRTED HELL • *Blue* here is almost an intensifier, although it carries the infernal suggestions of *blue blazes*: *It was more than tough, it was blue hell* (1970s +)

blue ice *n phr* Wastewater discharged from aircraft in flight, which

freezes on the way to the ground [Airlines 1990s + ; fr the *blue* toilet disinfectant used]

blue in the face *See* TILL ONE IS BLUE IN THE FACE

blue-light special *n phr* A bargain; a good buy; STEAL: *Paramount may look like a blue-light special in five years* [1980s + ; fr the marking by a *blue light* of a particular bargain or discount in Kmart stores]

blue meanie or **meany** *n phr* **1** A very nasty person; BASTARD: *It's not that all landlords are blue meanies* **2** Depression; melancholy; BLUE FUNK, the BLUES [1960s + ; fr cartoon characters in the 1968 film *The Yellow Submarine* of the English rock group the Beatles]

blue movie (or **flick**) *n phr* A pornographic movie; erotic film; SKIN FLICK (1960s +)

blue murder *See* BLOODY MURDER

bluenose *n* A prude; prig; self-appointed moral arbiter: *The moral bluenoses were sniffing around* (1920s +)

Bluenose *n* A native of Nova Scotia, esp a Maritimes fisherman [1830s + ; fr the color of a very cold nose]

blue note *n phr* A flatted note of the sort common in blues music (1890s + *Musicians*)

blue ruin *n phr* Inferior gin (1800s + *British*)

blues, the *n phr* **1** A state of melancholy; depression (1830s +) **2** A usu slow style of singing, guitar-playing, and jazz originally reflecting in its melancholy and resignation the special plight of black people and the general vicissitudes of life and love; esp songs

having in each stanza a repeated opening statement and single closing statement (1912+) **3** The police (*mid-1800s+*) [first sense ultimately fr late 1700s term *the blue devils*, “a fit of melancholy”]

blue screen of death *n phr* A fatal-error message that occurs in Windows operating systems, a blue screen that interrupts the computer’s normal boot-up, indicating a fatal error in the operating system (1991+)

blue-sky *adj* Having no sound factual or value basis; recklessly imaginative: *a budget figure, as it turned out, and a blue-sky one at that* [1900+ Finance; perhaps fr the purveyor’s fanciful description being as appealing and unclouded as the wide *blue sky*]

blue sky *n phr* **1** Speculation; guesswork: *That may sound great, but it’s just blue sky* (1980s+) **2** Heroin: *ex-psychiatric case from Bellevue with a minor in blue sky and toot* (1980s+ *Narcotics*) **v phr** To hold a brainstorming session with no limit on the strangeness of the ideas proposed (1980s+)

blue state *n* Any US state that tends to vote for candidates of the Democratic party in a general election: *the blue state conservatives* (2000+)

blue streak, a *adv phr* (also like a **blue streak**) In a very rapid or excessive manner; extravagantly: *she talked a blue streak/ he split out like a blue streak* **n phr** An extreme amount, speed, etc: *He yelled a blue streak/ We ran a blue streak* [1890s+; fr the *blue streak* of a lightning bolt]

◁**blue veiner**▷ *n phr* A very stiff penile erection: *Even the Dragon*

Lady couldn't have given you a blue veiner (1970s +)

blue velvet *n phr* A mixture of paregoric with Pyrabenzamine™, an antihistamine, used as an injection (1960s + *Narcotics*)

bluff *n*: **His courage was all bluff** • A noun sense fr 1849 is “an excuse” (1870s +) *v* To use confident pretense as a means of winning or succeeding • The 1674 definition is “to blindfold or hoodwink”; the game of poker was originally known as *bluff* (1670s +) [perhaps related to, though not derived fr, a late 1700s *bluff*, “a blindfold or blinker for a horse”] **See** CALL someone's BLUFF

blunt *n* A cigar hollowed out and filled with marijuana [1980s + *Narcotics*; fr the *Phillies Blunt*™ cigars eponymously used]

blurb *n* A statement in praise of something or somebody; esp an encomious passage from a book or theater review, used as advertising [1910 +; said to have been coined by Gelett Burgess (1866-1951), US humorist and illustrator; also attributed to Brander Matthews (1852-1929), US scholar and critic]

BM (pronounced as separate letters) *n* A bowel movement • Mainly a euphemism used with children

BMO (pronounced as separate letters) *n* An Arab woman [1990s + Gulf War Army; fr *black moving object*, describing the shrouded appearance of such women]

BMO (pronounced as separate letters) *n phr* A college-student leader or idol [1930s +; fr *big man on campus*]

B movie *n phr* A usu low-budget movie intended for the broad

middle ground of taste and meant to be primarily entertaining and narrative rather than serious, artistic, etc [1930s+; fr their being the second movie in a double feature]

BMX (pronounced as separate letters) *n* Cross-country bicycle racing [1980s+; fr *bicycle motocross*, fr *motocross*, “cross-country motorcycle racing over a laidout course,” fr French *moto*, “motorcycle,” and English *cross*, “cross-country”]

BO¹ (pronounced as separate letters) *n* Body odor, esp from underarm perspiration • Popularized by extensive use in ads for Lifebuoy™ soap (1930s+)

BO² *adj* Theatrical appeal: *The show is really big BO* *n* Box office, the gauge of how well a show is doing by its receipts (1930s+ *Show business*)

board *n* **1** A ticket to a show or game; PASTEBOARD (1950s+ *Show business*) **2** A rebound, the catching of a ball that bounces off the backboard or the basket: *We did a heck of a job on Shaq. He had 10 boards* (1990s+ *Basketball*) *v*: *If we rebound, we’ve got a chance. If we don’t board, we can hang it up* **See** ACROSS THE BOARD, IDIOT CARD, SANDWICH BOARD, TOTE²

boat *n* **1** A car: *The little boat (automobile, in the argot of ’22)* (1915+) **2** A big car: *Why don’t you park that boat there, hop inside with me* (1920+) **3** A big shoe; gunboats: *leaving his boats out in the hall* **See** GRAVY TRAIN, LIFEBOAT, MAN IN THE BOAT, MISS THE BOAT, ON THE GRAVY TRAIN, RIDE THE GRAVY TRAIN, ROCK THE BOAT

boat anchor *n* An old or useless computer; also, anything clunky and useless: *replace the boat anchors on the third floor*

boat people *n phr* Political refugees who escape by small boat (*mid-1970s +*)

bob *See* BOOB JOB, NOSE JOB

Bob modifier: Bob car/ Bob clothes *n* A Bedouin or Iraqi (*1990s + Gulf War Army*)

bob and weave *v phr* To behave evasively; ROLL WITH THE PUNCHES: *For months Ross bobbed and weaved with Time's negotiators (1920s + Prizefighting)*

bobber *See* DEELY BOPPER

Bobbitt *n* Militant feminism so extreme as to seem to approve sexual mutilation of the male [*1990s +*; fr John Wayne *Bobbitt*, whose wife was convicted of cutting off his penis]

bobble *n:* The President's denial was a bad bobble *v* To blunder; esp in baseball, to mishandle or drop the ball (*1900 +*)

Bob's your uncle *interj* A response in conversation expressing compliance, meaning it's all right or there you are: *turn right at the light then left at the stop sign and Bob's your uncle (1937 +)*

bobtail *n* 1 A dishonorable discharge • So called because the phrase "service honorable and faithful" was deleted from the discharge form (*1870s + Army*) 2 A truck tractor without a semitrailer (*1940s + Truckers*) *v:* *Returning with just the tractor (bobtailing) represented a loss* [noun sense 2 considers the semitrailer the *tail* of the rig]

◁**Boche**▷ (BAHSH) *modifier:* the Boche infantry *n* A German, esp a

soldier [WWI armed forces; fr French, a shortening of *Alboche*, a contemptuous modification of *Allemand*, “German”]

bod *n* **1** A person (1930s + *British*) **2** The body; physique: *Pamela Anderson (Brigitte Bardot hair, pouty lips, sex-doll bod)/ There are women who don't know any other way to relate except with their bods (1960s +)* **See** WARM BODY

bodacious (boh DAY shəs) *adj* Extreme; excellent, admirable: *That's one bodacious pair of ta-tas on that blonde* [chiefly Southern 1840s +; fr early 19th-century *bodyaciously*, “bodily, totally”]

bodacious ta-tas *n phr* Prominent attractive breasts [1980s + College students; *tatas* is a pronunciation of “taters, potatoes,” and a euphemism for “tits”; the phrase was used in the 1982 movie *An Officer and a Gentleman*]

bodega (boh DAY gə) *n* **1** A liquor store **2** A grocery store, esp in Puerto Rican areas of New York City [Mexican Spanish 1850s +; fr Spanish, “shop”]

bodice-ripper or **bodice-buster** *n* A romantic-erotic novel, esp one with a historical plot; HEAVY BREATHER: *the offensive term bodice-ripper/ literary set that swoons over such bodice-busters as “Love's Sweet Agony” (1980s +)*

body **See** KNOW WHERE THE BODIES ARE BURIED, WARM BODY

body and soul *n phr* One's boyfriend or girlfriend [1930s +; probably fr the title of a 1930s song, “Body and Soul”]

body bag *n phr* A kind of heroin [1990s +; because if you use it you

will be carried out in a *body bag*, 1960s term for the zippered plastic shroud used by persons transporting corpses]

body count *n* **1** The total number of casualties after a conflict: *daily body count increased as the war went on* **2** The total number of people affected in a shakeup or bad situation: *body count after the layoffs* **3** The total number of people present: *body count at the meeting*

body packer or **internal** *n phr*: These “internals” or “body packers” swallow heroin encased in condoms or other packaging, disgorging their contraband to drug dealers, if they are not killed by leaking packages first (1990s + *Narcotics*)

body-shake *See* SKIN-SEARCH

body-up *v* To be aggressive; muscular: *I like to play a physical game, you know, body-up, go to the hole* (1990s +)

boff *n* **1** A blow with the fist or open hand (1920s +) **2** A sex act; coupling: *a quick bathroom boff* (1950s +) **3** A laugh, esp one following a comedian’s joke; BOFFOLA (1940s + *Show business*) **4** A joke or witty remark (1940s + *Show business*) **5** A show that pleases the audience; SOCKEROO (1940s + *Show business*) *v* **1**: *LaGuardia bade his cops to muss them up and boff them around on sight* **2** To do the sex act: *professors boffing coeds in their offices/ I was trying for the world boffing championship* (1930s +) **3** To vomit; BARF (1950s +) [first and second senses echoic; show-business senses probably a shortening of *boffo*] *See* THROW A FUCK INTO someone

boffer *n* A man who does the sex act; COCKSMAN: *The All-American boffer*

(1930s +)

boffin *n* An expert, esp in a scientific or technical field: *Computer boffins play a game called hunt the wumpus* [WWII British aviators; origin unknown; conceivably fr a humorous comparison between the laboratories and shops of experts and the enormous trash heaps of Mr and Mrs Boffin in Dickens's *Our Mutual Friend*]

boffo *adj* **1:** *Hey, that's a very boffo line/ The zany Brewsters still get laughs, boffo laughs* **2:** "*Crimson Tide*" rolls in as the first boffo box office/ *Red-blooded boffo entertainment for both sexes* **3** Highly favorable; laudatory **n** **1** A dollar or dollar bill: *That's worth a million boffos* (1920s +) **2** A year, esp a one-year prison sentence; *Boppo* (1920s + *Underworld*) **3** A laugh, esp a loud laugh in response to a comedian; BOFF, BOFFOLA (1940s + *Show business*) **4** A joke or a witty remark; BOFF (1940s + *Show business*) **5** A successful entertainment; BOFF, HIT: *her string of box-office boffos* (1940s + *Show business*) [fr a 19th-century carnival term based on the idea of a good box office]

boffola or **buffola** *n* **1** A loud appreciative laugh; BELLY LAUGH, BOFF: *This ability brought out the old boffola from coast to coast* **2** A joke or remark that provokes such laughter: *All I need is a funny hat and a buffola* (1950s + *Show business*)

bogart or **Bogart** or **bogard** *v* **1** To behave truculently; get something by intimidation: *The little old lady bogarted her way into the grocery line/ some hotshot from Brooklyn trying to Bogart a game from the regulars* **2** (also **bogart a joint**) To take more than one's share, esp of a marijuana cigarette; HOG [1960s + Black; fr the

tough roles played in films by Humphrey *Bogart*]

bog down *v phr* To become helpless and immobile, as if mired in a bog: *On the one hand a threat had been neutralized, but we were bogging down again (1920s+)*

bogey or **bogie** or **bogy** *n* **1** A police officer (*1930s+ Underworld*) **2** An enemy aircraft, esp an attacking fighter plane (*WWII Army Air Forces fr British RAF*) **3** A golf score of one stroke over par on a given hole (*late 1800s+ British*) [all senses fr *bogy* or *bogey*, “evil spirit, hobgoblin,” the *boogy* or *boogy-man* invoked to frighten children; the golf sense originated in 1890 when Dr Thomas Browne, a naval surgeon, compared his opponent, the “ground score,” to the “Bogey Man” of a popular song, at any rate, so it is said]

bogsatt *n* An informal and congenial method of making decisions [1980s+ Pentagon and government; acronym fr “a bunch of guys sitting around a table talking”]

bogue¹ *adj* **1** In need of narcotics; suffering from deprivation: *I’m bogue. I’m trying to kick (1960s+ Narcotics)* **2** False; fake; BOGUS, PHONY (*1950s+*) [origin unknown]

bogue² *adj* Disgusting; unattractive; GROSS [1950s+ Teenagers; fr *bogus*]

bogue³ *n* A cigarette *v* To smoke a cigarette [1980s+ High-school students; fr Humphrey *Bogart*, who smoked so often in his films]

bogue out *v phr* To become bogus, that is, false, misleading, useless, etc (*1980s+ Computer*)

bogus *adj* **1** False; fake; counterfeit; PHONY (1830s +) **2** Ignorant; not up-to-date; unattractive; LAME, SQUARE: “*Bogus*” is a different shading of “*lame*” (1980s + Teenagers) **3** Not to be trusted; useless, false, wrong, silly, incredible, etc (1980s + Computers) [origin unknown; certainly connected with *bogus*, attested as name of a counterfeiting machine in 1827, whence a connection has been made with *bogy*]

boheme *n* A female style of comportment of loose funky clothing, comfortable shoes, and no make-up • Takeoff of *bohemian*

boho *n* **1** An ineffectual person; LOSER: *Leave it to bohos like the Clash to give the class war its first cavalry charge/ Jamie Lee as a goofball boho intellectual* (1960s +) **2** A person who is outdated, behind the times (1980s + College students) [apparently fr *hobohemian*, found by 1919 and revived in the 1960s to mean “member of an out-of-date avant-garde”]

◀**bohunk**▶ *n* **1** An immigrant from central or eastern Europe, usu a Czech, Slovak, Hungarian, or Pole; HUNKY (1900 +) **2** A stupid, clumsy person; lout (1920 +) (*Loggers*) *See* BEAUHUNK

boil down *v phr* To reduce to the essential elements: *It all boils down to who gets there faster* (1880 +)

boiled *adj* **1** Drunk (1890s +) **2** Angry *See* HARD-BOILED, HARD-BOILED EGG

boiled shirt (or rag) *n phr* **1** A dress shirt, esp with a starched front; Fried Shirt **2** Stiff, chilly, and pompous behavior; stuffiness: *not arrayed in the “boiled shirt” of formality* (1850s + Western)

boiler *See* POTBOILER

boilermaker *n* 1 (also **boilermaker and his helper**) A drink of whiskey with or in a glass of beer (1930s +) 2 BOILERMAKER'S DELIGHT

boilermaker's delight *n phr* Any very strong or rough drink; inferior whiskey; ROTGUT [1910 + ; because it would clean the scales from the inside of a *boiler*]

boiler room *modifier*: The county is home to hundreds of “boiler room” telephone operations/ what law enforcement officials call a “boiler room” operation **n phr** 1 A site of illegal operations, often the telephone sale of stocks, real estate, etc, by charlatans (1930s +) 2 A shady and provocative gathering-place; a hotbed: *the tendency of their young people to congregate in places that are boiler rooms for drugs and violence* (1980s +)

boil someone in oil *v phr* To punish or rebuke severely

boil over *v phr* To lose one's temper: *make a manager boil over* (1879 +)

boil the ocean *v phr* To waste one's time on an impossible task: *You can't get him to change. It's like boiling the ocean*

boing *interj* (also **boing-boing**) An exclamation of appreciative delight and intentness at the sight of an attractive woman • An uttered equivalent of a wolf whistle: *dropped what they were doing and their eyes went “Boing, boing” (WWII armed forces)* **v** (also **boink**) To do the sex act with or to; BOFF, BONK: *Previously it was more important whether I was boinging Paula Abdul/ chicks he claims he's boinked* (1980s +) [fr the sound a plucked spring makes, suggesting tenseness and quivering response, with a hint perhaps of penile

erection; verb sense related to *bang* and *bonk*]

boinkable *adj* Able, willing, and desirable for copulation: *a room full of boinkable ladies*

boinker *n* An encounter or engagement that ends in a sex act (1980s +)

boke or **boko** *n* The nose (1850s + *Underworld*)

bokoo or **boku** *n* Many • A play on French *beaucoup*: *boku people in line*

bollixed (or **bolaxed** or **bolexed**) **up** *adj phr* In a thoroughly confused and futile condition; BALLED UP, FUCKED UP: *You're getting your cues all bollixed up* [1930s +; fr *bollocks* or *ballocks*, "testicles," ultimately fr old English *bealluc*, "testicle"]

bollocks (also **ballocks**) *n* **1** Rubbish; nonsense **2** The testicles

boll weevil *n phr* A conservative Southern Democrat who votes with Republicans in Congress [1900s +; fr the insidious reputation of the *boll weevil*, an insect that eats cotton bolls]

bolo badge *n phr* A Purple Heart, esp one awarded posthumously after an injudicious maneuver [1990s + Gulf War Army; fr the notion that one was killed because he was a poor shot]

boloney *See* BALONEY

bolt *v* To leave; BOOK, SPLIT (1970s + *Students*)

bolt-on *adj* Of a woman's breasts, surgically augmented: *them's look bolt-on to me* *n* An additional part

bolts *See* BUCKET OF BOLTS, NUTS AND BOLTS

bomb *n* **1** A conspicuous and total failure; BLAST, FLOP (1950s + *Show business*) **2** A car, esp a hot rod (1950s + *Hot rodders*) **3** (also **bomber**) An especially big marijuana cigarette (1950s + *Narcotics*) **4** Heroin (1950s + *Narcotics*) **5** Something very good: *teenagers come home from a movie and say it was a “bomb,” yet insist on seeing it again and again* (1990s + *Teenagers*) **v** **1**: *The show bombed everywhere on the road/ I took the test, and bombed* (1960s + *Show business*) **2** To do very well at or on: *I really bombed the math test, aced it* (1960s + *Students*) **3** To go very fast; plunge: *found the discarded relics ideal for bombing down the dirt slopes of Mt Tam* (1960s +) **4** To paint graffiti on; TAG: *His favorite stylin’-and-bombin’ wall, tagged with the rebellious urban scrawl of graffiti artists* (1980s +) [in the sense of failure, perhaps fr the outdated expression *make a baum of it*, “fail”] *See* DROP BOMBS, DUMB BOMB, STINK BOMB

bomb, the *n phr* **1** A very long forward pass intended to score a quick touchdown (1960s + *Football*) **2** Something wonderful, outstanding, etc (1990s + *Teenagers*)

bombed *adj* Drunk (1950s +)

bombed out *adj phr* Very much intoxicated by narcotics; very dozy or exhilarated; SPACED-OUT, STONED (1960s + *Narcotics*)

bomber *n* A crude cocktail: *The kids had been chugging “bombers”—a mixture of liquors, wine and beer* (1980s +)

bombiosity or **bombosity** *n* The buttocks; ASS, DUFF [1930s + ; fr *bombous*, “rounded, belly-shaped,” fr the shape of a *bomb*]

bombita (bahm BEE tə) *n* Any amphetamine pill or capsule used by addicts [1960s+ narcotics; fr Spanish, “little bomb”]

bomb out *v phr* To fail; BOMB: *Stephanie Moody “bombed out” last year: failed to complete her opening lifts (1970s+)*

bombshell *n* **1** A startling, striking event; a stunning piece of news or something that makes one gape: *Her entrance astride the crocodile was a bombshell (1920s+)* **2** A sexually stimulating woman • Often in the expression “blonde bombshell” (1940s+)

bond *See* JUNK BOND

bondage *n* Sexual practice in which a participant is tied up or otherwise restrained, usu for whipping or other “discipline” (1960s+)

bone¹ *n* **1** Money; cash (1970s+ *Teenagers*) **2** A dollar, esp a silver dollar (1860s+) <3> The erect penis (mid-1800s+) *v* <1> (also **bone away**) To do the sex act; SCREW: *Shit! he thought. He coulda been boning by now (1980s+ Students)* *See* HAVE A BONE ON, JAWBONE, TAIL BONE

bone² *n* A diligent student *v* (also **bone up**) To study, esp to study intensely for an examination [College students 1880s+; fr the student’s use of *bohns*, “translations, ponies,” named after *Bohn’s* Classical Library]

bone factory *n* **1** A hospital: *taken to the bone factory* **2** A cemetery

bonehead *modifier*: I should have been in bonehead English *n* A stupid person: *four sons, all boneheads* [1900s+; fr the notion of the head being all *bone*, no brain] *See* PULL A BONER

boneheaded *adj* Stupid (1900s +)

bonehead *play* or *move* *n phr* An error, esp one caused by bad judgment: *Merkel's throw was the most renowned bonehead play in history (1910+ chiefly sports)*

◁**bone-on**▷ *n* An erect penis: *Sometimes he could still get a pretty respectable bone-on (1940s +)*

bone-orchard *n* A cemetery (1870s +)

bone out *v phr* To lose one's nerve; quit; CHICKEN OUT (1990s + *Teenagers*)

boner *n* **1** A blunder; error; BLOOPER, HOWLER (1910 + *Baseball*) **2** A diligent student; BONE (1900 + *College students*) ◁**3**▷ An erect penis; BONE-ON, HARD-ON: *The time you coveted your neighbor's wife, you had a big boner/ He walks around with a boner all the time (1950s +)* *See* PULL A BONER

bones *n* **1** Dice • Chaucer referred to dice as “bitched bones” about 1390 (1880s +) **2** Two sticks or bones held between the fingers and used to make a clacking rhythm • Best known fr their use in post-Civil War minstrel shows, where they were wielded by a character named Mr *Bones* (late 1500s +) **3** Dollars; money (1900s +) *See* MAKE NO BONES ABOUT, SAW-BONES

Bones *n* A ship's doctor (1940s + *Merchant marine*)

bone-shaker *n* Any badly sprung, springless, or violently jerking vehicle, esp a very early form of bicycle (1860s +)

bone up *See* BONE²

boneyard *n* A cemetery: *lie on a blanket out on the boneyard*

(1860s +)

bong *n* A water pipe for smoking narcotics • Said to have been introduced by returning Vietnam veterans: *the array of glass and plastic water pipes or bongos (1960s + Narcotics)* *v* 1 To smoke marijuana using a water pipe (1960s + Teenagers) 2 To drink beer from a keg through a hose (1980s + Teenagers)

bonged-out *adj* Intoxicated by a narcotic, esp one smoked through a bong: *You feel like a bonged-out Cubist painting (1970s +)*

bongo or **bongoed** *adj* Drunk (1940s +)

bonk *n* 1 A blow; BASH, SOCK (1930s +) 2 A single sex act; BANG, FUCK, PIECE (1980s + British) *v* 1 To hit; strike; BANG, BIFF (1930s +) 2 Do the sex act with or to; BOFF, SCREW: *And I asked him if he was still sneaking around bonkin' that secretary/ What's this I hear about you bragging to friends that you bonked Kate Moss? (1970s + British)*

bonkers *adj* Crazy; insane; NUTS: *Folks are going slightly bonkers these days over anything that glitters/ suffering stress-related ailments like eczema or colitis, or just plain going bonkers [1950s + British; probably fr bonk, "to hit on the head," plus the British slang suffix -ers]*

bonnet *See* BEE IN one's BONNET

Bonus! *interj* An exclamation of strong approval, pleasure, etc:
Super! You win a prize!

bonzer *adj* Good; excellent *n* Anything superior or useful (WWII *armed forces fr Australian*)

bonzo *adj* Crazy; NUTS: *almost drove me bonzo* **n**: *This guy is a real bonzo* [1970s + ; origin unknown; perhaps influenced by *bonkers* and *gonzo*; perhaps related to a British puppy named *Bonzo*, originated in 1922]

boo¹ *adj* Excellent; remarkable: *Something that used to be known as the cat's whiskers is now called "deadly boo" (1950s +)* **n** Marijuana or another narcotic: *I got over there and she lays this dynamite boo on me, I mean super shit (1930s + Jazz musicians)* [noun sense said to be fr black English *jabooby*, "marijuana, so called because it induces a state of fear or anxiety," of unknown origin; but possibly fr *Budda*, "marijuana"] **See** TICKETY-BOO

boo² *interj* **1** An exclamation of disapproval, the equivalent of a hiss (1890s +) **2** A supposedly frightening exclamation, such as a ghost might give: *She jumped out of the closet and hollered "Boo!" (1940s +)* **v**: *Next time at bat he was roundly booed*

boob¹ **n** **1** A stupid person; DIM-WIT: *There are still boobs, alack, who'd like the old-time gin-mill back (1908 +)* **2** A person who is too innocent and trusting; SUCKER: *The poor boob fell for his line and gave him the money (1920s +)*

◁**boob**²▷ **n** A woman's breast; BUB, KNOCKER [1940s + ; probably fr *boobie*²]

boob³ **n** A blunder; error; BOO-BOO **v**: *If I boob, I expect you to protect me (1930s +)*

◁**boobage**▷ **n** A woman's breasts; breasts in general

boobie¹ or **bubbie** **See** BUBBY

◁**boobie**² or **booby** or **bubbie**▷ (B^{oo} bee) *n* A woman's breast [late 1600s + ; perhaps ultimately fr Latin *puppa*, literally "little girl," which in child language became "breast"; whence Old French *pope*, *popel*, "breast," German dialect *Bubbi*, and so on]

boo-bird modifier: More often than not, I've joined the boo-bird chorus *n* A sports spectator who boos; a noisy heckler: *A trade might satisfy the boo-birds (1970s +)*

◁**boob job** (or **bob**)▷ *n phr* A surgical breast enlargement: *saying that Julie had had a boob job (1980s +)*

boo-boo¹ *n* An error or misstep, esp one with embarrassing consequences; faux pas: *The original boo-boo that started all this public confusion [1950s + ; perhaps fr boob³; perhaps fr Yiddish bulba, "potato," fr Polish, which came to mean "malapropism, faux pas"]*

boo-boo² *n* A minor flesh wound or blemish [1900 + ; perhaps fr *boo-hoo*, a child's crying over a minor hurt]

boob trap *n phr* A nightclub; boîte (1950s +)

boob tube, the *n phr* Television or a television set; the TUBE (mid-1960s +)

booby hatch *n phr* **1** An insane asylum; mental hospital: *King Bolden cut hair in the booby-hatch (1890s +)* **2** (also **booby hutch**) A police station (1950s + *Underworld*) [first sense perhaps connected with *Colney Hatch*, a village near London where an insane asylum was opened in 1851; the name became generic for a mental hospital]

booby trap *n phr* **1** A hidden explosive charge designed to be set off by some ordinary act, such as starting a vehicle or driving down a street, used originally in wartime to harass invaders • The British schoolboy's booby trap was a pitcher of water poised atop a door so that whoever opened the door would be doused **2** A seemingly harmless appearance that conceals vexations arranged for an unsuspecting opponent: *Don't debate him, it's a booby trap* *v*: *They booby-trapped his car and six people died (WWII Army; mid-1800s + British)*

boodle *n* **1** An entire lot; a large number or amount; CABOODLE (1830s +) **2** Counterfeit money (1850s + *Underworld*) **3** Bribe money or other money obtained by graft and corruption: *A few trees are planted. What happens to most of the boodle?* (1880s +) **4** Money in general (1890 +) **5** Sweets; treats; delicacies (*Prison & students* 1900 +) *v* To hug, kiss, etc; NECK (1940s + *Students*) [fr Dutch *boedel*, "estate, lot"]

boog *v* To dance: *to go booging* (1930s + *fr boogie-woogie*)

boogaloo or **bugaloo** (BŌŌG a lŌŌ, BŌŌG-) *modifier* **1**: *That's really voodoo music, man, boogaloo music* **2**: *Go out and have a bugaloo good time* *n* A shuffling, shoulder-swinging dance: *feet doing a fast boogaloo in the grass* *v* **1**: *They boogalooed down the street* **2** To carry on jocularly; play; tease; FOOL AROUND [1960s +; apparently a rhyming form based on *boog*, like *boogerboo*]

booger or **boogie** *n* A piece of nasal mucus [1890s +; an extension of *bugger*, "nasal mucus"] *See* BUGGER

boogered or **boogered up** *adj* Damaged; inoperable: *I can't use this bolt; the threads are all boogered/ That car is all boogered up* (1920s +)

boogie or **boogey** (Böö gee, Böö-) *modifier* <1>: *a boogie hairstyle/ boogie music n 1* (also **boogie-woogie**) Syphilis, esp advanced syphilis (1900s + *Black*) <2> A black person (1920s +) **3** BOOGIE-WOOGIE (1940s +) <4> The vulva; CUNT (1960s +) **5** An enemy aircraft, esp a fighter plane; BOGEY (WWII Army Air Forces) **6** A piece of solid mucus from the nose; BOOGER **v 1** To move, shake, and wriggle the body in time to rock-and-roll music; do a sort of boogaloo: *Amanda boogies and bangs a tambourine while her 39 sisters sit on steps and force shattered smiles* (1940s +) **2** To move; go; leave; LIGHT OUT: *Let's boogie, Mama—Right behind you, Big Daddy/ F16D, a jet that can really boogie/ He was here on June 16, then boogied before we got on the record* (1970s +) **3** To carry on jocularly; play; tease; FOOL AROUND: *back from a long weekend and ready to boogie* (1930s +) **4** To do the sex act: *a lot of heavy boogieing going on at Iowa State* (1960s +) <5> To do anal intercourse; BUGGER: *Would Ronnie be averse to being boogied by Kiss during his acceptance speech* (1970s +) *See* LET'S BOOGIE

boogie board *n phr 1* A skateboard **2** A kind of surfboard (1970s +)

boogie box *See* GHETTO BOX

boogie down to somewhere *v phr* To go somewhere in a bit of a hurry: *boogie down to the store for some ice cream*

boogieman (also **bogeyman**) *n* An imaginary scary person or

monster, an evil spirit; also, any false threat: *left the light on so the boogiemer won't come*

boogie-woogie (Bōō gee Wōō gee, Bōō-, Wōō-) **modifier:** Jimmy Yancey created the boogie woogie blues **n** 1 Syphilis, esp advanced syphilis (1900s + *Black*) 2 A fast jazz piano style with a heavy rolling bass played eight beats to the measure, often used as a song accompaniment (1920s + *Jazz musicians*) **v** To enjoy oneself thoroughly (1930s + *Black*) [origin uncertain]

book **n** 1 BOOKIE (1860s + *Gambling*) 2 A bookie's function and place of business: *Joey keeps a book* (1860s + *Gambling*) 3 The daily logbook of a police station (1840s + *Police*) **v** 1 Make Book 2 To charge someone with a crime or misdemeanor at a police station: *They took the bum in and booked him for vagrancy* (1840s + *Police*) 3 To engage or reserve in advance: *They booked eight readings in three days for the visiting poet/ Book me a table for six* (1820s +) 4 HIT THE BOOKS 5 To run or depart, esp rapidly: *And the couple booked off into the sunset for their honeymoon* (1980s + *Students*) **See** BY THE BOOK, CRACK A BOOK, HIT THE BOOKS, IN someone's BAD BOOKS, LITTLE BLACK BOOK, ONE FOR THE BOOK, POUND THE BOOKS, READ someone LIKE A BOOK, STROKE BOOK, TAKE A PAGE FROM someone's BOOK, THROW THE BOOK AT someone, WISH BOOK, WRITE THE BOOK

book, the **n phr** 1 A life sentence to prison (1920s + *Underworld*) 2 Instructions or conventional wisdom about someone's performance; **FORM:** *The "book" on this player was to leave him alone, treat him politely, and pick him up if you happened to block him* (1950s +) [first sense fr *throw the book at someone*; second sense fr the accumulated knowledge about horses and jockeys that gamblers study] **See** THROW

THE BOOK AT someone

bookend *n* **1**: *two black bodyguards, macho bookends* **n** **2** (also **bookend ad**) A television commercial having two parts, separated by other unrelated commercials: *Bookends are intriguing to people because they set up a scenario* **v** To precede and follow; bracket: *all this is somehow bookended by the secret, shadow manuscripts of his mother and his wife/ eight big star duets, bookended by solo performances (1980s +)*

bookie *n* A person who accepts and handles bets on horse races; bookmaker (1880s + *Gambling*)

book it **v** *phr* **1** To depart quickly; BOOK (1970s + *Students*) **2** To be confident of something; count on something; Make Book on Something: *I'll be back. Book it*

bookmark **v** To make a note of something, mentally or in writing • Fr the bookmarking of Web pages

book-smarts *n* Learning; erudition: *They not only have the "book-smarts" that it takes, but the acting and drama ability (1990s +)*

boola-boola *n* Noisy partisan support for one's college teams: *too much panty-raiding, fraternities, and boola-boola and all of that* [1960s +; fr a Yale University song]

boom *adj* Wonderful; fashionable; outstanding; GREAT (1990s + *Canadian students*) *n* Marijuana (1950s + *Narcotics*) **v** **1** To flourish; show vigor: *Business is booming! (1860s +)* **2** To promote aggressively: *There he goes booming that brand of soap (1890s +)* **3** (also **boom along**) To sail fast, under full canvas (1600s +)

Nautical) **See** FALL DOWN AND GO BOOM, LOWER THE BOOM

◁**boom-boom**▷ **n** Sexual activity; copulation; ASS: dragging girls into the woods “for a little boom-boom” (1960s + *Armed forces*)

boom box **n phr** (also **boom**) A loud stereo cassette player: *Violators risk confiscation of their boom boxes (1980s +)* **See** GHETTO BOX

boomer **n** **1** A migratory worker (1890s + *Hoboes*) **2** A railroad or construction worker, logger, etc, who continually shifts from one place of work to another (1890s + *Hoboes*) **3** A womanizer; ladies’ man (1930s +) **4** An enthusiastic advocate of land development: *What consumes the attention of most Idahoans is the battle between the boomers (developers) and the greenies (environmentalists) (1880s +)* **5** A member of the post-WWII baby boom; **BABY BOOMER**: *Two quirky tales of adolescence, rooted in boomer history and sanitized for the boomer market (1980s +)*

boomerang **v** To return to the parental nest: *There’s a 40 percent chance you’ll “boomerang” back to live with your parents at least once (1980s +)*

boomerang baby (or **kid**) **n phr** A child who returns to the parental home even after college and other mature training; a reoccupant of the empty nest (1980s +)

booming or **boomin’** **adj** **1** Excellent; wonderful; **BOOM, FLY, RAD** **2** Playing loud bass tones on a stereo (1980s + *Teenagers*)

boomlet **n** A minor upsurge; a small access of vigor: *sustains the boomlet in comedy-dramas about Irish village life (1880 +)*

boomshakalaka *interj* An impudent exclamation similar to *in your face*

boom sticks *n phr* Drumsticks (1950s + *Cool musicians & rock and roll*)

◁**boon coon**▷ *See* ACE BOON COON

boondock *modifier* Suitable for rough outdoor use: *Marines use boondock clothes and boondock shoes for hikes and maneuvers (WWII Navy and Marine Corps)*

boondocks, the, or the **boonies** *n* Remote places; rural regions: *The people out there in the boonies may not know you're past it* [Marine Corps 1900 + ; fr Tagalog *bundok*, "mountain"]

boondoggle *n*: The public's got the idea that this is a boondoggle, a Rube Goldberg v To spend public funds outlandishly or on futile activity [mid-1930s + ; origin uncertain; verb said to be fr the iron-smelting industry, meaning "make unprofitable attempts to retrieve good iron from slag"; noun found by 1940s meaning "an ornamental thong made by Boy Scouts" and suggesting mere make-work]

boonie rat *n phr* A combat soldier, esp an infantry private; DOGFACE, GRUNT (*Vietnam War armed services*)

booshwa or **booshwah** *See* BUSHWAH

boost *n*: I'll give you a good boost v **1** To steal, esp by shoplifting: *Someone had boosted my tape recorder out of the room/ slept on park benches and boosted from the A&P (1908 +)* **2** To praise highly: *to*

boost one's home town (1900+) **3** To do the sex act with or to; BONK, SCREW (1980s+ Students)

booster n 1 A shoplifter; pilferer: *Got a booster for you. The chunky girl in blue at the lace counter/ He knew they couldn't be boosters or creepers (1908+)* **2** A huckster's or auctioneer's assistant who pretends to buy in order to stimulate others; SHILL (1905+ Carnival)
3 A person who praises extravagantly; FAN (1890+)

boot n 1: *Give him a boot in the ass (1940s+)* **2:** *Dark atoned for his boot by making a good play on Kiner's slow roller* **3** A thrill; surge of pleasure; BANG, KICK: I get a boot from boats (1930+) **4** A recruit (1900+ *Navy & Marine Corps*) **◀5▶** A black person (1950s+ *Black*)
6 (also **Denver boot**) A metal locking device put on the wheels of a scofflaw's car to prevent driving (late 1960s+) **v 1** To kick, esp to give a hard kick: *Let's boot a football around (1870s+)* **2** To discharge; eject; FIRE, SACK (1880s+) **3** (also **boot away**) To lose or waste by incompetence, inattention, etc; botch; bungle; BLOW: I booted three good chances (1950s+) **4** To commit an error, esp in handling a ground ball (1900s+ *Baseball*) **5** (also **backtrack**) To inject a narcotic gradually by pulling back and reinjecting blood again and again to increase the drug's effect: *The technique, known as "booting," is believed to prolong the drug's initial effect (1960s+ Narcotics)* **6** BOOT UP (1980+ Computer) **See** HARDBOOT, RUBBER BOOTS, TO BOOT

boot, the n phr Dismissal, discharge (1880s+)

boot camp n phr 1 A basic training center (*WWI Navy & Marine Corps*) **2** A penal camp, resembling a military boot camp in rigor, used as a substitute for imprisonment: *The penal system is moving*

toward separate drug-treatment facilities, boot camps for young offenders (1980s +) **3** Any very strict training facility: *militant pro-life boot camp* (1990s +)

booted *adj* Intoxicated by narcotics; HIGH, STONED (1900s + *Narcotics*)

bootleg *modifier*: a bottle of bootleg hooch **n** Whiskey illegally made or sold (1880s +) **v** **1** To make or sell illegal whiskey and other illegally repackaged products such as music recordings, movies, etc (1906 +) **2** To carry the ball deceptively by holding it against the leg, esp after pretending to hand it off to another player (1950s + *Football*) [fr the idea of concealment in the upper part of one's boots]

bootlegger or **booter** or **bootie** *n* A person who bootlegs: *5,000 booters on Manhattan Island alone/ That new bootie carries a powerful line of hooch* (1880s +)

bootlick *v* To serve and flatter a superior; curry favor; APPLE-POLISH, BROWN-NOSE: *Boss kisser-uppers will always be with us, bootlicking their way through the workplace* (1840s +)

boot someone out *v phr* To kick or throw someone out: *They booted me out of the soup kitchen*

boot party *n phr* Savagely kicking an offender as a form of punishment (1990s + *Street gang*)

boots *n* A bootblack, esp in a hotel (1840s +) **See** BET YOUR BOOTS, JESUS BOOTS, RUBBER BOOTS

boot strapper *n phr* A person who succeeds by his own efforts; self-made person: *black "boot strappers," teachers, city workers,*

professionals who have to struggle to make it [1960s+; fr the expression lift oneself by one's own bootstraps]

boot up or **boot v phr** or **v** To start up or input a computer's operating system: *The typical first step in working with a computer, then, is to load the DOS programs; this is called "booting up"/ He showed me how to log in and boot the operating system [1970s+ Computers; fr earlier bootstrap, because after a simple action like pressing one key, the computer loads the operating system itself, as if it were raising itself by its own bootstraps]*

◀**booty** or **boody**▶ **modifier**: It's about snappin' all the booty rap **n**
1 The female body as a sex object *You can listen to it, but you can shake your booty to it too* **2** The vulva **3** The sex act; sex; ASS: *The heroines are giving up some booty (1920s+ Black)*

◀**booty call**▶ **n** **1** Sexual arousal or desire to seek a sex partner: *We're in the party! Booty call!* **2** A telephone call to seek a sex partner: *high-school booty calls where they ignore you the next day*

boo-word n phr A word or phrase that frightens: *his scholarly interests —traditional, historical, and, to use a radical boo-word, Eurocentric (1990s+)*

booyah interj **1** An impudent exclamation similar to *in your face*: *They screamed "booyah" at the other team* **2** An excited exclamation of extreme pleasure, approval, etc: *He said "booyah!" when I told him I made tacos for dinner*

booze n Any alcoholic drink, esp whiskey and other spirits (1880s+)
v To drink alcoholic beverages, esp to drink whiskey heavily

(1760s +) [fr Middle English and dialect *bowse* (pronounced like *booze*), “drink, carouse,” reinforced by the name of a 19th-century Philadelphia distiller, E G Booze] **See** HIT THE BOTTLE

booze artist *n* A drunk person; drunkard

boozed or **boozed up** *adj* or *adj phr* Drunk • In-Included as *bowz'd* in Benjamin Franklin's 1722 list of 225 words meaning “drunk” (*first form 1850 +, second 1880s +*)

boozehound or **booze-fighter** *n* A person who habitually drinks a great deal of whiskey; LUSH: *Among American governors, the booze-fighters are plainly the best (first form 1940s +, second 1900s +)*

booze it (up) *v phr* To drink a great deal of liquor: *boozed it up every night after work*

boozer *n* A heavy drinker; ALKY, LUSH (1819 +)

boozery *n* A saloon, esp an illegal or after-hours saloon; SPEAKEASY (1915 +)

booze-up *n* A drinking spree; BINGE: *the morning booze-up which was still fouling his blood (1890s + British)*

booze up *v phr* To drink a great deal of liquor (1940s +)

boozy *adj* Drunk • Found in the 225 terms meaning “drunk” that Benjamin Franklin published in 1722 (1720 +)

bop modifier: a bop musician **n 1:** *a bop on the beezer (1930s +)* **2** A fight among gangs; RUMBLE (1950s + *Street gang*) **3** The sex act; SCREW (1970s +) **4** (also **bebop**) A style of modern jazz characterized by complex harmonies, sudden changes in register, the use of fast and

nearly unintelligible lyrics, etc: *Bop is “cool” jazz (1940s + Jazz musicians)* **v** 1 To strike, esp with the fist: *Nina reached out and bopped her on the head/ I kept my temper in check, since bopping police chiefs wasn’t good PR (1930s +)* **2** To defeat: *The home team got bopped again (1980s +)* **3**: *You gotta go on bopping and hanging around street corners all your life?* **4**: *You told Esteva the cop was bopping his wife* **5** To walk or go, esp in a slow and relaxed mood: *They bopped over to the bar (1950s + Students)* [echoic] **See** DIDDLYBOP, HARD BOP, TEENYBOPPER, THROW A FUCK INTO someone

bop (or bopper) glasses n phr Horn-rimmed spectacles: *The horn-rims of the intellectual came to be known as bop glasses (1940s + Jazz musicians)*

bop off v phr To depart; BOOK, SPLIT (1950s + *Students*)

bopper n **1** A street-gang fighter (1960s +) **2** A bop musician (1940s +) **3** A baseball power hitter; SLUGGER: *Now I’ve got a big bopper at the plate (1970s +)* **4** TEENYBOPPER (1960s +) **See** DEELY BOPPER

bopping modifier: The “bopping” cabbies were expelled **n** Tampering with taxicab meters to register illegally high charges: *The United Cab Association here has expelled about 40 cab drivers in the last two years for “bopping” (1970s + Philadelphia cabdrivers)*

boppy adj Bouncy; zesty; JAZZY: *an MTV-like newscast—everything is boppy, the pace is snappy and the graphics flashy (1980s +)*

borax modifier: strictly a piece of borax junk **n** **1** Cheap or inferior material; shoddy merchandise **2** Exaggeration; misrepresentation; HORSESHIT • This may derive fr sense of the talk of *borax* salesmen, or

it may be the ultimate source of all other senses: *borak* or *borax*, fr an aboriginal language, has been used in Australia since at least the 1840s to mean “nonsense”; hence it might have developed (pejorated) to mean “horse-shit” and found its way to the US **3** Any gaudy item; tasteless bric-a-brac (1940s +) [1920s + Furniture business; origin unknown; it has been suggested that sellers of cleansers based on the mineral *borax* gave away cheap furniture to customers]

border *See* SOUTH OF THE BORDER

bored out of one’s skull *adj phr* BORED TO DEATH: *Stratford High School, where he was bored out of his skull for four years (1960s +)*

bored stiff *adj phr* BORED TO DEATH (1920s +)

bored to death *adj phr* Extremely bored (1880 +)

bore the pants off someone *v phr* To thoroughly bore or weary: *would bore the pants off me (1937 +)*

bork or **Bork** *n*: close ranks to coordinate a huge preemptive bork *v* To mount an intense campaign against a political appointee; BUSHWHACK: “*We’re going to Bork him,*” proclaimed a feminist advocate [late 1980s + ; fr the experience of Judge Robert Bork, whose 1987 nomination to the Supreme Court was rejected by strong concerted opposition]

born loser *See* LOSER

born to *adj phr* Seemingly destined and compelled to perform something indicated: *My born-to-shop bride is disappointed that all*

the shops are closed on Sunday/ This guy was born to run/ Weeb was born to coach (1980s +)

borscht belt *n phr* **1** The region in and near the Catskill Mountains north of New York City where many predominantly Jewish resort hotels are found (1930s +) **2** Any neighborhood peopled by Russians or Russian emigrants: *Just south of the Fairfax borscht belt and across the street from the Farmer's Market (1990s +)* [fr Russian *borshch*, “beet soup” (in its Yiddish spelling), a focus of the cuisine]

borscht circuit *n phr* The resort hotels of the Catskills borscht belt, regarded as a circuit for entertainers, lecturers, etc (1930s +)

bosh *n* Nonsense; poppycock; BULLSHIT [1830s +; apparently fr Turkish, “empty,” popularized by an 1834 British novel]

bosom buddy *modifier*: IBM has entered a series of bosom-buddy pacts with Novell, Lotus and Borland **n phr** A very close friend; best friend; MAIN MAN (1920s +)

boss *adj* Excellent; wonderful; the MOST • This old use seems to have been revived independently by 1950s jazz musicians and teenagers: *Aw, this is boss/ Japan has leaped into the implements-for-bosser-living gap (1880s +)* **n 1** The chief; the person in charge (late 1500s +) **2** The head of a political machine (1860s +) **v**: That little guy bosses the whole operation (1850s +) [fr Dutch *baas*, “master”] **See** STRAW BOSS

boss someone around *v phr* To direct or control someone in an offensively authoritarian way: *I don't mind being told, but I hate being bossed around (1850s +)*

boss trick *See* CHAMPAGNE TRICK

bossy¹ *adj* Domineering; autocratic: *She's very bossy, a take-charge gal* (1880s +)

bossy² *n* **1** A cow **2** Beef (1930s + *Lunch counter*) [fr Latin *bos*, "cow"]

bothered *See* HOT AND BOTHERED

both hands *n phr* A ten-year prison sentence (1930s + *Underworld*)

both sides of the desk *n phr* The faculty and students of a school or university: *and both sides of the desk challenged the established canon* (1990s +)

both sides of the street *See* WORK BOTH SIDES OF THE STREET

both ways *See* HAVE IT BOTH WAYS, SWING BOTH WAYS, WORK BOTH WAYS

bottle *n* **1** A bottle or bottle's amount of liquor; JUG: *He had a bottle on him* (late 1600s +) **2** A glass insulator for electric or communications lines (1900s + *Line repairers*) **3** A vacuum tube (1920s + *Radio operators*) *See* FIGHT A BOTTLE, HIT THE BOTTLE

bottle, the *n phr* **1** Liquor; BOOZE: *In life he battled wives, producers, bankruptcy, and the bottle* (1600s +)

2 Male prostitution (1960s +) [sense 2 perhaps fr cockney rhyming slang *bottle and glass*, "ass"] *See* HIT THE BOTTLE

bottle baby *n phr* A derelict alcoholic; Skid Row Bum [1920s + Police; fr the term for an infant fed with a bottle]

bottle club *n phr* A social club where members may drink after legal

hours (1930s +)

bottom *n* The buttocks; ASS (1790s +)

Bottom *See* FOGGY BOTTOM

bottom dollar *See* BET ONE'S BOTTOM DOLLAR, BET YOUR BOOTS

bottom dropped out, the *sentence* The market collapsed; disaster struck: *And then the bottom dropped out of the market* (1935 +)

bottom-end *n* The crankshaft, main bearing, and connecting-rod bearings of an automobile engine (1950s + *Hot rodders*)

bottom feeder *n phr* **1** A despicable, predatory person who exploits and fancies the squalid; SCUM-SUCKER, SLEAZEBAG: *Jesse Helms, David Duke, and other political bottom feeders* **2** (also **bottom fisher** or **bottom troller**) A person or company that deliberately exploits those in difficulty and profits by their poverty or misfortune: *which has made the bottom trollers start to take notice* [1990s + ; fr the presumed disgusting habits of fish and other marine forms that *feed* on the *bottom*, hence eat slime, excrement, etc; the fact that *bottom* means “ass” may not be entirely irrelevant]

bottom-feeding *modifier* Showing the instincts and practice of a bottom feeder: *bottom-feeding biographies have existed as long as people have been able to write* (1990s +)

bottom fishing *n phr* The activity of investing in securities when it is believed the market has reached bottom following a major decline; searching for investment bargains

bottomless *adj* **1** Wearing nothing; nude: *a bottomless waitress* **2** A

bar, club, restaurant, etc, featuring unclad females [1960s+; by comparison with *topless*, which means nude above the waist]

bottomless pit *n* **1** A voracious and insatiable person: *Mr P is a bottomless pit* **2** An infinite resource of something **3** Something that drains all one's resources or causes infinite trouble

bottom line, the *modifier*: a bottom-line matter **n phr** **1** The bookkeeping figure showing profit or loss **2** The result of any computation or estimate, esp one showing total costs: *I'll go half if the bottom line's OK* **3** Any final decision or judgment: *Let me tell you the bottom line* **4** A fundamental or crucial point of fact; the essence; the NITTY-GRITTY: *The bottom line is I am paid to win games, not for goodwill* [1960s+; perhaps *fr* Yiddish *untershte shure*, "bottom line," as used in the financial-commercial community]

bottom man on the totem pole *See* LOW MAN ON THE TOTEM POLE

bottom of the barrel *See* SCRAPE THE BOTTOM OF THE BARREL

bottom out *v phr* To get as low or bad as possible; reach nadir: *If [Watergate] ever bottoms out, we might be all right* (1970s+)

◁**bottoms up**▷ *adv phr* DOG FASHION (1950s+)

Bottoms up *sentence* Drink up! Cheers!

bottom woman *n phr* The best-patronized and most dependable woman in a pimp's covey of prostitutes (1960s+)

bounce *n* **1** Energy; vitality; PISS AND VINEGAR, PIZZAZZ • Perhaps *fr* a 1930s term for a lively jazz tempo: *more bounce to the ounce* (1940s+) **2** A prison sentence: *You're going down as an accessory to assault and*

battery, a serious bounce (1950s+ Underworld) 3 (also bump) A sudden and sometime brief increase in rating, popularity, value, etc: The Republicans got a three-point bounce out of their convention (1980+) v 1 To expel; throw out: When he started swearing, they bounced him (1870s+) 2 To discharge or dismiss; FIRE (1880s+) 3 To be rejected for lack of funds in the bank: His checks never bounce (1920s+) 4 To intimidate; bully; ROUST • Esp police use: And I'll want to bounce this Nadine kid, see what she has to say (1600s+)

bounce, the *n phr* **1** Forcible ejection, esp by a person hired to remove unwanted customers; the BUM'S RUSH **2** A dismissal, polite or otherwise; KISS-OFF: *After a brief dialogue with my boss I got the bounce (1870s+)*

bounce something around v phr To think about and discuss an idea, project, etc: *Let's bounce it around a little before we decide (1970s+)*

bounce back v phr To recover; return to action: *She had a bad case of flu, but bounced back in two days (1950s+)*

bounce for or spring for v phr To pay for; treat; PICK UP THE TAB: *somewhere that doesn't bounce for bluecoats (1930s+)*

bounce something off someone v phr To try out an idea or scheme by seeing how someone reacts; seek a quick evaluation: He likes working with people, bouncing off people and having them bounce off him (1970s+)

bounce off the walls v phr Be in a nervous and confused condition; be hyper (1970s+ *Army and medical*)

◁**bounce-on**▷ *n* A sex act; a copulation; FUCK, SCREW: *I want a bounce-on*

(1990s +)

bouncer *n* **1** A person employed to eject unwanted customers from a saloon, restaurant, dance hall, etc (1880s +) **2** A check that is returned for lack of funds; RUBBER CHECK (1920s +) **3** A forged check (1920s + *Underworld*) **See** CHECK BOUNCER

◁**bouncy-bouncy**▷ *n* The sex act (1950s +) **See** PLAY BOUNCY-BOUNCY

bow-and-arrow squad *n phr* A police assignment involving unarmed duty: *They pull an officer's weapon and send him off to a desk-bound bow-and-arrow squad* (1970s +)

Bowery bum *n phr* Skid Row Bum (1940s +)

bowl **See** GOLDFISH BOWL, RUST BOWL

bowlegs *n* A cavalry soldier (1900s + *Army*)

bow out *v phr* To depart, voluntarily and often gracefully: *We wanted her to take the role, but she bowed out* (1940s +)

bowser *n* A person with a doglike or ugly face: *white bowzers on the ball court*

bow tie *n phr* BRUSHBACK: *"Dykstra needs a bow tie." Nolan pitched the next day, and, sure enough, Lenny got his present* (1990s + *Baseball*)

bowwow *n* **1** A dog (1890s +) ◁**2**▷ An unattractive or obnoxious young woman; DOG (1970s +) **3** A frankfurter (1900 +)

bowwows *adj* Beautiful; attractive: *an athletically built blonde who was just bowwows* (1930s +) *n* The feet (1920s +)

bowzed *adj* BOOZED • Included as *bowz'd* in Benjamin Franklin's 1722

list of 225 words meaning “drunk”

box *adj* (also **boxed**) Dead (1970s + *Medical*) **n** 1 A coffin (1600s +)
2 A safe; vault; bank vault (1900s + *Underworld*) <3> The vulva;
vagina: *Her box ain't no rose blossom* (1600s +) <4> The male
genitals, esp as displayed by tight pants; BASKET (1960s +
Homosexuals) 5 Any stringed instrument, esp a guitar (1930s + *jazz*
musicians) 6 An accordion; GROAN BOX (1950s +) 7 A phonograph
(1920s +) 8 Portable stereo radio; GHETTO BOX: *Hey, man, don't mess*
with my box/ They were allowed to keep their boxes because their age
exempted them from normal court procedures (1970s +) 9 A very
tight and awkward situation; cleft stick; BIND: *Those guidelines put me*
in a hell of a box **v** 1 To die: *Oh, she boxed last night* (1970s +
Medical) 2 To kill: *Samalson planned to go back Monday morning, but*
he got boxed (1970s +) **See** BITCH BOX, BLUE BOX, FIRST CRACK OUT OF THE BOX, GIT-
BOX, GO HOME FEET FIRST, IDIOT BOX, IN A BIND, IN THE BOX, NUTHOUSE, OUT OF THE BOX, PETE,
SHINE BOX, SOAPBOX, SQUAWK BOX, STUFF THE BALLOT BOX, THINK-BOX

box, the *n phr* Television or a television set (1950s +)

boxcar *modifier* In high numbers: *boxcar odds* (1950s + *Gambling*) **n**
A large cargo aircraft or bomber (*WWII Army Air Forces*) [modifier
sense from the high numbers seen on the sides of railroad boxcars]

boxcars **n** 1 A throw of two sixes (1900s + *Crapshooting*) 2 Very large
shoes (1940s +)

box someone's **ears** **v phr** To punch someone's ears; also, to tell
someone off: *a good mind to box your ears* (1600 +)

boxed *adj* Drunk (1940s +)

boxed in *modifier* With few or no alternatives; in a corner: *I'm boxed in on the timeframe for this project*

boxed out *adj phr* Totally free and uninhibited, esp because of narcotic intoxication: "*Brush 'em easy, he boxed out,*" *he says of a Pensacola dude, a dealer in contraband (1940s + Narcotics)*

box someone in *v phr* To put someone in a tight and awkward situation; incapacitate someone (1940s +)

◁**box lunch**▷ *n phr* Cunnilingus (1950s +)

box man *n phr* **1** (also **box-worker**) A criminal specializing in opening safes; PETE MAN (1900 + *Underworld*) **2** A professional blackjack or twenty-one dealer (1950s + *Gambling*) **3** A cashier or croupier at a gambling table: *the box men, who are the cashiers of the tables (1950s + Gambling)*

box on the table *v phr* Die on a medical operating or examining table

boy *interj* (also **boy howdy**, **boy o boy**, **boys**) An exclamation of amazement, shock, happiness, intensification, etc; JEEZ, MAN, WOW: *Boy, that was a close one! / Boy o boy, isn't this great? (1890s +)* **n** ◀**1**▶ A black man: *Don't call me "boy"; I'm as old as you are if not older (1850 +)* ◀**2**▶ Any male, regardless of age, working as a porter, elevator operator, etc • With the implication that it is not the job for a man. *Boy* has been used as a term of contempt since about 1300 **3** A male who takes the subservient role in a homosexual relationship; *Peg Boy (1970s + Homosexuals)* **4** Heroin: *But now he had the boy; he could lie around (1920s + Narcotics)* **See** BIG BOY, FAIR-

HAired BOY, FLY-BOY, GOOD OLD BOY, OLD BOY NETWORK, ONE OF THE BOYS, PADDY, POOR BOY, PRETTY BOY, THAT'S MY BOY, TOMBOY, WALKBOY(

boychik or **boychick** *n* A boy; youngster; KID: *Maybe you're crazy about one boychick* [1960s + ; fr Yiddish]

boyo *n* A fellow; man; friend • Often used in address [1970 + ; fr Anglo-Irish]

boys, the *n phr* **1** Any group of men, esp a group of drinking companions, poker players, etc: *an evening out with the boys* **2** A group of criminals or other disreputable types (1880s +) **See** ONE OF THE BOYS

boys in the backroom, the *n phr* Any group of men, esp politicians and their aides, who are privy to and control the inner workings of an enterprise or place: *the salad boys in the back room, oiling up the cabbage* (1880s +)

boys uptown, the *n phr* **1** The political bosses of a city, and their staffs; CITY HALL (1880s +) **2** Any group of influential and unnamed criminals: *The tricksters were "the boys uptown," not yet identified* (1880s +)

boy-toy or **boytoy** *modifier*: the times Madonna has whupped her boy-toy dancers on stage **n** **1** A young woman used like the plaything of a man: *when she plays boy-toy to all your crush objects* (1980s +) **2** A young man used like the plaything of a woman or man: *Paul Newman's 69 now and thinks being the boy toy of yet another generation of women is "undignified"/ a has-been silent screen legend and her young screenwriter boytoy* (1980s +)

bozette *n* A girl; a woman, esp a somewhat vulgar one; a female

bozo; BIMBO: *A drunk babe is a happy babe, whether it's Babe Ruth or some bozette you've snagged at the five-and-dime (1970s+)*

bozo *n* A fellow; a man, esp a muscular type with a meager brain: *This bozo right here next to me [Rep. Thomas P. O'Neill incognito] could probably be a better Congressman than those guys in Congress [1910+; origin unknown; perhaps fr Spanish *bozal*, used in the slave trade and after to designate someone who speaks Spanish badly, hence a stupid person]*

bozo filter *n phr* A desirable but nonexistent device that would automatically exclude fools and louts from computer networks; also, any way of avoiding annoying people, e-mail, etc: *Do you know where I could get a good bozo filter?/ thank goodness for the bozo filter otherwise known as Caller ID (1990s+ Computer)*

◁**braburner**▷ (BRAH bər nər) *n* A very militant feminist: *The media decided henceforth to label feminists as "braburners" [1910+; fr the putative symbolic burning of brassieres as a protest against the restriction of women's freedom]*

brace *n* A very stiff and exaggerated standing at military attention (1930s+ *Armed forces and service academies*) *v* 1 To stop or approach a person and beg for money: *This panhandler came up to me and braced me (1890+)* 2 To confront someone with an accusation: *this would be a good chance to brace Bubba's wife without her husband being present (1950s+)* 3: *The sergeant ordered her to brace* **See** SPLICE THE MAIN BRACE

bracelet *n* A radio transmitter in a band fitting on the ankle and

emitting signals so that the whereabouts of the wearer may be monitored: *drug dealer was released on the condition that he wear an ankle bracelet (1990s +)*

bracelets *n* A pair of handcuffs • Old-fashioned fetters were so called in the 1600s (1840s + *Underworld*)

bracer *n* A drink of liquor (1820s +)

bracket creep *n phr* The raising of wage earners into higher income-tax brackets, esp because of wage raises triggered by inflation: *Tax payments will mount next year from “bracket creep,” the tendency of inflation to push people into higher tax brackets (1970s +)*

bragging rights *n phr* The privilege of boasting about one’s accomplishments; the warrant of superiority: *the burning question of the bragging rights to the world’s hottest chilies/ A town of 2,000 or more had a number of teams vying for local bragging rights (1980s + Sports)*

brag-rags *n* FRUIT SALAD (1950s +)

braid *See* GOLD BRAID

brain *n* An intelligent person; intellectual; good scholar: *The publicity of being a brain did not further her movie career as a glamour girl (1914 +)* *v* To injure with a hard blow to the head • Attested fr 1382 in the full sense, “kill by knocking out the brain”: *The left hook really brained him* *See* BIRDBRAIN, BUBBLE BRAIN, HAVE something ON THE BRAIN, LAMEBRAIN, NOT HAVE BRAIN ONE, PICK someone’s BRAIN, RATTLEBRAIN, SCATTERBRAIN

brain bucket *n phr* **1** A steel helmet (1950s + *Armed services*) **2** HARD HAT

brain-burned or **-fried** *adj* **1** Mentally impaired from drug-taking **2**
Unable to efficiently function mentally because of tiredness: *after a day of this, brain-fried*

brainchild *n* Someone's great idea; a product of creative thinking and word: *my brainchild, a bestseller*

braindead *adj* Stupid; DUMB [1980s + students; The more technical term designating biological death as cessation of brain activity dates fr the 1970s]

brain dish *n phr* A helmet worn for motorcycling, bicycling, in-line skating, etc: *Do I really have to wear this brain dish? (1990s +)*

brain drain *n phr* The loss of useful educated persons, esp professionals, because they can find better conditions elsewhere: *Stalled Economy Speeds Puerto Rico's Brain Drain (1960s + British)*

brain dump *n phr* To talk, explain, expatiate: *Go hang around a mouse potato and see if you can get him to geek out and do a brain dump* [1990s + Computer; based on *screen dump*, a computer command to print everything appearing on the monitor screen]

brained *See* AIRHEADED, BIRDBRAINED, DICK-BRAINED, LAMEBRAINED, NUMB-BRAINED

brainery *n* A college or university (1890s +)

brain-fade *n* Stuporous boredom; tedium: *She and her colleagues fight brain-fade by sizing up customers (1980s +)* **v** To become confused; lose coherence: *I just brain-faded; I got a little confused (1990s +)*

brainiac modifier: since you've been quoting every brainiac dumb-dumb to make your points **n 1** An intelligent person; BRAIN: *Hugo is*

such a brainiac he got 100% on the algebra test **2** An intellectual;
DOUBLE-DOME, EGGHEAD [1980s + ; fr a smart and nasty character in the
Superman comics]

brain one *n phr* The most elementary intelligence; a minimum of
sagacity: *Our leader doesn't exhibit brain one (1970s +)* **See** NOT HAVE
BRAIN ONE

brain-picker *n* A person who exploits the creative notions of others:
nothing but scorn for brain-pickers and imitators (1880s +)

brains *n* **1** Intelligence; mind; SAVVY, SMARTS (*mid-1700s +*) **2** The person
who does the thinking and planning; guiding mind: *Father Paul
Lucano, the real brains of the organization (1920 +)* **See** BEAT one's
BRAINS OUT, FUCK someone'S BRAINS OUT, HAVE SHIT FOR BRAINS, SHIT-FOR-BRAINS

brains out, one's *adv phr* To one's utmost; extremely much;
spectacularly; one's HEAD OFF: *So I played his brains out in spring
training/ Xing his brains out*

brainstorm *n* A sudden idea, esp one that is apt and useful; a happy
insight • *Brainstorm* was a medical term for "mental explosion" by
the 1890s (*1920s +*) **v** To examine and work on a problem by
having a group sit around and utter spontaneously whatever
relevant thoughts they have: *We'll brainstorm the drop in enrollment
(1920s +)*

brain surgeon **See** YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE A BRAIN SURGEON

brain surgery *n phr* Anything very difficult and technical: *This game
isn't brain surgery, but it teaches them to vent without hurting someone/
If a guy doesn't know he's being tailed, well, tailing is not brain surgery*

(1990s +)

brain tablet *n phr* A cigarette (1930s + *Cowboys*)

brain-tap *n* An instance of brain-picking [1990s + ; probably based on the operation called *spinal tap*, in which spinal fluid is drawn off for medical analysis]

brain-teaser *n* (also **brain-twister** and **brain-scratcher**) A puzzle; a hard or tricky question: *here is today's social brain-scratcher* (1920s +)

brainwash *n*: Your line is persuasive, virtually a brainwash **v 1** To cause profound attitudinal changes, usu in a prisoner, by psychological conditioning, supplemented by drugs and physical abuse **2** To change or influence someone's opinions or attitude by methods less stringent than those used on prisoners: *They were brainwashed into joining that crazy cult* [1950s + ; fr Chinese *hsi nao*, "wash brain," which came into US use during and after the Korean War, apparently because of its use by North Koreans and their Chinese allies as custodians of US prisoners of war]

brain wave *n phr* A sudden useful idea; **BRAINSTORM**: *Lou had a brain wave. He offered the boy a C note to let him drive* (1890s +)

brainy *adj* Intelligent; sagacious (1840s +)

brakes *See* **STAND ON one'S BRAKES**

brand spanking new *modifier* Completely new: *a brand spanking new Mini*

brand X *n phr 1* The infantry insignia, crossed rifles (1970s + *Army*)

2 Marijuana (1970s + *Narcotics*) [fr the phrase used in television advertising for unnamed and allegedly inferior products]

brannigan or **branigan** *n* 1 A spree: *a prolonged crossword puzzle*
brannigan 2 A brawl or fracas; DONNYBROOK: *Republicans and Democrats alike are guilty of this brannigan* (1940 +) [1903 +; fr the Irish surname, for unclear reasons]

brass *n* 1 Impudence; effrontery; CHUTZPA • Fr the late 1500s *brass* had the same meaning in the phrase *face of brass*, that is, “brazen-faced” (1700s +) 2 Money • Common in British usage (*late 1500s* +) 3 High officials or managers in general; the BRASS: *There’s lots of vice presidents here but they’re not really brass* (1899 +)

brass, the *n phr* The upper ranks of the military or other uniformed services: *Many a GI hated the brass and the enemy* [Armed forces fr WWII; probably a shortening of *brass hat*] **See** the TOP BRASS

◁**brass balls**▷ *n phr* Courage; audacity; GUTS: *But I had the brass balls to hold out for a piece of the action* (1960s +)

brassed off *adj phr* Ready to quit; sated; bored; FED UP (*WWII Royal Air Force*)

brass hat *n phr* 1 A high-ranking officer in the military or other uniformed services (1890s + *British*) 2 Any high-ranking official; manager; chief; BOSS (1930s +)

brass monkey *n* Very cold weather [1857 +; orig referring to a brass figure of a monkey; not, as widely believed, a nautical term relating to cannonballs]

brass tacks *See* DOWN TO BRASS TACKS

brat¹ *n* A child, esp an obnoxious or troublesome one [1505 +; origin unknown]

brat² *n* Bratwurst, a kind of sausage: *a neighborhood more attuned to baseball, brats, and beer (1980s +)*

-brat combining word Designating a child raised in a stated environment: *Army brat/ opera brat/ Navy brat/ faculty brat/ Air Force brat/ Masako led a normal life—normal, that is, for a diplomatic brat with an ambitious father (1940s +)*

brat pack *n phr* A group of young metropolitan males deemed worthy of media attention: *Richard Price was a one-man Bronx-boy Brat Pack [1980s +; modeled on rat pack]*

brat-sit *v*: BABY-SIT (1990s +)

braver than Dick Tracy *adj phr* Audacious; too brave for one's own good; BALLSY, GUTSY [1980s +; fr the stoic detective hero of a comic strip, whose courage was acknowledged when Al Capp satirized him as Fearless Fosdick]

brawl *n* A noisy, riotous party [1920s +; fr *brawl*, “a noisy fight,” of obscure origin; perhaps related to Dutch *brallen*, “brag,” and Low German *brallen*, “shout, roar”; perhaps fr French *branle*, “an energetic circle dance”]

Brazilian (also **Brazilian wax** or **bikini wax**) *n* A technique in which all or most of the pubic hair is removed with a hot-wax treatment: *Brazilians on “Sex and the City”*

bread *n* Money; DOUGH [1940s + , but esp cool talk & 1960s + counterculture; probably fr *dough*; perhaps related to earlier *gingerbread*, “money”] **See** the BEST THING SINCE SLICED BREAD, SMALL POTATOES

bread and butter *modifier*: a routine, bread-and-butter type of case
n phr The simple necessities of life; basic needs (*mid-1735* +)

breadbasket *n* The stomach; abdomen; KISHKES, LA-BONZA (*1750s* +)

breadly **See** WHITE BREADY

break *n* **1** An escape or attempt to escape (*1830s* +) **2** A brief period of rest or relaxation: *Take a five-minute break* (*1860s* +) **3** A stroke of luck, good or bad • Probably fr the *break* in billiards, when balls arrange themselves in either a good or bad way: *I got a break and made it on time/ Football’s a game of breaks to some extent* (*1911* +) **4** A stroke of mercy or favor: *Give me one break and I’ll never flunk again* **5** An improvised passage; solo; LICK (*1930s* + *Jazz musicians*)
v **1**: *Let’s break while I think about it all* **2** To interrupt or abandon some regular practice: *to break training/ break an old routine* (*1400* +) **3** To happen; occur; fall out: *If things break right I’ll be OK* (*1914* +) **4** To tame a wild horse; subdue someone’s spirit (*late 1400s* +) **5** To bankrupt a company or person (*1612* +) **6** To demote; reduce in rank; BUST: *They broke him back to buck private* (*late 1600s* +) **7** To separate, esp from a clinch: *The boxers broke and came at each other again* (*1890s* +) **8** (also **breakdance** or **boogie**) To do a kind of dancing that evolved in the inner-city ghettos and is characterized esp by intricate writhings and shows of balance and strength close to the floor • *Break down* was used by 1819 to describe very energetic black dancing: *You can go running.*

You can swim. Or you can break (1980s + Black teenagers) 9 (also service break) To win a game from an opponent who is serving (1950s + Tennis) See COFFEE BREAK, EVEN BREAK, TAKE A BREAK

break a leg *sentence* Best wishes; good luck; I hope you do very well [fr theater; perhaps fr German *Hals und Bein brechen*, “break your neck and leg,” a similar good-luck formula; the same grim warding-off spell is expressed in Italian *in bocca al lupo*, “good luck!”]

break one’s arm patting oneself on the back *v phr* To be very self-gratulatory; bask in smugness: *I think we’ve improved the Met a great deal. I don’t mean I’m breaking my arm patting myself on the back (1990s +)*

◁**break one’s ass**▷ (or ▷**balls**▷ or **buns** or **butt** or **cork** or **hump** or **nut** or ▷**sweet ass**▷) **See** BUST one’S ASS

break (or pop) a sweat *v phr* To perspire from exercise or exertion; exert oneself: *Students were not the only ones breaking a sweat Sunday/ They want to feel great and look great and not pop a sweat (1970s + Prizefight)*

breakaway *adj* Unconventional; rebellious: *a breakaway rock group/ breakaway mind-set (1930s +) modifier* Made to break or collapse easily: *bashed with a breakaway chair (1950s + Theater)*

break bad *v phr* To become hostile and menacing: *I don’t want to make eye contact with this sucker because he may break bad on me (1970s + Black)*

break someone’s balls *v phr 1* To give someone a hard time, esp

nagging or overwhelming them: *She takes every opportunity to break his balls* **2** To overwork or be overworked: *breaking my balls to finish this in seven weeks*

break someone's brains v phr Injure someone severely: *any more of that shit and I'm gonna break your brains (1990s +)*

break (or bust) chops v phr To injure; punish; literally, to break someone's face or mouth: *But busting Luana's chops by busting her boyfriend's wasn't going to exactly get me in her good graces (1970s +)*

break (or bust) someone's chops or balls v phr 1 To verbally assault someone; harass: *I love it here. I can work hung over and nobody busts my chops/ Well, she turned absolutely livid, and ever since she's been busting my chops* **2** BUST one's ASS (1970s +)

breakdance *See* BREAK

break something down v phr To explain something; present something in detail: *Break it down for me, Baby (1960s + Black)*

breaker n A person who dances with intricate writhings and shows of balance and strength close to the floor, esp and originally to rhythmic, staccato songs spoken rather than sung, in a style indigenous to the urban ghetto: *the night he and other breakers showed up, ready to boogie (1980s + Black teenagers)* *See* BACK-BREAKER, JAWBREAKER

breakfast *See* FROM HELL TO BREAKFAST, MEXICAN BREAKFAST, SHOOT one's COOKIES

breakfast of champions n phr An alcoholic drink taken upon waking: *bad sign that he has the breakfast of champions* [fr the advertising phrase for the breakfast cereal Wheaties]

break someone or something **in v phr** To put through an initial period of easy use or training before requiring full function (1840s+)

break it up v phr To stop fighting, quarreling, chatting, etc: *all right, cats, break it up* • Usual a stern command (1930s+)

break luck v phr To get the first client of the day (1950s+ *Prostitutes*)

break out v phr 1 To escape from prison or some other confining situation 2 To show symptoms of disease or discomfort: *He broke out in a purple rash* (1530s+) 3 To bring out; produce for use • Originally for nautical use where it referred to the freeing of cargo prior to unloading: *When I came he broke out the Scotch* (1890s+) 4 To be the case; be apparent: *We need donations; that's how it breaks out here* (1990s+)

◁**break out into assholes**▷ **v phr** To become very frightened [1970s+; an allusion to the loose bowels associated with fear]

break out the jams *See* KICK OUR THE JAMS

breaks, the n phr 1 Good luck; special favors: *If I get the breaks I'll prevail* 2 Bad luck: *Them's the breaks* (1911+)

break the back v phr 1 To do the hardest part, or most, of a job (1890+) 2 To make ineffective; cripple: *The UN's mission is to break the back of the warlords in Somalia* (1970s+)

break the bank v phr To use all or most of the available money or resources to do something: *the website redesign break the bank*

break the ice *v phr* To dissipate the sense of strain among people who do not know each other: *I broke the ice by saying she looked like Charlemagne's mother (late 1500s +)*

break the points *v phr* To score enough points to cover the point-spread (1970s + *Sports & gambling*)

breakup *n* A separation or dissolution (mid-1700s +)

break up *v phr* **1** To separate or to cause separation or dissolution of a close relationship: *to break up a marriage/ After ten years they broke up (mid-1700s +)* **2** To laugh or cause to laugh uncontrollably; FRACTURE, SLAY • The synonymous phrase *break all up* is attested in the 1890s: *His doctor shtick broke them up (1920s +)*

break wind *v phr* To flatulate; FART (mid-1600s +)

◁**breastworks**▷ *n* The female breasts; BAZOOM (1860s +)

breathe easy *v phr* To be relieved of concern; relax (1950s +)

breather *n* A person who makes harassing telephone calls and merely breathes, rather than talking, into the mouthpiece (1970s +) *See* HEAVY BREATHER, MOUTH-BREATHER

breathing *adj* Alive, at least: *They'll take any warm body that's breathing (1970s +)* *See* MOUTH-BREATHING

breeder *n* A heterosexual person; STRAIGHT: *the scornful term "breeders," used by some urban gays about heterosexual couples with children (1980s + Homosexuals)*

breeze *n* **1** An easy task; anything easy; CINCH, CAKE-WALK (1920s + *Baseball*) **2:** *They had a breeze today at Ossining* *v* **1** To go or move

rapidly and easily: *to breeze through work/ I breezed out (1907+)* **2**
To escape from prison (*1940s+ Prison*)

breeze, the *See* BAT THE BREEZE

breeze off v phr To leave; depart; BOOK (*1920s+*)

breezy adj Very easygoing and jovial; cheery: *a breezy “Good morning” (1870+)*

brekkie n Breakfast: *It was brekkie with Ed Meese [1980s+; perhaps modeled on Oxford brekker, attested by 1890]*

brew (or brewhaha or brewski), a n phr **1** A glass, bottle, or can of beer; a beer • *Brewhaha* has its own variants: *brewha, haha, and ha: She treated me to a brew* **2** Coffee or tea: *Dunkin’ Donuts is my kind of brew* [first form 1940s+, third 1980s+; second form 1970s+ fr French *brouhaha*, “fuss, ado”]

brew-out n A beer party; BEER BUSY (*1970s+ College students*)

brewster n **1** A beer drinker **2** A beer; brewski

briar n A file or hacksaw (*1830s+ Underworld*)

brick n **1** A decent, generous, reliable person (*1830s+ British students*) **2** A kilogram (2.2 pounds) of tightly compacted marijuana (*1970s+ Narcotics*) **3** A very inaccurate basketball shot (*1980s+ Students*) [first sense said to be a clever student version of Aristotle’s phrase *tetragonos aner*, “four-sided man, foursquare man,” used in the *Nichomachean Ethics* to describe a person of public merit whose praise might appear on a square monument of tribute] *See* DROP A BRICK, HIT someone LIKE A TON OF BRICKS, HIT THE BRICKS, PRESS

THE BRICKS, SHIT A BRICK, THREE BRICKS SHY OF A LOAD

brickhouse *n* A very busty woman [1980s+ Students; because she is *built like a brick shithouse*]

bricklayer *n* An inaccurate basketball shooter: *His drawback is that he's a bricklayer from the free throw line* (1990s+ Sports)

bricks, the *n phr* The streets and sidewalks of a city: *I had to get out on the bricks and hustle* (1940s+) **See** HIT THE BRICKS, PRESS THE BRICKS

bricks and mortar *n phr* Buildings and construction, esp as an item of expenditure and administrative emphasis for an institution (1850s+)

◁**brick shithouse**▷ **See** BUILT LIKE A BRICK SHITHOUSE

bricktop *n* A redheaded person (1850s+)

Brickyard, the *n phr* The motor speedway at Indianapolis, Indiana, site of the annual 500-mile race [1970s+ ; fr the *brick* construction of the track]

bridesmaid syndrome *n phr* Misfortune of being very close, but never the winner: *Suffering from bridesmaid syndrome, which had left her the loser in 6 of the 8 finals she reached last year* (1990s+)

brig *n* **1** The detention cell of a ship **2** A naval prison (1850s+ *Nautical*) **3** Any military jail or prison (1890s+)

bright *n* Day; the daytime (1930s+ *Black*)

bright-eyed and bushy-tailed *adj phr* Eager and energetic; in splendid fettle (1950s+ *Air Force*) **See** STREET-SMART

bright-line *v* Single out; focus on; emphasize: *My final comment, and*

I want to bright-line it [1980s+; fr the use of a usu yellow felt pen to mark important passages]

brights *n* The bright or upper-beam headlights of a car: *into the brights of an oncoming car (1970s+)*

brig rat *n phr* A military prisoner (1940s+ *Armed forces*)

brill *adj* Brilliant: *John Turturro is brill as the gawky Jew who takes a dive (1981+)*

brilliant *interj* Excellent: *Go outside for lunch? Brilliant!*

◀**Brillo or Brillo-pad**▶ *n* A black person: *a black woman admitted that white teenagers called her “Brillo-pad” while she was standing at a bus stop [1980s+; fr Brillo™, a brand of scouring pad with tight wiry fibers resembling tight curly hair]*

brim *n* A hat: *nice brim, Indiana Jones*

bringdown *modifier* **1:** *a bringdown scene* **2:** *that bringdown face* *n*
1 A cutting rebuke or comment; a deflation: *Polite applause is a bit of a bringdown* **2** A disappointing or depressing performance **3** A morose person: *A “bringdown” is a depressing character [1950s+ beat & cool talk fr 1940s+ jazz musicians]*

bring someone down *v phr* To depress; dispirit; sadden: *I’m afraid your jolly word brings me down (1960s+ Students fr beat & cool talk)*

bring down the house *v phr* To score a resounding theatrical success: *Old Man Dillinger strode onto the stage and brought down the house/ first heard on a Broadway stage in 1930, when she brought down the house singing “I Got Rhythm” (1840s+ Theater)*

bring home the bacon (groceries may replace bacon) v phr 1 To achieve a tangible goal or task: *Their new tailback brought home the bacon* 2 To earn enough to support oneself and one's family (1908 +)

bring it v phr 1 To throw a baseball fast (1980s + *Baseball*) 2 To play very well; do the job: *He's a heck of a football player. He can bring it* (1900s +)

bring money sentence What we are talking about is quite expensive: *They have plans for two more hotels. Bring money. Breakfast for two, without champagne, can run to \$50 or \$60* (1970s +)

bring someone on v phr To arouse sexually

bring scunnion (or smoke) v phr 1 To inspire fear or anxiety in others 2 To concentrate fire, esp artillery fire [1970s + *Army*; origin unknown]

bring something to a screeching halt v phr To end or cease something immediately: *If I were you, I'd bring that association to a screeching halt* (1970s +)

bring something up v phr 1 To introduce into the conversation; mention: *better not bring up that new idea* 2 To vomit or cough up: *Heimlich brought up his lunch*

bring (or get or keep) someone up to speed v phr To give necessary information; FILL someone IN, PUT someone IN THE PICTURE: *Well, look, I appreciate your keeping me up to speed/ Johnson's teammates have gone out of their way to help him get up to speed* [fr the need to increase gradually the speed of a machine or phonograph]

turntable, video recorder, etc, to the proper rate]

briny, the *n phr* The ocean; the sea (1850s +)

Brit *adj* British: *the Brit rock scene n: two Brits and a Yank* (1900 + British)

bro' or **bro** *n* **1** Brother (*mid-1600s* +) **2** A black person: *the slick-speaking bro who scores points off the ofay* (1960s + Black) **3** A man; GUY: *the pack of twenty-seven bros jamming along the freeway/ Hawk murmured, "Right on, bro," and drank some champagne* (1970s +)

◁**broad**▷ *n* **1** A woman • Used almost entirely by men and considered offensive by many women: *Sorry lady, no broads allowed in here/ So here was this suburban broad* **2** A promiscuous woman; prostitute [1910 +; probably from the notion "broad in the beam"]

broad-arsed or **broad-beamed** *adj* Wide in the buttocks (1916 +)

broad-gauge *adj* Very versatile and competent: *We're looking for a few broad-gauge people for an exciting project* (1970s +)

broad strokes, the *n phr* General details; basic facts: *I don't want any details. I understand your hesitation. Just the broad strokes* (1980s +)

brodie or **Brodie** *n* **1** A fall; tumble (*late 1800s* +) **2** A total failure; fiasco; FLOP, TURKEY (1920s + Theater) **3** A mistake (1920 + Students) **4** A squealing, rubber-burning skidding of a motorcycle or car (1950s + Motorcyclists) [fr Steve Brodie, who claimed to have leaped off the Brooklyn Bridge in 1886, but failed to have the act witnessed]

broke *adj* Entirely out of money; destitute (1660s +) **See** ALL HELL BROKE

LOOSE, DEAD BROKE, FLAT BROKE, GO BROKE, GO FOR BROKE

broken arrow *n phr* An accident involving nuclear weapons: *The idea that this is a “broken arrow” never released is incorrect (1980s +)*

broken-bat bleeder *n phr* A weak blow on which the hitter breaks his bat, and that trickles out for a hit: *It’s appropriate that we should lose that game on a frickin’ broken-bat bleeder up the middle (1990s + Baseball)*

broken-nose crowd, the *n phr* The organized-crime syndicates; MOB
• Compare *bentnose*: *There is a big-time problem here that wouldn’t be one if the broken-nose crowd still ran the gambling houses (1990s +)*

broken record *n phr* Something or someone repetitive, tedious, and importunate: *He kept asking for a raise, like a broken record*

broke to the curb *adj phr* Ugly; ill-favored; BUCKLED, CRUSHED, PISS-UGLY
(1990s + Teenagers)

broolly *n* An umbrella • Thoroughly British, with some US use
(1870s + British schools)

bromide *n* 1 An old, stale joke or scrap of wisdom: *a rolling illustration of the bromide that beggars can’t be choosers* 2 A boring, tedious person: *Clutterbuck, with his wilted wit, was a total bromide*
[1900s + ; fr the use of *bromide* as a sedative]

bronc or bronk *n* 1 BRONCO 2 A catamite; PUNK (*Hoboes*)

bronco *n* A young male not accustomed to nor complaisant in homosexual relations (1970s + *Homosexuals*) [fr Spanish *bronco*, “coarse, rough”]

bronco buster *n phr* **1** (Variations: **peeler** or **snapper** or **twister** may replace **buster**) A cowboy who tames broncos to riding; also, a rodeo performer who rides unruly horses in competition (1880s + *Cowboys*) **2** CHICKENHAWK (1970s + *Homosexuals*)

Bronx cheer *n phr* **1** A loud, rude, flatulating noise made with the tongue and lips; the BIRD, RASPBERRY: *The Duchess was startled but serene when the crowd greeted her with a fortissimo Bronx cheer* **2** Any outright and precise expression of derision: *That book will get Bronx cheers from every critic* (1920s +)

brookie *n* A brook trout (1950s +)

Brooklyn side *n phr* The left side of the bowling alley as one faces the pins [1940s + Bowling; fr the location of *Brooklyn* as one looks south along the East River]

broom *v* To run or walk away, esp to escape by running (1800s +)
See HAVE A BROOM UP one's ASS

brother *interj* An exclamation of surprise, amusement, vehemence, etc; BOY, JEEZ, MAN: *"The lady was prepared to take it if it did." "Brother!"* (1920s +) *n* **1** A man; fellow; GUY • Used in addressing strangers: *I don't know you, brother, but you said a mouthful* (1910 +) **2** A black person; BLOOD • Common and significant fr 1960s: *All you brothers here, and you white people too, got to take care of business* (1920 + *Black*) **3** A fellow professional; colleague: *I'd like to ask Brother Donaldson something, if I may* (mid-1300s +) *See* SOUL BROTHER

Brother *See* BIG BROTHER

brouhaha (BREW hah hah) *n* A noisy clamor; fuss; FLAP [1950s + ; fr

French; possibly ultimately fr Hebrew *baruch haba* “blessed are those who come (in the name of the Lord),” Psalm 118, although the line of derivation is complex and tenuous]

brow *See* HIGHBROW, LOWBROW, MIDDLEBROW

browbeat *v* To intimidate; STRONG-ARM (1830s +)

browbeater *n* One who intimidates: *alternately a party-throwing cheerleader and a sadistic browbeater*

brown *adj* Opposed to environmental preservation and restoration • The opposite of *green*: *The chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers is judged brown, rather than green, on the issue of timetables for climate control (1990s +)* *v* <1> also **brown-hole** To do anal intercourse; BUGGER, BUNGHOLE (1930s +)

brown-bag or **brown-bag it** *v* To take one’s lunch to the office, or one’s liquor to a club or restaurant, in a paper bag: *for brown-bagging booze at places that allow this practice/ brown-bagging it for lunch (1960s +)*

brown bagger *n* **1** A person who brown-bags (1960s +) **2** A very ugly person; DOUBLE-BAGGER (1970s +) [second sense fr the notion that such a person should wear a bag over the head to hide the face]

browed off *adj phr* **1** Restless from waiting or wasting time; bored; BRASSED OFF (*British armed forces since WWI*) **2** Angry; PISSED OFF: *He got browed off at the way they treated the kids (1930s +)*

brown eyes *See* BIG BROWN EYES

brownie¹ *n* BROWN-NOSER [WWII armed forces; fr the color of feces]

brownie² *n* A traffic-control and parking-violation officer [1980s + ; fr the color of the uniform]

Brownie points *n phr* A fancied unit of credit and approval: *I'll get Brownie points for helping him/ a place where you get big shiny brownie points, cash, sex, and adulation* [1960s + ; fr merit points awarded to *Brownies* toward promotion to Junior Girl Scouts]

brown-nose *n* also **brown-noser**: *He got there by being a pious and effective brown-nose* *v* To flatter and pamper in order to gain approval and advantage; curry favor; APPLE-POLISH: *He's just like any other person who's in a position to screw you. You gotta brown nose* [1930s + Military academy students; fr the color of feces presumably acquired when one has one's nose at the flatteree's anus]

brown out or **brownout** *n* A period when electricity is dimmed or fading; a partial blackout: *a brownout if some power supply is retained* *v* For electricity, to fade or dim

bruiser *n* A big, strong man, esp a pugilist (*mid-1700s* +)

brush *n* **1** A mustache (*1820s* +) **2** A fight; squabble; disagreement: *have had drug or alcohol problems, and have experienced a "brush with the law"* (*1840s* +)

brush, the *n phr* **1** The backwoods; jungle; the BOONDOCKS (*1770s* +) **2** A snub; quick dismissal; BRUSH-OFF (*1930s* +) **See** GIVE SOMEONE THE BRUSH

brushback *modifier* Pitched very close to the batter, as if to hit him: *knocked me over like a good brushback pitch* *n* BEANBALL, DUSTER: *Throw another brushback and you're out of the game* (*1950s* + Baseball)

brush someone back v phr To pitch close to a batter in order to force him or her away from home plate and upset the batting poise (1950s+ *Baseball*)

brush-fire war n phr A small-scale war that erupts suddenly and might spread (1950s+)

brush-off n the BRUSH (1930s+)

brush someone off v phr To snub or dismiss someone pointedly; GIVE SOMEONE THE BRUSH (1930s+)

brush up v phr 1 *To clean; make neat and clean* (1600+) 2 (also **brush up on**) To improve, review, or perfect one's mastery: *Brush up your Shakespeare. Start quoting him now* (1830s+)

bruss n An extremely stiff and exaggerated military position of attention; BRACE [1950s+ *Army*; fr *brace*]

brutal adj Excellent; great (1960s+ *Students*)

BS or bs (pronounced as separate letters) **n** BULLSHIT (1900+) **v** To deceive or attempt to deceive with flattery, lies, etc: *Don't BS a BSer*

b school n Business school, esp for an MBA: *applied to b school at Yale*

BSer n BULLSHIT ARTIST: *He's not a big BSer* (1900+)

B-side n The second or other side of a phonograph record, of an issue, etc; FLIP SIDE (1960s+)

BTO or bto (pronounced as separate letters) **n** BIG-TIME OPERATOR (1940s+)

BTW (pronounced as separate letters) **adv** By the way (1990s +
Computer network)

bub¹ **n** BOOB, TIT (1960 +)

bub² **n** A man; fellow; brother; GUY • Used in direct address, with a slightly insulting intent: *Okay, bub, get the hell outta my way* [1830s + ; fr *bubba* fr *brother*]

bubba **n** **1** Brother • Not uncommon as a nickname: *Here comes big Bubba Jones (1860s + Southern)* **2** also often **Bubba** A person of simple Southern rural culture; CRACKER, GOOD OLD BOY • Occurrence increased enormously during the early years of the Clinton administration: *People watching “Jeopardy!” aren’t just bubbas out there/ He doesn’t have your typical “Bubba” approach to state government (1980s +)* [Imitation of baby talk]

Bubbafest **n** A celebration of Southern rural culture: *Greer, SC, is holding a Bubbafest, complete with country music, sports, wading pools full of grits, a Moon Pie toss, and the crowning of the royal Bubba and Bubbette*

Bubbette **n** A woman Bubba (1990s +)

bubble brain **n** *phr* A stupid and vapid person; AIRHEAD: *Did I want to establish that, bubble brain though I seemed to him, there were sound reasons? (1960s +)*

bubble-brained **adj** Stupid; vapid: *Suzanne Somers’ bubble-brained Chrissy (1960s +)*

bubble-butt **n** The bulbous stern found on many 1990s cars:

Chryslers and Tauruses and Toyotas all have “bubble-butts” (1990s +)

bubble economy *n phr* An economy that overexpands and must burst: *the bubble economy of the ‘80s (1990s +)*

bubblegum machine *n phr* The flashing colored lights on the roof of a police car; GUMBALL, PARTY HAT: *Many of us come to the same realization as the bubblegum machine lights up behind us while we cruise at 85 mph (1960s +)*

bubblegummer *n* A young teenager; TEENYBOPPER (1960s +)

bubblegum music or **bubblegum modifier**: The rap itself is sheer bubblegum monotony/ The new album is less bubblegum, something kids and adults can relate to **n phr** Rock-and-roll music that appeals to young teenagers: *young adult audience dissatisfied with “bubblegum music”/ so fundamental that one might refer to it as “heavy bubble gum” (1960s +)*

bubblegum set, the *n phr* Young teenagers; TEENYBOPPERS (1960s +)

bubblehead *n* A stupid person, esp one who is frivolous and flighty; AIRHEAD, BUBBLE BRAIN: *Linda was, a polite word for dumb cunt, a bubblehead (1950s +)*

bubbles, the *adj phr* All fun; all beer and skittles: *Think life is the bubbles when you’re Batman? (1990s +)*

bubble the pot *v phr* To try something out; learn by experiment: *You have to bubble the pot, stand back and see what floats to the top (1990s +)*

bubbly *n* Champagne; sparkling wine (1920 +)

bubby (also **boobie**, **bubbe**, **bubbie**, **bubeleh**) (BU bee) *n* Darling;

BABY, SWEETIE, TOOTS • A term of affection with general application:

Bubby, it's Hollywood. A little mistake [1940s +; fr Yiddish *bubele*, an endearing epithet, fr Hebrew *buba*, “doll,” which is much like Latin *pupa*, “doll”]

bubkes or **bobkes** or **bupkes** (BŃŃB kəs, BŃŃP-) *adv* Absurdly little:

That it sold bubkes may say just as much for his laziness and his hubris

n Something trivial; nothing; BEANS: *We've gone from bubkes to big deals in a year/ They've waved bye-bye to the likes of Julius Irving and gotten bubkes in return/ paying bupkes for rent* [1940s +; fr Yiddish, “goat dung,” fr Russian, “beans”]

◁**bubs**▷ (BŃŃBZ) *n* A woman's breasts; BOOB² (1900s +)

buck *n* 1 A dollar (1850s +) 2 A hundred dollars, esp as a bet

(1960s + *Gambling*) 3 BUCK PRIVATE 4 A Roman Catholic priest

(1920s + *Hoboes*) 5 A young male Indian; Native American brave

(1800 +) 6 A young black man (1830s +) 7 Any young man, esp a

strong and spirited one; BUCKO (*mid-1700s* +) *v* 1 To resist; defy; go up against • Often in the negative: *You can't buck the system/ Life is a combination hard to buck, A proposition difficult to beat* (1850s +) 2

To work for personal advancement; aspire eagerly; covet: *I'm*

bucking for that dealership (1880s +) 3 To pass along a letter,

memorandum, problem, etc, usu without taking action; PASS THE BUCK:

Let's buck this one to the Committee on Hot Potatoes (WWII armed forces) [all senses ultimately fr *buck*, “male animal, usually

horned”; the semantics are complex: for example, the first sense is said to be fr the fact that a *buck* deer's skin was more valuable than

a female's skin; the other senses have most to do with male behavior of a butting and strutting sort] **See** BANG FOR THE BUCK, BIG BUCKS, the BUCK STOPS HERE, FAST BUCK, PASS THE BUCK, SAWBUCK

buckage *n* Money: *he's trying to get buckage off me*

bucked *adj* Pleased; proud; braced: *After that win they were really bucked with themselves (1907 +)*

bucket *n* **1** A car, esp a big, old car (1930s +) **2** A ship, esp an old and slow ship; RUST BUCKET (1840s + *Merchant marine & Navy*) **3** A destroyer; CAN, TIN CAN (*Navy by WWII*) **4** The buttocks; rump: *Knocked him on his bucket (1930s +)* **5** The basketball net (1920s + *Basketball*) **6** A basketball goal: *He'll make ten buckets a game (1920s + Basketball)* **7** The rearmost part of the batter's box • The source expression was "have his foot in the water-bucket": *had his foot way back in the bucket/ Emily steps into the bucket when going for a pitch (1913 + Baseball)* **8** Jail: *These days, the Gray Bar Motel is a synonym for "the bucket," which means jail (1990s + Los Angeles police)* **v** To speed; BARREL: *The kids were bucketing along (1860s +)*

See BRAIN BUCKET, someone CAN'T CARRY A TUNE IN A BUCKET, DROP one's BUCKETS, FOR CRYING OUT LOUD, GO TO HELL IN A HANDBASKET, GUTBUCKET, KICK THE BUCKET, LARD-BUCKET, RUST BUCKET, SLEAZE-BUCKET, SLIMEBAG

buckethead *n* A stupid person; BLOCKHEAD • Probably originally fr the blunt, thickish head of a donkey or mule (1950s +)

bucket of blood *n phr* A nasty saloon, filthy restaurant, etc: *It was about what he figured: a real bucket of blood. White tiled walls slick with grease (1915 +)*

bucket of bolts *n phr* An old car, airplane, etc; JALOPY (1940s +)

bucket shop modifier: A sleazy bucket-shop operation **n phr** A place where very dubious stocks, commodities, real estate, etc, are sold, often by telephone solicitation [1880+; origin uncertain; *bucket*, “cheat, swindle,” is attested in 1812 and may be the source; another account has illicit traders sending down by elevator for “another *bucketful*” of dupes]

buck general n phr A brigadier general [1940s+ Army; modeled on *buck private* and *buck sergeant*, all three denoting a soldier of the lowest rank within the category]

buckle v To hit; CLOBBER (1990s+ Teenagers)

buckled adj Ugly; CRUSHED, PISS-UGLY (1990s+ Teenagers)

buckle down v phr To set seriously to work; put slothful ease behind one (1860s+)

buckle your seat belts v phr To get ready for trouble; take precautions; BATTEN DOWN THE HATCHES [1970s+; fr the pilot’s order to passengers as an airplane approaches danger]

buck naked n phr Entirely nude; BARE-ASS: *My God, Sal, them women is buck naked in them magazines* (1920s+)

bucko modifier: The bucko skipper was a nasty sadist **n 1** Fellow; friend; comrade; buddy; guy **2** A mean and dangerous man: *The mate aboard the Pride of Hoboken was a notorious bucko* (1800s+ Merchant marine)

buckpasser n Someone who rarely or never takes responsibility: *a whole family of buckpassers*

buck private *n phr* An Army private; soldier of the lowest rank
[1870s + Army; origin unknown]

buckra *n* A white man, esp a poor and mean one; CRACKER, PADDY
[1790 + Black British; probably fr *mbakara*, “master,” fr several
West African languages]

bucks *See* BIG BUCKS, IN THE BUCKS, LIKE A MILLION BUCKS

buck sergeant *n phr* An Army sergeant, wearing three stripes [Army
fr WWI; origin unknown]

buck stops here, the *sentence* This is the place where responsibility
must be accepted; a decision must be made here • Attributed
usually to President Harry S Truman [1940s + ; The *buck* is the
same as in *pass the buck*]

buck up *v phr* To cheer up; brace: *Immigrant life lets people down as
soon as it bucks them up (1850s + British schools)*

buckyball *n* A buckminsterfullerene, a molecule shaped like a
geodesic dome [1990 + ; fr R Buckminster “Bucky” Fuller, who
designed the geodesic dome]

bud¹ *n 1* Friend; fellow; GUY • Used only in direct address, often with
hostile intent: *Okay, bud, that’ll do (1850s +) 2* A very close friend;
BUDDY, PAL: *Just be glad I’m your bud/ She hid out with various buds and
in runaway shelters (1930s +)* [fr *buddy*, a childish pronunciation of
brother]

bud² *n* Marijuana: *There was no pain yet, just numbness, kind of like
smoking bud* [1980s + Teenagers; fr *Budda*, *Buddha sticks*, earlier

terms for marijuana]

buddy *n* **1** BUD¹ **2** A man's closest male friend; PAL • During WWI this term took on a particularly strong sentimental value **3** A male's partner in work or sport *v* BUDDY UP [1850+; fr earlier *butty*, "partner, chum," said to be fr Romany; probably influenced by a childish pronunciation of *brother*] **See** ACE BOON COON, ASSHOLE BUDDY, GOOD BUDDY

buddy-buddy *adj*: *Some are buddy-buddy with the players/He is not buddy-buddy, although he insisted that the photographer take their pictures together* *n* **1** A close friend; BUDDY (1940s+) **2** A person who is too friendly; an importunate acquaintance (1960s+) *v*: *Look at that guy buddy-buddying Joe*

buddyroo *n* BUDDY, PAL: *You should've seen the way they said hello. Old buddyroos (1940s+)*

buddy seat *n phr* A passenger portion on a motorcycle seat (1950s+) **See** IN THE DRIVER'S SEAT

buddy store *n phr* A military refueling facility for aircraft (Vietnam War Air Force & Navy)

buddy up *v phr* To share living quarters and conditions with; form a close association or two-person team: *These guys are alike; OK if they buddy up?/Swimmers, buddy up (1930+)*

buddy up to someone *v phr* To become close and comradely with; ingratiate oneself with: *He's hanging out with Watson now and buddying up to him/Lawrence smarmily buddies up to these women (1950s+)*

budget *adj* Low-quality or cheap: *No thanks on the budget toilet paper*

budget squeeze or crunch *n* A situation where there is not enough money for a project or plan: *college boys in a budget crunch*

buff¹ *n* A devotee or enthusiast; hobbyist; FAN, NUT: *I like to think I'm a people buff* [originally *fire buff*, because New York City volunteer firefighters about 1820 wore *buff*-colored, light brownish yellow coats; transferred to persons who like to watch fires, then to enthusiasts in general]

buff² *adj* Naked [1604 +; probably fr the pale yellowish color of the leather called *buff*, likened to skin] *See* IN THE BUFF

buff³ *adj* (also **buffed**, **buffed out**) Well-built; muscular; HUNKY: *Looking mighty buff, by the way (1980s + Teenagers)* *v* (also **buff out**) To do body-building; put on muscle; become brawnier: *Fudgie wondered if Tweezer had buffed out in San Quentin (1980s + Teenagers)* *v phr* (also **buff up**) To be ingratiating and attentive, so as to keep on good terms: *Gotta go. Gotta buff (1990s + Hollywood)* [probably fr *buff*, “polish, make attractive,” a process originally done with a leather *buff stick*; the *adj* sense may be derived fr *buffalo*, as an image of strength]

buff⁴ or **buff up** *v* or *v phr* To make a patient's chart look good, esp in preparing him or her for discharge [1970s + Medical; fr *buff*, “to polish”]

Buff *n* An HH53 long-range rescue helicopter, called a “big ugly fat fellow” (1960s + *Air Force*)

buffalo *n* <1> A heavy or fat woman; cow (1950s +) <2> A black

person • This sense reflects that black troopers were called *buffalo soldiers* by Native Americans (1870s +) **v 1** To confuse someone purposely, esp in order to cheat or dupe (1870 +) **2** To intimidate; COW; BULLDOZE (1890 +)

buffalo butt n phr A person with large buttocks; FAT-ASS: *I mean “buffalo butt” could be a term of, uh, endearment (1970s + Students)*

buffalo chips modifier Like the feces of a buffalo; COWFLOP: *give you that stretch valise buffalo chips thing (1840 +)*

buffaloed adj Baffled; puzzled: *I didn’t think Pierre would be buffaloed by it (1870 +)*

buff the helmet v phr To fondle one’s penis; masturbate (1990s + Black)

◁**bufu**▷ (BOO foo) **n** A male homosexual; sodomite; BUGGER [1980s + Students; fr *buttfucker*]

bug¹ n 1 Any insect whatever • Now US only (1642 + *British*) **2** Any upper-respiratory or flulike complaint, esp one that is somewhat prevalent: *There’s a bug going around (1960s +)* **3** Any fault or defect in a machine, plans, system, etc: *You’ve got to get the bugs out of the program before trying to run it on the computer (1870s +)* **4** Any small, cheap item sold by a vendor or huckster (1800s + *Circus & carnival*) **5** A joker or a wild card (1940s + *Poker*) **6** A girl: *Boys prowl for “bugs” (1960s + Teenagers)* **7** A semiautomatic or automatic radiotelegraph key used for fast sending (1920s + *Radio operators*) **8** Any small symbol or label, such as a copyright or trademark symbol (1950s + *Print shop*) **9** An asterisk printed beside

the weight a horse is to carry, showing that a five-pound decrease has been granted because the jockey is an apprentice (1940s + *Horse racing*) **10** An apprentice jockey who has ridden his or her maiden race during the current year or has not yet won his or her fortieth race (1940s + *Horse racing*) **11** A horse that has never won a race; MAIDEN (1940s + *Horse racing*) **12** A hot rod (1950s + *Hot rodders*) **13** A small foreign car, esp the Volkswagen Beetle™ (1919 +) **14** A small two-person lunar excursion vehicle (1960s + *Astronautics*) **15** An enthusiast; devotee; hobbyist; FAN, NUT: *Momma's a football bug* (1841 +) **16** A compelling idea or interest: *His bug is surf-casting* (1900 +) **17** An insane person; NUT: *Only a bug is strong enough for that* (1880s +) **18** An irrational, touchy mood; bad mood (1930s + *Prison*) **19** A psychiatrist (1950s + *Prison*) **20** A confidential message or signal; confidential information (1925 + *Underworld*) **21** A burglar alarm (1920s + *Underworld*) **22** Small hidden listening devices for surveillance: *The team planted bugs in about six flowerpots* (1940s +) **23** Any bacterium, microbe, virus, etc: *Syph is caused by a bug* (1919 +) [the sense "irritate, pester" may be a shortening of black English *humbug*, attested in such uses as "Him wife de humbug him too much"; *humbug* itself, attested in English fr the mid-18th century, is apparently found in and may derive fr Pacific Pidgin English and West African Pidgin English] **v** **1** To do a psychiatric evaluation; pronounce one insane (1950s + *Prison*) **2** To irritate or anger someone; pester or harry someone: *I suspected something was bugging her* (1940s + *Jazz musicians*) **3** To equip with a burglar alarm: *They've got that safe bugged eight ways* **4** To prepare a room

or other place for electronic surveillance by installing hidden microphones; equip for electronic eavesdropping: *to bug a room/bug the Secretary's telephone (1920+)* **See** BIG BUG, FIREBUG, HAVE A BUG UP **One's**

ASS, JITTERBUG, LITTERBUG, PUT A BUG IN **someone's** EAR, SHUT-TERBUG

bug² (also **bug out**) **v** To protrude; bulge: *Her eyes bugged out when she saw the bill* [1870s+ Dialect; fr humorous or dialectal pronunciation of *bulge*]

-bug combining word A devotee or energetic practitioner of what is indicated: *firebug/money-bug/hockey bug* [1920s+; fr humorous or dialectal pronunciation of *bulge*]

bugaboo **n** Something that frightens or defeats one; bugbear; hobgoblin; bogy [1820s+; probably fr *Bugibu*, a demon cited in the Old French poem *Aliscans*, of 1141]

bugaloo **See** BOOGALOO

bugeyed **adj** **1** Having protruding eyeballs; exophthalmic; **POPEYED** **2** Startled; astonished: *gets very bugeyed about details of a failed real estate development* [fr humorous or dialectal pronunciation of *bulge*]

bug-fucker **n** A man with a tiny penis (1970s+)

bugged **adj** Fitted with a concealed microphone or otherwise equipped for electronic surveillance: *do-it-yourself sex manuals, bugged phones (1919+)*

bugger¹ (BUH gər, Bŭŭ-, Bŭŭ-) **n** **1** A despicable man; ASSHOLE, JERK (1719+) **2** Fellow; man; child; thing • Used affectionately: *What have you been up to, you old bugger?/Ain't he a cute little bugger?*

(1850s +) **3** An object, esp something admired, wondered at, or scorned; FUCKER, SUCKER: *The little buggers would outlast anything humans threw at them and dance on our graves* (1940s +) **4** A male with a taste for anal intercourse; sodomite (1550s +) **5** An arduous, painful, or difficult thing; BITCH (1930s +) **v** **1** To do anal intercourse or sodomy; sodomize; BUNGHOLE: *The proprietor wins the right to bugger him/who immediately announced that the Reverend Mr. Alger had been “buggering” him* (1590s +) **2** (also **booger up, bugger up**) To spoil; ruin; confuse; abuse; impair; BOLLIX UP: *Between them they buggered up the mimeo machine/The practice of how you bugger these numbers of US-Soviet armaments* (1880s + Cowboys)

bugger² or **booger** or **boogie** (BUH gər, Bŏŏ-, Bŏŏ-) **n** A piece of solid mucus from the nose

bugger-all **n** Absolutely nothing: *investments left him with bugger-all* (1918 +)

buggered **adj** Damned; confounded; FUCKED: *I’m buggered if I can see anything busted on that truck* (1850s +)

buggerlugs **n** An ineffectual or contemptible person; JERK, WIMP (1990s + Canadian)

bugger off **v phr** To leave; depart; FUCK OFF • Often a contemptuous command; rare in US, although adopted by the Air Force in the Korean War: *Pay no attention to my piteous Don’ts, but bugger off quickly* (1920s + British)

bugging or **buggin’** **n** Irrational behavior; overreacting: *buggin’ ... Irritated, perturbed ... Flipping out* (1990s + Teenagers)

bugging out *n phr* Male sexual response to attractive females; protrusion of the trousers (1990s + *Black teenagers*)

buggy¹ *n* **1** A caboose (1890s + *Railroad*) **2** A car, esp an old and rickety one; HEAP, JALOPY: *I wouldn't exactly call my Maserati a buggy* (1925 +) **See** HORSE-AND-BUGGY

buggy² *adj* Crazy; BUGHOUSE, NUTS (1900 +)

buggy whip *adj* Old-fashioned; outmoded; antique; OLD-TIMEY: *still manages to epitomize buggy-whip thinking in an increasingly sophisticated high-tech communications world* (1970s +) **modifier:** *a buggy-whip antenna* *n phr* A long radio antenna on a car (1940s +)

bughouse *adj* Crazy; NUTS: *He's a bughouse pimp/The local constabulary haul the bughouse blighter off to prison* (1895 +) *n* An insane asylum: *Who cares whether you're free or locked in a bughouse?* (1900 +)

bug-hunter *n* An entomologist; naturalist; lepidopterist; bugologist (1880s +)

bugjuice *n* **1** Liquor, esp inferior whiskey; ROTGUT (1860s +) **2** A synthetic and highly colored soft drink (1950s +) [fr resemblance to the juice secreted by grasshoppers]

bugle *n* The nose; BEAK, SCHNOZZ (1865 +)

bug money *n phr* Money bet on a policy operation: *a person that takes illegal bug (numbers) money* (1990s +)

bug off *v phr* To leave; depart • Often an irritated command: *I'm done with you, so bug off* [1950s +; perhaps fr *bugger off*; perhaps fr early

19th-century US bulge “to rush, dash”]

bugology *n* Entomology (1840s +)

bugout *modifier: a bugout plan n 1* A person who usually withdraws and evades; a slacker **2** A military retreat (*Korean War Army*)

bug out¹ *v phr* To bulge; protrude: *His eyes bugged out like a frog’s* [1880s +; fr *bulge*]

bug out² *v phr 1* To retreat; turn one’s back and run (*fr Korean War Army*) **2** To leave rapidly, esp to drive away in a hurry (1950s + *Teenagers & hot rodders*) **3** To behave crazily; FREAK OUT (1980s + *Students*)

bugs or **bugsy** *adj* Crazy; NUTS: *The idea is so bugs it might work/Don’t act bugsy* (1900 +) **See** STIR-CRAZY

bug someone up *v phr* To agitate someone; upset someone (1950 + *Prison*)

build *n 1* One’s physique, esp one’s figure or shape; BOD: *a husky build/sexy build* (1850s +) **2** A show whose earnings continue to increase: *The revue was a build once word-of-mouth took hold* (1950s + *Theater*) **3**: *It’s been a long build, but we can make our move now* *v* To prepare someone for swindling, extortion, etc; SET someone UP (1920s + *Underworld*) [first noun sense perhaps influenced by earlier *build*, “the look and shape of tailored clothing”]

build a collar *v phr* To gather evidence for an arrest (1950s + *Police*)

build a fire under someone *v phr* To encourage and incite someone

forcibly: *Let's get those people moving if we have to build a fire under them (1950s +)*

buildup *n* **1** Publicity and other provisions for introducing a new product, entertainer, etc: *the buildup for a concert (1920s +)* **2** The careful preparation of a potential customer or victim (1940s +)

built *adj* Physically well-developed, esp in a sexually attractive way; HUNKY, STACKED: *She wasn't especially smart, but she was built*

◁**built like a brick shithouse (or chicken-house)**▷ *adj phr* Very solidly and well constructed; BUILT, HUNKY • Said usually of a woman with a sturdy and attractive body, esp with large breasts (1940s +)

bulb *n* DIM BULB (1960s +)

bulge *n* **1** An advantage; a lead: *running up a 20-0 bulge/the Californians fashioned a two-run bulge of their own (1840s +)* **2** A usu fatty surplus on the waist, buttocks, etc; SPARE TIRE (1940s +) *See* BATTLE OF THE BULGE

bull modifier: *a bull market* *n* **1** A peace officer of any kind, esp a uniformed police officer • London police constables were called *bulldogs* by 1710 (1850s +) **2** An elephant, of either sex (1920s + *Circus*) **3** An ace • Short for *bullet* (1940s + *Poker*) **4** Bull Durham™, a very popular brand of tobacco for rolling cigarettes (1930s +) **5** A locomotive (1880s + *Railroad*) **6** The chief; head man; BOSS, BULL OF THE WOODS (1940s + *Loggers & cowboys*) **7** A dealer who favors higher prices and quicker selling (1700s + *Stock market*) **8** BULLSHIT (1900 +) *v*: *We were sitting around bulling/He was bulling about his enormous talent* *See* ALL THAT KIND OF CRAP, BULL SESSION, BULLWORK, COCK-AND-BULL STORY, FULL OF SHIT, SHOOT THE BULL, SLING IT, THROW THE BULL

bulldog modifier: *the bulldog edition* **n 1** The earliest daily edition of a newspaper (1920s + *Newspaper office*) **2** A snub-nosed revolver (1880s + *Police & underworld*) **v 1** To advertise horse-race winners falsely; DYNAMITE (1950s + *Gambling*) **2** To attack like a bulldog, esp to wrestle a steer to the ground by the horns (1800s + & esp cowboys)

bulldoze v To intimidate; overcome by force • Early use of the term is connected with Southern politics of the Reconstruction period and describes the intimidation of black men who wished to vote: *to bulldoze employees* [1870s + ; *fr bulldose*, “to beat, flog with a strip of leather,” perhaps *fr* the notion of the dose of force needed to cow a *bull*]

bulldozer n 1 A person who bulldozes (1870s +) **2** A revolver (1880s +

bulldyke n A lesbian, esp an aggressive one; DYKE (1920s + *Black*)

bullet n 1 An ace (1807 + *Card games*) **2** Money; dollars (1900 + *Underworld*) **3** A rivet (*WWII aircraft workers*) **4** Anything thrown or hit so as to travel very fast, esp a baseball: *He’s throwing bullets out there* (1940s +) **5** A record rising very fast on the popularity charts (1970s + *Recording industry*) **6** A one-year prison sentence; BOFFO (1990s + *Police*) **v:** *currently bulleting up the charts* **See** BITE THE BULLET

bullet bait n phr Soldiers, esp young novice soldiers; CANNON FODDER (*WWII armed forces*)

bullets n 1 Beans **2** Peas, esp chickpeas and cowpeas (1900s + *Prison & Navy*) **See** SHIT BULLETS, SWEAT BULLETS

bullfest *n* BULL SESSION (1920s + *Students*)

bull fiddle *n phr* The double bass; bass fiddle (1870s +)

bullfrog *n* A male hitchhiker (1960s + *Truckers*)

bullhead *n* A stupid, obstinate person (1850 +)

bullheaded *adj* Obstinate (1818 +)

bullhockey *n* BULLSHIT • Perhaps earlier, since *hockey*, *hawky*, “shit,” is attested as a dialect verb in 1902 (1960s +)

bullish *adj* **1** Favoring and exhibiting high prices and relatively quick turnover: *a bullish market/bullish advice* (1880s + *Stock market*) **2** Showing a positive and hopeful attitude; encouraging • Often used with “on” or “about”: *She tends to be bullish about our prospects/He’s quite bullish on the new restaurant*

bull of the woods *n phr* **1** The foreman or chief; BOSS (1920s + *Loggers & truckers*) **2** Any chief or supervisor: *Oakes is bull of the woods in the proofroom* (1940s +) [perhaps because the *Bull of the Woods* was the first locomotive used in logging, in 1852]

bullpen *n* **1** A cell or secure area where prisoners are kept temporarily; TANK: *We’re in the bullpen waiting to go to court* (1880s +) **2** A military stockade; military prison (1900 +) **3** A usu enclosed area where pitchers practice and warm up: *The bullpen’s getting active now* (1915 + *Baseball*) **4** The relief pitching staff of a baseball team: *They’ve got starters but no bullpen* (*Baseball*) **5** A bunkhouse (1930 + *Loggers*) **6** A living room, lounge, etc, where a girl’s escorts and suitors are appraised by friends and family

(1940s+ *Students*) [baseball sense perhaps fr a boys' game called *bullpen*, attested fr 1857, in which opponents lined up in a rectangle and threw balls at each other; similarly, the pitchers in the bullpen are vulnerable to being hit by thrown and hit balls]

bullrag *n* Bovine excrement; BULLSHIT, COWFLOP: *didn't mean bullrag in a pasture to him* (1970s+) **v** also *bullyrag* To intimidate; domineer over; tease (*first form* 1880s+; *second form* 1820s+) [earlier forms included *balrag*, *ballarag*, *ballyrag*, of obscure origin]

bull session *n phr* A discussion, esp one among good companions passing time idly but investigating important topics [1920+ College students; perhaps influenced by *bull*, "discuss, visit another student to pass the time," attested as college slang by 1850]

bull's-eye *interj* An exclamation of admiration over a perfect answer, guess, solution, etc; BINGO¹ **See** HIT THE NAIL ON THE HEAD

bullshine *n* Nonsense; pretentious talk; BULLSHIT: *the perpetual motion, nonstop, all-American bullshine machine* [1970s+; a euphemism for *bullshit*]

◁**bullshit!**▷ *interj* An exclamation of disbelief, derision, and contempt in retort to some proposition *n* Nonsense; pretentious talk; bold and deceitful absurdities; BALONEY: *I'm afraid your theory is chiefly bullshit* (1915+) **v**: *He tried to bullshit his way out of it* (1942+)

◁**bullshit!** *artist*▷ *n phr* A person who habitually and effectively exaggerates, cajoles, seduces verbally, etc: *She's seen as a talented maverick. "She's not a bullshit artist"* (1940s+)

bullshitter *n* Someone who bullshits (1930s +)

bullshooter *n* A person given to exaggeration, boasting, or pompous inanity [fr *shoot the bull*, and a euphemism for *bullshitter*]

bullsmoke *n* BULLSHIT • Attributed to the football coach Vince Lombardi, who died in 1970: *It's all blocking and tackling. Everything else is bullsmoke* (1990s +)

bullwork *n* Tedious work requiring little thought or skill; DONKEYWORK, GRUNT WORK, SCUT: *sees computers taking over only the bullwork of secretaries* (1970s +)

bully *adj* Excellent; good (1840s +) *interj*: *Bully for you!* (1780s +) *n* A track worker; GANDY DANCER (1900 + *Railroad*) [first two senses fr *bully*, “a beloved person, darling,” of obscure origin, attested fr 1538. *Bully*, “worthy, admirable,” used of persons, is attested in 1681]

bully pulpit *modifier* Using high office or fame as a splendid standpoint for one's teaching or preaching: *At the least, they hoped that his “bully pulpit” approach would help rally public support/Theodore Roosevelt, rejoicing in the president's bully pulpit, drowned out every other voice in the United States/Madonna has used her bully pulpit to preach scantily clad homilies on bigotry, abortion, civic duty, power, death, and safe sex* [late 1980s + ; Said to have been originated by Theodore Roosevelt, and more recently popularized by Ross Perot]

bullyrag *v* To harass or bully: *bullyrag the substitute teacher*

bully up *v phr* To press one's way forward; BELLY UP: *Sharkey was*

bullying up to the bar [1970s+; probably fr *belly up*]

bum¹ **adj** **1** Inferior; defective; LOUSY: *That's a real bum notion you have there* (1850s+) **2**: *I told a bum story first/He just didn't want me to think he had a car with a bum clutch* (1859+) **n** **1** A person who seldom works, seldom stays in one place, and survives by begging and petty theft; vagrant; DRIFTER, HOBO (1860s+) **2** A promiscuous woman, esp a cheap prostitute: *picking up bums in public dance halls* (1930+) **3** Any male who is disliked by the speaker, esp for lack of energy, direction, or talent • Often used of inept or despised athletes: *The bum strikes out three times in a row* (1920+) **4** A person who lives or tries to live by his or her sports talent and charm, usu without being genuinely professional: *Developed by volleyball bums who hated the regimentation of the indoor game* (1950s+) **5** An inferior animal, breed, racehorse, etc (1930+) **6** Anything inferior or ineffectual: *Money is a bum, a no-good bum* (1950s+) **v** **1** To live as a tramp, drifter, etc: *It wasn't easy bumming that winter/He bummed for a couple of years, then got a job* (1860s+) **2** To beg or borrow; cadge: *A schooner can be grafted if you're fierce at bumming* (1850s+) **3** (also **bum one's way**, **bum a ride**) To hitchhike: *They bummed all the way to Alaska* (1920s+) **4** To deceive; victimize: *Anyone who's seen this halfbaked ode to mixed marital relations realizes that the star has been bummed into a bit role* (1960s+) **5** To improve something, esp by exploiting its full potential or rearranging its parts: *I bummed the whole program to show up all possible mistakes* (Computer) **6** (also **bum out**) To become depressed, discouraged, or irritated: *You don't want to pull*

off the information superhighway because you're already dialed into an on-line service. Don't bum (1960s +) [probably fr German Bummler, "loafer"] See BEACH BUM, CRUMB-BUN, SKID ROW BUM, STEWBUM, STUMBLE-BUM

bum² n The buttocks or anus; ASS • More common in British usage: *after getting a shot of something in her bum* [late 1300s + ; fr Middle English "anus"]

bum about v phr To be depressed about something or someone: *bumped about not being picked for first chair*

bum around v phr To go about idly; loaf: *I just bumped around last summer (1940s +)*

bumblebee See KNEE-HIGH TO A GRASSHOPPER

bumblepuppy n 1 A bridge game played haphazardly **2** An indifferent or erratic player [1930s + Cardplayers; fr a late 1800s British term for inexpert whist]

bum check n A bad or forged bank check: *no bum check for the rent*

bumf n Paper; paperwork; toilet paper • Chiefly British: *Most of the bumf he handles himself* [1880 + British schoolboys; fr *bum fodder*]

◀**bum fodder**▶ **n phr** Toilet paper or other material of the same use • Later, for obvious reasons, this became a term for a newspaper or magazine (1650s +)

◀**bumfuck**▶ **v** ASSFUCK (1860s +)

◀**Bumfuck, Egypt**▶ (also East Bumfuck) **n phr 1** A very distant and remote place; dead end **2** The destination of or a point along a long and circuitous march [1970s + Army)

bummage *n* Despair; depression: *the bummage in breaking up just before the prom*

bummed or **bummed out** *adj* or *adj phr* In a bad mood; dejected; depressed: *I'm heavily bummed if I've realigned anybody's karma/belonging to the most bummed-out generation* [1960s + ; fr narcotics and teenager senses of *bummer*]

bummer *interj* An exclamation of dismay: *Ms. Riner is too docile, too scared, too unsexy for the role, and—bummer!—there seems to be a real possibility that she's innocent* **modifier**: *Zonk is rushed to the Woodstock bummer tent* **n** 1 BUM¹: *an old bummer named Rumson (1855 +)* 2 An unpleasant or depressing experience with a narcotic, esp with LSD; *BAD TRIP (1960s + Narcotics)* 3 Any bad experience or occasion; bad situation or place: *May 17—Trip was a bummer. Instead of being off by ourselves, we met another couple (1960s + Counterculture)* [first noun sense probably fr German *Bummler*, “loafer”]

bumming *adj* Depressed; despairing: *bumming and need to talk*

bum something **off** someone *v phr* To borrow or beg someone for something: *bum a twenty until Friday*

bum-out *n* An assignment to easy work (1940s + *Prison & Army*)

bum someone **out** *v phr* To depress; discourage; irritate: *At a fraternity the things you observe totally bum you out/It bums the fuck out of me sometimes (1960s +)*

bump *n* 1 A job promotion: *I see old Pipkin has got the bump to full professor (1930s +)* 2 In dancing, a thrust of the pelvis: *She unreeled*

about fifty bumps in dazzling staccato **3** A drink; SLUG: *They go out and have a bump of whiskey (1980s +)* **4** A party (1980s + Teenagers) **v 1** To discharge; dismiss; FIRE: *They bumped him for insubordination (1915 +)* **2** To take away one person's status in order to accommodate someone of greater importance or seniority: *A person is bumped by someone with a larger number of retention points (1860 + Railroad)* **3** To cancel a reserved seat on an airline, bus, etc, because the vehicle has been oversold: *To be bumped means to be put off a flight because too many seats have been sold (1940s +)* **4** To displace a sports opponent by defeat: *The Indians bumped the Tigers out of third place (1950s +)* **5** To kill; BUMP OFF (1910 +) **6** To make pregnant; KNOCK someone UP: *She had to blame someone for bumping her (1930s +)* **7** To do the sex act with or to (1980s + Students) **8** To promote: *He got bumped to assistant manager (1930s +)* **9** To raise a bet (1930s + Poker) **10** In dancing, esp in striptease, to thrust the pelvis forward and up • Nearly always in combination with *grind* (1940s + Show business) **See** HUMP AND BUMP, LIKE
A BUMP ON A LOG

bump, the *n phr* Murder; assassination; BUMPOFF (1920 +)

bump along v phr To progress haltingly: *The interest rate has been bumping along (1960s +)*

bump and grind n phr The wearing tedium of life and work; RAT RACE: *the ordinary bump and grind we call civilization/Let us get you through the bump and grind tomorrow (1990s +)* **v phr 1** To thrust out and rotate the pelvis in dancing, esp the striptease; an imitation of the sex act: *She bumped and ground faster as the bass*

drum upped its tempo (1940s+) **2** To play roughly; stress the physical game rather than strategy: *We have to bump and grind.*

That's how the puck went in for us (1980s+ Hockey)

bump belly v phr To oppose; confront; GO UP AGAINST: *And while bumping belly with Bob Dole may prove tough (1990s+)*

bumpdrafting n In a race, pushing the car ahead in order to increase speed: *Bumpdrafting, as the name implies, involves actually pushing the car in front (1990s+ Car racing)*

bumper¹ n A striptease dancer or other erotic dancer (1950s+ *Show business*)

bumper² n A black upwardly mobile person (1990s+)

bumper music n phr Music played before a radio show, esp a talk show [1990s+ Radio; probably by analogy with the *bumper* of a car]

bumper sticker n A vehicle following too closely behind another: *where are the police when this bumper sticker's around*

bumper-thumper n A minor car accident; BANGERS AND MASH, FENDER-BENDER (1990s+)

bump fuzz v phr To do the sex act; BOFF, SCREW: *Little did he know, all I wanted was to bump fuzz (1990s+)*

bump one's gums See BAT one's GUMS

bumping adj Excellent; wonderful; COOL, RAD: *The product has kickin' taste and bumpin' packaging. (That means it tastes good and looks good) (1980s+ Students)*

bump into someone v phr To meet someone unexpectedly: *Guess who I bumped into downtown (1880s +)*

bumpman n 1 A professional killer; HIT MAN (1920s + *Underworld*) **2** A pickpocket (1930s +)

bumpoff n A killing; murder; assassination; HIT (1920s + *Underworld*)

bump someone off v phr To kill, esp to murder; WHACK (1908 + *Underworld*)

bump on a log See LIKE A BUMP ON A LOG

bumps See DUCK BUMPS, GOOSE BUMPS

bump something up v phr To increase: *bumped up the price of gas (1940 +)*

bumpy See GOOSE-BUMPY

bump zone n phr A five-yard space downfield from the line of scrimmage, within which a wide receiver can be bumped once, and beyond which he may not be bumped at all: *The '94 rules strictly enforcing the bump zone (1990s + Football)*

bum rap n phr 1 An erroneous conviction or sentence (1920s + *Underworld*) **2** Any unjustified condemnation: *Reagan said, "Nancy's taken a bit of a bum rap on that buying White House china" (1980s +)*
v 1: *he had been bum-rapped 2: the Philadelphia Navy Yard has been bum-rapped*

bumrush v To eject someone, esp from a restaurant or other public place: *Your posse bumrushed Tatum*

bum's rush, the *n phr* **1** The ejection of a person by force, esp from a public place: *Dey gimme de bum's rush/You want us to give 'em the bum's rush?* **2** Any discourteous or summary dismissal: *Those not in sympathy with the strike got the bum's rush/with Stanfill telling the press that she had given her husband "the bum's rush" (1920s +)*

bum steer *n phr* Erroneous guidance or advice (1924 +)

bum trip *See* BAD TRIP

bun *n* **1** A state of drunkenness; alcoholic exhilaration: *A bun is a light jag (1900 +)* **2** The buttocks; BUM • Originally "the tail of a hare, scut"; first seen applied to persons in Scottish poetry (1530s +) **3** A single buttock; CHEEK: *a boil on my left bun (1970s +)*
See CHEESE BUN, CRUMB-BUN, HAVE A BUN IN THE OVEN, HAVE A BUN ON

bun-buster *n* A very hard task or job; BALL-BUSTER: *This job is a bun-buster (1970s +)*

bunch *n* **1** A group of people (1600s +) **2** A particular group or set, family, etc: *I like my bunch, but yours is elitist (1902 +)* **3** MOB (1950s +) **4** Money, esp a large sum; BUNDLE: *He must have paid a bunch for that mink*

bunch, a *adv phr* Very much; a lot; HEAPS: *Your CIC'll be a bunch happier this way (1980s +)*

buncher *n* A dognapper who steals dogs in quantity for sale to research laboratories or pet shops: *Organizations that help dog owners are often thwarted by teams of thieves called "bunchers" (1990s +)*

bunch of fives *n phr* A fist (1825 +)

bunco or **bunko** *modifier: a bunco scheme/the police bunco squad* (1872 +) *n* (also **bunco game**) A swindle; CON GAME, SCAM (1872 +) *v* To swindle; defraud; FLIMFLAM: *He was buncoed out of his seat in the House* (1875 +) [said to be fr *Banco*, the name given in the 1850s by a crooked US gambler to the older game “Eight-Dice Cloth”; *Banco* was probably based on Spanish *banca*, a card game similar to monte]

bunco (or **bunko**) *artist n phr* A professional swindler; CON MAN: *Sleep, like a bunco artist, rubbed it in/The other fellow is, in most instances, a bunko artist* (1901 +)

buncombe *See* BUNK

bunco-steerer *n phr* An accomplice in a confidence game, esp one who makes the first contact with the victim; SHILL: *became entangled with a bunco-steerer* (1975 +)

bundle *n* 1 A large amount of money • Originally the loot from a robbery: *Can the Pentagon Save a Bundle?/He’s dropped a bundle that way* (1905 +) 2 An attractive woman • This term has improved: In the early 1800s it designated a camp follower, then a fat woman: *I saw Charley yesterday with this cute bundle* (1930 +) 3 Twenty-five \$5 packets of a narcotic, esp marijuana or cocaine (1960s + *Narcotics*) *v* To gather up small political contributions into a large and influential amount: *His preferred strategy is a controversial practice known as bundling, which means rounding up contributions from friends/The PAC bundles all the checks for presentation to the*

individual campaigns (1980s +) **See** DROP A BUNDLE

bundle of joy or **bundle from heaven** *n* A baby: *Brad and Angelina's bundle of joy*

bundle of nerves *n phr* A very nervous person: *He was a bundle of nerves before the speech*

bungee (BUN jee) *modifier: bungee cord/bungee jump n* Rubber; a rubber eraser (*late 1800s + British schoolboys*) [origin unknown]

◁**bung fodder**▷ *n phr* Toilet paper; BUM FODDER

◁**bunghole**▷ *n* The anus (*1600s +*) *v* To do anal intercourse; BUGGER (*1940s +*)

bung up *v* or *v phr* To dent; damage; bruise; BANG: *He bunged up the left fender pretty good/My knee is all bunged up* [1830s + ; Used in the 1500s to mean “close the eyes or mouth with a blow, as the *bung* of a barrel is closed”]

bun in the oven *n phr* Pregnancy: *no more buns in the oven for me* (*1950 +*)

bunk *n* Nonsense; pretentious talk; BALONEY, BULLSHIT (*1900 +*) *v* To cheat; defraud; BUNCO: *couldn't possibly have done a better job of bunking the American people* (*1870s +*) [fr the explanation by a 1800s politician that his extraordinary statements were meant only for his constituents in *Buncombe County, North Carolina*]

bunker mentality *n phr* A sense of impending doom, stimulating the innermost defenses [1980s + ; probably recalling the last days and delusions of Hitler in his Berlin *bunker*]

bunkie *n* A roommate or bunkmate; a close friend: *OK, bunkies, let's raise our right hands and make a solemn pledge (Students fr WWII armed forces)*

bunko *See* BUNCO

bunkum or **buncombe** *n* BUNK (1840s +)

bunned *adj* Drunk (1908 +)

bunny *n* 1 Welsh rabbit (1900s + *Students*) 2 A habitually puzzled or victimized person: *She is always criticizing some poor bunny (1920s +)* 3 Any young woman, esp a pert and attractive one (1600s +) 4 A young woman who associates with the men in some exciting, daring, or otherwise glamorous activity, sometimes as a participant; *GROUPIE: to eliminate any chance that newsroom chauvinists could tag her as an electronic bunny (1960s +)* ◀5▶ A prostitute who serves his or her own sex (1950s + *Homosexuals*) 6 A layup shot (1970s + *Basketball*) *See* BEACH BUNNY, CUDDLE-BUNNY, DUMB BUNNY, DUST KITTY, GUNBUNNY, JUNGLE-BUNNY, PLAY SNUGGLE-BUNNIES, QUICK LIKE A BUNNY, SEX KITTEN, SKI BUNNY

bunny (or rabbit) food *n phr* Lettuce, salad, green vegetables, etc [1936 +; *Bunny grub* is attested in British schoolboy use by 1890]

◀**bunny fuck**▶ *n phr* A very quick sex act; *QUICKIE v 1: They pulled beside the road and bunny-fucked* 2 To stall; waste time; *FUCK THE DOG: Quit bunny-fucking and let's move (1960s +)*

bunny hill *n phr* The beginners' slope at a ski resort: *The people on the bunny hill are having just as much fun as those on the moguls (1980s +)*

bunny hop *n* Putting a bicycle in the air so both wheels are off the

ground, esp in mountain biking **v** To put a bicycle's wheels in the air or jump over an obstacle without dismounting

bunny suit *n phr* A protective flight suit, sanitary coveralls, or other raiment of astronauts, nuclear workers, etc (1960s +)

buns *n* The buttocks, esp male buttocks: *I'll grab Ron's or Alan's buns sometimes and they're firm and hard* [1960s +; *Bun*, "buttocks," is found in the 1500s, based on an early sense, "the tail of a hare"; this later use is probably not related, being rather based on the full, round shape of an eating bun; note that *biscuit* and *crumpet* exemplify this baked-goods analogy in other milieux]

buns off, one's *adv phr* Very energetically; with maximum effort; TO THE MAX: *You'll be playing your buns off with your left hand* (1970s +)

See one's ASS OFF, BUST one's ASS, WORK one's ASS OFF

bun-struggle *n* A formal tea (1890 +)

buppie *n* A black yuppie: *two proto-buppies slide instantly into Coney Island life* (1980s +)

'burb modifier: *They star as burbs newcomers* *n* A suburb: *The 'burbs, my pet name for LA-Boston-Frisco/If he chooses to bolt to the 'burbs that's his business* (1970s +)

burbed out *adj phr* Middle-class; bourgeois; pretentious: *nonstop wisecracks about burbed-out students* (1970s + Teenagers)

burg *n* A city; town; village • Usu expresses contempt: *stuck two days in this ghastly burg* (1840s + Theater)

-burger combining word A sandwich made with cooked portions of

what is indicated: *beefburger/cheeseburger/snakeburger* [1930s+ ;
The definition does not apply to *hamburger*, the source of the term.
The suffix was probably first used by the comic-strip artist E C
Segar, who coined *goonburger* in the mid-1930s]

burger-flip *v* **1** To work at a fast-food restaurant **2** To work for low
and insufficient wages: *the average worker has a family, which a
burger-flipping job won't feed* (1990s+)

burger-flipper *n* A person who burger-flips: *pay him wages that could
be topped by a burger-flipper at McDonald's* (1990s+)

burglar *n* A person who cheats or victimizes others: *Don't shop there,
he's a burglar* (1920s+)

burgle *v* To break into a place to rob; burglarize (1870+)

buried *adj* **1** Serving a life sentence or other long prison sentence **2**
Languishing in solitary confinement; incommunicado (1930s+
Underworld & prison)

burly¹ *n* Burlesque: *even when Buttons was in burly*

burly² *adj* Very difficult; tricky; dangerous: *Check out his burly
disaster slide* (1990s+ *Snowboarders & skateboarders*)

burn *interj* An exclamation of delight at a successful insult (1980s+
Students) *n* **1** Becoming angry: *He didn't blow up, just did a slow burn*
(1930s+) **2** Cheat or swindle: *It was a burn, but it didn't start out to
be* **3**: *I didn't mean it as a burn* (mid-1890s+) *v* **1** To cook or heat
food: *Let's burn a couple of hot dogs* (1950s+) **2** To put or be put to
death in the electric chair; FRY (1925+) **3** To kill; assassinate

(1930s +) 4 To become angry; BURN UP: *I burned but went on singing*
 (1930s +) 5 To anger; infuriate; PISS someone OFF: *You must have done something to bum him* (1935 +) 6 To cheat; swindle; victimize; rob; RIP OFF: *If you go along with that guy you'll get burned* (late 1600s +) 7 To assault or fight a rival gang or gang member (1950s + *Street gang*) 8 To harass a person relentlessly; hound: *I'll burn you right off the force* (1950s +) 9 To insult; PUT DOWN • This seems to be a spontaneous verb form that coincides with the much older noun: *I burned this chick. "Whereja get those jeans, like Sears or something?"*/*The Administration only turned to her after it felt burned by two "Eastern elitists"* (1970s + *Teenagers & students*) 10 To infect or become infected with a venereal disease (1500s +) 11 To pass; spend; waste; KILL: *I'll start a conversation just to burn time/if it burns tomorrow afternoon* 12 To move very rapidly; speed; BARREL: *He wasn't just running, he was burning* (1880s +) 13 To perform, esp to improvise, superbly; excel; Be Hot: *The cat was getting down and burning* (1950s + *Jazz musicians*) 14 To borrow; beg (1970s +) 15 To throw something, esp a baseball, very fast: *He burned the fastball right down the middle* (1940s +) 16 To outdo; outshine in competition: *Tony has burned the guy/the way Dex burned Eddie on that last number* 17 To make a xerographic copy: *Will you burn me ten copies of this?* (1980s + *Army*) 18 To expose as an informer: *Do you really want to spend valuable man-hours trying to find out who burned him?* (1950s + *Police*) **See** BURNOUT, DO A SLOW BURN

burn, a *n phr* A cigarette; a SMOKE: *They stepped outside fora bum* (1970s +)

burn someone's ass (or butt) v phr To anger someone; irritate someone extremely: *It burns a girl's ass when she's not supposed to go around with anybody else/Still, it burns my ass to be so close and miss it/That arrogance burns my butt for sure (1950s+)*

burn someone down v phr **1** To shoot someone **2** To deflate; humiliate: *He's so cocky someone has to burn him down (1930s+)*

burned or burnt adj Very angry: *Everyone is sitting there really pissed, really burned/My dad would be burned if he knew we bought it at a Chevron (1930s+)*

burned (or burnt) out adj phr **1** Tired; exhausted; POOPED (1940s+) **2** At the end of one's vigor and productivity; PLAYED OUT: *The coach said he quit because he was burned out/an old burned-out teacher (1883+)* **3** Depressed and exhausted after the effects of a narcotic have worn off (1960s+ *Narcotics*)

burned-out (or burnt-out) case n phr A person who is exhausted and ineffectual; BURNOUT: *once a superior foreign correspondent but by then a burnt-out case* [1960s+ ; fr the title of a 1961 Graham Greene novel about a leper whose case was arrested and cured only after loss of fingers and toes]

burner n **1** The electric chair (1920s+) **2** A superlative performer; the TOPS: *He showed he was a burner at the combine (1950s+)* **3** A pistol, esp a .22-caliber revolver (1920s+) **See** COOK WITH GAS, FAST BURNER, HAY BURNER, OAT-BURNER, ON THE BACK BURNER

burnie n **1** A partially smoked marijuana cigarette **2** A marijuana cigarette shared among smokers (1960s+ *Narcotics*)

burning out *n phr* An older addict's voluntary withdrawal from narcotics after years of use (1960s+ *Narcotics*)

burn one *v phr* To draw a glass of beer (1930+)

burn one in (or over) *v phr* In baseball, to throw a fastball (1940s+)

burnout *n* 1 Total and incapacitating exhaustion; inability to go on • The term apparently originated among psychotherapists, describing their own overstressed condition: *Many report lawyer burnout after two or three years in practice/high rate of teacher burnout (1970s+)* 2 Boredom; apathy; satiation • The currency of this and the previous sense is due to the various narcotics users' meanings of *burn out*: *I feared polka burnout, but it never happened. I became a polkaholic (1970s+)* 3 (also **burn**) A user or abuser of drugs, liquor, etc: *There are two groups in my school, the jocks and bum-outs. The burnouts smoke and take pills and drink/except for the long hairs (or "burns," short for "burnouts") who hang out on the steps and smoke (1970s+ Teenagers)* 4 A very high-speed hotrod race (1950s+ *Hot rodders*) 5 An informal match where players try to throw a baseball so hard that it cannot be caught without undue pain 6 The point where a rocket or missile has exhausted its fuel (1950s+ *Astronautics*)

burn rubber *v phr* To leave; depart, esp very precipitately: *When I got back to the flat, you had burned rubber out the back [1970s+ ; fr the scorching of tires in the fast acceleration of a car]*

burn up *v phr* 1 To perform very well; do superbly well: *His club is burning up the league this season (1940s+)* 2 To go very fast on •

Burn in the same sense dates from the 1870s: *to burn up the base paths/burn up the road* (1940s +) **3** To become angry (1940s +)

burn someone up v phr 1 (also **burn someone off**) To anger someone: *His egocentricity burns me up* (1930s +) **2** To put someone to death in the electric chair (1920s +) **3** To cheat; swindle; victimize (1930s + *Circus*)

burp n A belch, esp a gentle one **v 1**: *She burped thrice and smiled 2* To cause a baby to belch, esp by holding it over the shoulder and patting its back (1930s +)

burp gun n phr 1 A German Schmeisser machine pistol with a very high rate of fire **2** Any submachine gun; TOMMY GUN (*WWII Army*)

burr under the saddle (or up one's rear end) n phr A constant annoyance; obsessive nuisance: *General Noriega has been a burr under the saddle of this Administration/Sasha Schneider has always been a burr under the saddle of musical complacency/For some reason, though, he had a burr up his rear end* (1990s +)

bursting at the seams adj Too full; almost beyond capacity: *school is bursting at the seams* (1960 +)

bury v 1 To sentence someone to a very long prison term or to solitary confinement (1900 + *Underworld*) **2** To defeat decisively; CLOBBER (1940s + *Sports*)

bury the hatchet v phr To make peace; cease hostilities: *He and Chambrun hadn't buried the hatchet after all* [1750s +; fr an American Indian custom of burying such a weapon as a sort of peace treaty]

bus *n* **1** A car: *Whose old bus is in the drive?* (1919+) **2** An aircraft (1916+) **3** An ambulance: *Roger one-oh-four, do we need a bus?* (1980s+ *Police*) **v** To clear dirty dishes and tableware from the tables in a restaurant or cafeteria (1913+) [the restaurant sense probably fr the four-wheeled cart often used to carry dishes] **See** JITNEY, MISS THE BUS, RUBBERNECK WAGON

busboy *n* A person who clears dirty dishes and tableware from restaurant tables: *Talking very tough to a bus boy* (1913+)

buscar *n* **1** Borrowed money **2** Unexpected or forbidden pleasure; BOODLE [1900s+ Armed forces; fr Spanish *buscar*, “to seek, hunt”]

bush *adj* **1** Rural; provincial; BUSH LEAGUE • The sense has gradually developed from “the wilderness” to “the country as distinct from the city”; coincidentally it has taken on the same value judgment: The city is superior, the country is inferior: *a bush town* (1650s+) **2** Mediocre; second-rate; amateur: *seemed pretty bush for pros* (1650s+) **modifier** <1>: *Bush shot. You could see the pubic hair, but not the sex parts* **n** **1** A beard; whiskers (1640s+) <2> The pubic hair, esp of a female; BEAVER (1745+) **n** To fatigue; exhaust; sap; POOP: *The climb bushed him/Our dialogues always bush me* (1870+) **See** BEAT AROUND THE BUSH, BEATTHE BUSHES

bush or bushes, the *n phr* The back country; the BOONIES: *When I was working 12-hour tricks as a newspaper cub in the bushes* (1670+)

bushboy *n* A young, new, and naive prisoner: *That damn bushboy beats his gums too much* (1980s+)

bushed *adj* Tired out; exhausted; BEAT, FRAZZLED, POOPED [1870+ *Loggers*;

perhaps fr mid-19th-century meaning “lost in the woods”]

bush league *adj phr* Mediocre; second-or third-rate; BUSH, SMALL-TIME: *a bush-league hoodlum/Your ideas are invariably bush league* **n phr** 1 A baseball minor league of professional or semiprofessional players (1908 +) 2 Any subordinate, apprentice, or amateur enterprise: *The road companies are sometimes bush leagues for aspirants to Broadway* (1908 +)

bush leaguer or **busher** **n** or **n phr** 1 A baseball player in a minor league • A 1907 example of *bush leaguer* applies to basketball rather than baseball players (1930 +) 2 Any mediocre or second-rate performer; amateur: *He’s a busher at the piano* (1920s +)

bush leagues, the **n phr** The mediocre and inferior reaches of business, entertainment, sports, etc; the SMALL TIME: *For years he made a perilous living as a singer in the bush leagues* (1908 +)

bush patrol¹ **n phr** Hugging and kissing; NECKING [fr the notion that a couple might hide in the *bushes*]

◁**bush patrol**²▷ **n phr** The sex act; copulation [1950s +; fr *bush*, “pubic hair”]

bushwah (BŏŏSH wah, BŏŏSH-) **n** (Variations: **booshwah** or **bushwa** or **booshwa**) Nonsense; pretentious talk; bold and deceitful absurdities; BALONEY, BULLSHIT: *But the President’s own managers concede this is so much bushwah* [1906 +; seemingly a euphemism for *bullshit* fr a cowboy corruption of French *bois-de-vache*, “dried cow dung”; in some users possibly influenced by French *bourgeois* taken pejoratively]

bushwhack *v* 1 To assault, esp from ambush: *Two guys jumped out and bushwhacked him* 2 To attack violently: *After that speech the President felt bushwhacked* [1860s+; fr the action of cutting the bush in order to get through the forest or along an overgrown stream]

bushy-tailed *See* BRIGHT-EYED AND BUSHY-TAILED

busier than a one-armed paperhanger (or a tall horse in flytime) *v phr* Extremely busy: *Since taking over last June, Schofield has been busier than the proverbial one-armed paperhanger* (first form 1920s+)

business *n* Excrement, esp that of a house pet (1645+) *See* IN BUSINESS, KNOW *one's* ONIONS, MONKEY BUSINESS, THAT'S SHOW BUSINESS

business, the *n phr* The equipment used for giving oneself a narcotic injection (1930s+ *Narcotics*) *See* GET THE BUSINESS, GIVE *someone* THE BUSINESS

business as usual *n phr* Persistence in the ordinary course of events despite difficulties, morality, and other hindrances: *the team that is supposed to drag America from the path of business as usual/The riot is over, and it's back to business as usual/If you bribe a public employee it's corruption; if he works in a private company it's business as usual* (1885+)

business end, the *n phr* The dangerous or operative part of something, esp the muzzle of a gun (1878+)

busk *v* To perform music in subway stations or other public places, taking the contributions of listeners • Very common in Great Britain, but spreading to the US (1840s+)

buss *v* To talk about; gossip over: *Quit bussin' about my shoes*
[1980s+ Teenagers; perhaps a survival of British dialect *buss*,
“mutter, murmur busily, buzz,” attested from the 1500s]

bussy *n* A bus driver: *Where the blazes was that bussy? (1970s+)*

bust *adj* Out of funds; destitute; BROKE (1840s+) 1 A police raid: *One whiff of marijuana and we get a bust (1930s+)* 2 An arrest; COLLAR: *Beating a Bust: Two Views (1938+)* 3: *That one bust decked me* 4 A failure; fiasco: *My try for her sweet favors was a total bust (1840s+)* 5 A person who fails; LOSER, NONSTARTER: *At baseball I was a risible bust (1920s+)* 6 A spree; drinking bout: *took his paycheck and went on a bust (1840+)* *v* 1 To break: *I busted my nose (1806+)* 2 To disperse or chase a rival street gang (1950s+ *Street gang*) 3 To reduce in rank; demote: *He got busted from buck sergeant to buck private (late 1800s+ Army)* 4 To tame a wild horse for riding: *Two rides will usually bust a bronco so that the average cow-puncher can use him (1890s+ Cowboys)* 5 To break open a safe, vault, etc; also, burglarize a place (1890s+ *Underworld*) 6: *I've been busted, bring bail* 7 To catch someone in an illegal or immoral act (1950s+ *Teenagers*) 8 To hit someone: *She busted me in the kishkes (1808+)* 9 To fail an examination or course; FLUNK • The standard form *burst* is found in the 1850s: *I miserably busted the econ final (1900+ College students)* *See* BEER BUST, GO BROKE

busta *n* 1 An unemployed person who is dependent on others: *He might become a busta and live with his mother* 2 Someone who aspires to be someone else; WANNABE; also, a kid trying to act tough: *rappers trying to be bustas*

bust a gut (or **hamstring** or **nut**) **v phr** BUST one's ASS (*first form 1912+*)

bust a move **v phr** To leave, depart

bust ass **v phr** To thrash; punish by beating; CLOBBER, KICK ASS: *A little belly, sure. But I can still bust ass (1980s+)*

◁**bust one's ass**▷ **v phr** (Variations: **break** may replace **bust**; ◁**balls** ▷ or **buns** or **butt** or **chops** or **conk** or **hump** or **nuts** or **stones** or ◁**sweet ass**▷ or **tail** may replace **ass**) To work or perform to one's utmost; exert oneself mightily: *Yeah but, what if he busts his ass, goes to a lot of trouble/If They Break Their Asses They Might Get into College Program/I'm finished busting my hump on that kind of work/I busted my butt to get those business people to sponsor me/We're really busting our buns/Here I was, busting my tail to develop young players (first form 1940s+)*

◁**bust balls**▷ **v phr** To discipline harshly; punish: *They gonna be bustin' balls, man (1950s+)*

bust one's buttons **v phr** To be ostentatiously proud and happy: *Dolores Rogan of Bay View is busting her buttons these days*

bust caps **v phr** **1** To fire the main gun of a tank **2** To have a firefight (*1970s+ Army*)

bust chops *See* BREAK CHOPS

bust someone's chops *See* BREAK someone's CHOPS

bust clothes **v phr** To dress up (*1980s+ Teenagers*)

busted or **bust** **adj** **1** Penniless; BROKE (*1860s+*) **2** Arrested or caught

by an authority: *I'm so busted* **3** Intoxicated

buster¹ *combining word* Someone or something that destroys, thwarts, or otherwise defeats what or who is indicated • Revived by an early 1980s film comedy called *Ghostbusters* creating forms like *blockbuster/chartbuster/gangbuster/gridlock buster/fuzz buster/troll buster/virus buster* (1930s +) **n 1** A splendid person, esp a robust one; BEAUT, CORKER: *He was a buster nigh as big as his Mammy* (1840s +) **2** (also **Buster**) Man; fellow; GUY, BROTHER • Used in direct address with a somewhat hostile tone: *Down the hall to the back room, buster* (1860s +) **See** BALL-BUSTER, BELLY-WHOPPER, BRONCO BUSTER, BUN-BUSTER, CLOUD-BUSTER, CONK-BUSTER, KIDNEY-BUSTER, SKULL-BUSTER

buster² **n** A weak or treacherous gang member; MARK: *Bogard accused Compton of being a “buster,” meaning he was weak and unwilling to defend the gang’s interests/No fucking way. I ain’t no buster!* [1990s + Street gang; probably fr *gangbuster*]

bust hump v phr To work extremely hard; BUST one’s ASS: *Nobody’s ever accused you of being unwilling to bust hump* (1970s +)

bustier (BOO stee ay) **n** A brassiere that enhances the size of the breasts: *a sex-bomb blonde in a push-up bustier/So it’s jarring when she hands you a short rubber skirt and bustier* [1990s + ; fr French, “strapless brassiere”]

busting out adj phr Doing well; looking good (1980s + *Black teenagers*)

bustlebutt n A very busy, energetic person; EAGER BEAVER (1980s +)

bust on v To attack someone or something: *The gang’s gonna bust on*

you

bust-out *n* The climax of a swindle, when the victim hands over the money (1950s + *Police*)

bust out *v phr* **1** To be dismissed from a school for academic failure (1920 +) **2** To lose all one's money gambling, esp at craps; *TAP OUT* (1960s +) **3** *BREAK OUT* (1930 +)

bust someone out *v phr* To win all of someone's money in a crap game, esp by cheating (1960s +)

bust-up *n* An argument, esp violent: *bust-up over unionizing* (1900 +)

bust up *v phr* **1** To end a marriage, friendship, or other association (1920s +) **2** To beat or batter someone: *want me to bust you up*

bust someone wide open *v phr* To beat someone severely

busty *adj* Having large breasts; bosomy; *CHESTY: But she looked like the others, busty, too slender, bony hips* (1940s +)

busy bee *n phr* The powdered form of phencyclidine, a tranquilizer used in veterinary medicine, which as a narcotic is either sniffed or smoked in a tightly rolled cigarette; *ANGEL DUST: angel dust, also known as busy bee* [1970s + *Narcotics; fr the fact that a low dosage produces a buzz*]

but *adv* Really; definitely: *He noticed it and began making cracks but loud* [1930s + ; perhaps fr a Yiddish speech pattern]

butch *adj: short round blonde of butch self-sufficiency* *n* **1** A rough, strong man; *TOUGH* • Often used as a nickname (1902 +) **2** An aggressive lesbian; *BULLDYKE, DYKE: Even if she has turned butch on me*

*and twisted the family name on you (1940s + Homosexuals) [fr
butcher]*

butcher *n* 1 A surgeon, esp an incompetent one (*mid-1800s +*) 2 A brutal and sanguinary ruler: *They called Bokassa a worse butcher than Amin (1529 +)* 3: *As a carpenter I'm a butcher* *v* To do crudely and clumsily what should be done with finesse: *I butcher their language/I try to paint but butcher the canvas (1640s +)*

bute (BYOOT) *n* Butazolidin™, a drug sometimes used to stimulate racehorses (*1960s +*)

but good *adv phr* Very well; extremely; really: *They hate us but good/Your brother fucked you but good* [*1930s +*; perhaps fr a Yiddish speech pattern]

butt *adj* Bad; undesirable (*1990s + Students*) *adv* Very; extremely; STONE: *That furniture is butt ugly (1980s + Students)* *n* 1 The buttocks; rump; ASS • This sense is attested as western US in 1860. Oddly enough, *butt* looks like a diminutive of *buttock*, but to judge by the suffix, the opposite must be the case.: *So drunk he couldn't find his butt with both hands (1450 +)* 2 The remainder of a smoked cigarette or cigar (*1930s +*) 3 A cigarette: *a pack of butts (1900 +)* 4 The final year of a prison sentence or a term of military enlistment (*1915 + Armed forces & prison*) 5 Something or someone disliked • Somewhat derogatory: *woman is a real butt* **See** DUCK-BUTT, DUSTY BUTT, GET OFF one'S ASS, GOOD BUTT, GOOFY-BUTT, GRIPE one'S ASS, NO SKIN OFF MY ASS, SCUTTLEBUTT

butter *n* Flattery; cajolery; SOFT SOAP (*1823 +*) *v* (also **butter up**) To flatter shamelessly and fulsomely (*1700 +*) **See** LIKE SHIT THROUGH A TIN

HORN

butter-and-egg man *n phr* **1** A wealthy business executive or farmer from the provinces: *The visiting Butter and Egg Men had their Whoopee in New York* **2** A person who finances a theatrical production; ANGEL (1920s +)

butterball *n* Any plump person: *Short and plump. A real butterball/But butterball? That's on a par with pleasingly plump* [1940s +; The simile "as fat as a *butterball*" occurs from the mid-1800s]

butterfingered *adj* Clumsy, as if there was butter on someone's fingers (1615 +)

butterfingers *n* A clumsy, unhandy person, esp one who regularly drops things [1850s + Cricket; Adopted by baseball players in the 1880s]

butterflies *n* Dull spasms in one's stomach, caused by anxiety and nervousness; flutters: *I sure got butterflies thinking about it* (1908 +)

butterfly *See* PUSSY BUTTERFLY

butterfly ball (or **pitch**) *n phr* A slow and erratic pitch; KNUCKLEBALL: *All this exertion took the butter off his butterfly ball* (1940s + Baseball)

butterfly case *n phr* An insane person; NUT: *At first Rupert Pupkin doesn't seem like a butterfly case* [1970s +; fr the conceit that insane persons go about chasing *butterflies*]

butterfly kiss *n phr* A caress made by winking an eye so that the lashes brush one's partner: *She worked her eyelashes and made*

butterfly kisses on my cheeks (1871 +)

◀**butterhead**▶ *n* A black person regarded by others as a discredit to the black community (1960s + *Black*)

butter no parsnips *v phr* To have no practical effect; be unavailing: *Subtlety, Madonna well knew, butters no parsnips in the pop marketplace* [1619 +; The source expression is “Fair words butter no parsnips”]

Butternut *n* A Confederate soldier [1863 +; fr the fact that many such soldiers, esp fr rural areas, were dressed in homespun colored with dye made fr *butternuts*]

◀**buttfuck**▶ *v* and *n* ASSFUCK, BUMFUCK: *to sue us for his two-thirds contingency fee and all the troopers he can buttfuck*

◀**buttfuck buddy**▶ *See* ASSHOLE BUDDY

◀**butthead**▶ *n* A stupid person; oaf; BONEHEAD, DUMDUM, Spazz: *Howdy is a depressingly stupid butthead* [1980s + Students; probably fr *butthead*, “ass-headed,” influenced by the 1960s student term *butterhead*, “stupid person”]

butt heads *v phr* To vie strongly; contend: *NBC’s new John Laroquette Show butted heads with ABC’s Ro-seanne*

◀**butthole**▶ *n* The anus; ASSHOLE: *Did those buttholes score again?* (1950s +)

butt in v phr To intrude oneself; proffer unwanted counsel; Barge In:
The Wagner Act forbade any employer to butt in on such matters/“Greenspan, don’t butt in,” said Gold (1900 +)

buttinsky n (Variations: **butterinsky** or **buttinski** or **butt-in**) A person who rudely intrudes himself, esp one who does so habitually [1902 +; fr *butt in* plus the Slavic or Yiddish suffix **-sky**, *added for humorous effect*]

butt-kicker n A very effective person • Compare asskicker: *He’s a real butt-kicker in soccer (1980s + Students)*

buttlegger n A cigarette smuggler: *expected to concentrate on apprehending buttleggers who plied a trade between the low-tax, tobacco-growing South and the high-tax, tobacco-consuming North (1960s +)*

buttload n A large quantity; a lot of; SHITLOAD (1980s + Students)

butt naked adj Totally nude: *butt naked running through the boys’ locker room*

button n 1 The chin; point of the chin: *I got clipped square on the button (1920 +)* <2> The clitoris; CLIT (1870s +) **3** A small quantity of a narcotic: *There exists some traffic, however, in “buttons,” or small amounts (1960s + Narcotics)* **4** The rounded top of the peyote plant (1960s + Narcotics) **5** A police officer’s badge; POTSY, TIN (1920s +) **6** (also **buttons**) A police officer • *Blue and buttons* was used of the police (1900 +) **n phr 7** (also **button man** or **button player** or **button soldier**) A low-ranking member of the Mafia; SOLDIER (1960s + *Underworld*) **See** BELLY BUTTON, CHICKEN SWITCH, HIT THE PANIC BUTTON, ON

THE BUTTON

buttondown or **buttoned-down** *adj* Conventional; of unmistakable respectability; conservative; SQUARE: *The buttondown, dispassionate, country club racism of the nouveau riche/One of the most squeaky-clean and buttoned-down of US corporations is a partner* [1960s+; fr the wearing of *buttondown* collars by business executives and other conservatives]

button down *v phr* **1** To classify; PEG, PIGEONHOLE: *I buttoned him down from the start as a probable bore* **2** To make precise; discard all but one alternative: *First we decide to buy, then we button down the price* **3** To prepare for action; get ready: *He was all buttoned down and ready to go* [1950s+; third sense fr a military term for closing all ports and hatches for action]

buttoned-up *adj* Neat; trim; prim: *Betty Crocker's very serious, buttoned-up, orderly* (1970s+)

buttonhole *v* To get someone's attention as if by taking hold by a buttonhole: *listening to and buttonholing other researchers* [1880+; *Button* in the same sense is attested from the early 1860s]

buttonhook *n* A maneuver in which a pass receiver runs downfield and then suddenly spins and runs back toward the line of scrimmage [1970s+ Football; fr the resemblance of the path to a *hook* used for pulling *buttons* through the buttonholes of a pair of shoes]

button (up) one's lip *v phr* To stop talking; not tell what one knows: *I wish Jim Quello would button his lip* (1847+)

buttons *See* HAVE ALL one'S BUTTONS

button up v phr **1** To keep quiet; BUTTON one'S LIP, CLAM UP: *If you don't button up they'll shut you up (1850s +)* **2** To finish something, esp tidily and handsomely: *We buttoned it up in a couple days (1940s +)* **3** To lock up, close up, or make secure: *I told John Sanderson to button up the generator (1940s +)*

butt out v phr **1** To stop intruding; reverse one's butting in • Usual exasperated command, based on opposition to *butt in*: *Four other guys told me I should butt out (1930s +)* **2** To depart, esp abruptly; BUG OUT: *I butted right out of there when it went off (1940s +)*

butt pack n phr FANNY PACK

buttplug n A despised person; ASSHOLE, JERK (1980s +)

butts or butts on interj The declaration that one has or wants first rights to something; DIBS: *The kids hollered "Butts on the drumstick!" [1930s +; fr the claiming of a cigarette butt seen in the street]*

butt ugly adj phr Very ugly; repulsive: *That furniture is butt ugly/the "I feel butt-ugly" days (1980s + Students)*

buy v **1** To believe; accept as true: *These guys bought the myth and now it's costing them dearly/I buy it. What you told me is between us* **2** To agree to; acquiesce in: *I'll that's the plan, I'll buy it (1920s +)* **3** To do; effectuate: *She pointed her gun at me. I said, "What are you trying to buy with that?" (1940s +)* **4** To hire; engage: *He bought him a lawyer and filed suit (1650s +)* **5** (also **buy off**) To induce by money; bribe: *He tried to buy a couple of jury members (1650s +)*

buy-and-bust operation *n phr* A police operation in which an undercover officer buys narcotics and then arrests the seller: *The case began with a routine buy-and-bust operation (1980s +)*

buy a pig in a poke *v phr* To accept or agree to something without careful examination; risk the unknown: *It is unfair for anyone running for president "to ask people to buy a pig in the poke" [1562 + ; fr dialect poke, "bag, sack"] See CAN'T BUY*

buy-in *n* Acceptance; acquiescence: *Not everyone adheres to the strategy. They hedge. There's a lack of buy-in (1990s +)*

buy into *v phr* To accept; acquiesce in • Thought of and perhaps coined as the opposite of sell out, which has a more contemptuous suggestion of betrayal: *tots of guilt and I bought into that/I bought into the whole materialistic trip/the degree with which you bought into the pop culture of the Fifties*

buy jawbone *v phr* To buy on credit [1860s + ; perhaps fr the notion that one has to *jawbone* the merchant into taking a credit risk]

buy off on *v phr* To agree to; BUY: *Will you buy off on letting us go back to the garrison? (1970s + Army)*

buy the big one *v phr* To die: *Aunt June bought the big one*

buy the farm (or the ranch) *v phr* To be killed; die: *the cat that bought the farm when Harvey hit him on his bike/Luna crash confirmed. They bought the ranch [1950s + Armed forces; fr earlier Air Force term buy a farm, "to crash"; probably from the expressed desire of wartime pilots to stop flying, buy a farm, and live peacefully]*

buy time v phr To be dilatory or evasive in order to gain time; temporize; STALL (1960s +)

buzz n 1 A telephone call: *I think I'll give the Guided Child a buzz* (1910 +) **2** Subject of talk; gossip; rumor: *What's the buzz, cuz?* (1605 +) **3** A feeling or surge of pleasure, esp a pleasant sense of intoxication; HIGH: *After two Scotches he got a nice buzz* (1935 +) **4** A police squad car (1950s + *Teenagers*) **v 1** To call someone on the telephone; RING: *Why not buzz Eddy for the brawl?* (1910 +) **2** To talk; converse: *The crowd was buzzing about some pretty raunchy divorces* (1832 +) **3** To flatter; court (1900 +) **4** To inform someone in confidence, esp by whispering: *You'll buzz me later* (1950s +) **5** To announce one's arrival or summon someone by or as if by sounding a buzzer: *Buzz when you want me* (1950s +) **6** To beg (1920s + *Hoboes*) **7** To pilfer; rob; HOLD UP (1812 + *Underworld*) **8** To question or investigate someone (1930s + *Police & underworld*) **9** To fly an aircraft alarmingly close to something, esp to the ground • A sense "to flutter or hover about, over, etc," is attested from 1650 (*WWII air forces*) **10** To roister drunkenly at: *They were all buzzing the bar* (*WWII armed forces*) **11** Kill; WASTE: *They buzz the kid and her baby?* (1990s + *Street gang*)

buzz along See BUZZ OFF

buzzard n 1 A dislikable person, esp an old man: *a stingy and predatory old buzzard* (1600s +) **2** The eagle worn as insignia by a colonel or a naval captain (1930s + *Armed forces*)

buzzard colonel n phr CHICKEN COLONEL (1930s + *Armed forces*)

buzz bomb *n phr* A German WWII V-1 winged robot bomb powered by a ramjet engine (*mid-1940s +*)

buzz book *n phr* A best-selling book; a book everyone is talking about: *The nation's latest buzz book is not a fast summer read* (*1970s +*)

buzz-buzz *n* Unintelligible or tedious noise, esp continuous vociferation: *All the buzz-buzz from without may be said to go in one ear and out the other* (*1908 +*)

buzz-crusher or **buzz-kill** *n* Someone or something that ruins or dampens one's pleasure; KILLJOY, PARTY-POOPER (*1980s + Students*)

buzz cut or **buzzed hair** *modifier*: *Some have buzz-cut spiked haircuts/Fitness guru Susan Powter, she of the platinum buzz-cut hair *n phr* A cutting off of all or most of the hair; a total or near-total dehairing: *A woman cadet could conceivably get a buzz cut/Nowicki received a buzz cut from his swimmers* (*1990s +*)*

buzzed *adj* Intoxicated, esp mildly so; TIDDLY: *Getting a little buzzed on a second Bloody Mary* (*1950s +*)

buzzer *n* A police or other law-enforcement badge: *I brought out the 1928 deputy sheriff's star I carried to show people who wanted to see a buzzer* (*1914 +*)

buzzin' *adj* Drunk (*1980s + Teenagers*) *See* COUSIN

buzz in *v phr* To arrive: *Old JK buzzed in from Syracuse* (*1930s +*)

buzz someone in *v phr* To unlock an outer door for someone by actuating an electric unlatching device (*1970s +*)

buzz off (or along) v phr To depart; TODDLE OFF • First form often a command (1914+)

buzzword or buzzphrase n A modish technical or arcane term used to make one appear sophisticated: *The rhetoric has sputtered with buzzwords like “anticolonialist” and “progressive”/I avoid buzzphrases like “this point in time”/Buzzword of the Month Dept* [1946+; coined in the mid-1940s by students at the Harvard Business School and meaning “a word used to describe the key to any course or situation” in their specialized and amusingly stilted vocabulary; hence *buzz* may be a shortening and repronouncing of *business*]

buzzworthy adj Worthy of attention and gossip: *Is your website buzzworthy*

buzzy adj Drunk (1700s+)

BVDs (bee vee deez) n Underwear, esp long underwear; BEEVEEDEES: *I opened the door and caught her in her BVDs* [1920s+; fr the 1870s trademark of a brand of long underwear, the initials of the manufacturers Bradley, Voorhees, and Day]

by prep **1** With; as far as concerns: *Five skins is jake by me* **2** At; to; at the place of: *I’ll buy you a drink by Antek* [1920s+; fr direct transcription of Yiddish prepositional use into English] **See** GET AWAY WITH something, GET BY **by a long shot (or a jugful)**, not **See** NOT BY A LONG SHOT

by a nose adv phr By a narrow margin; barely: *win by a nose* (1908+)

by-a-whisker adj Very nearly tied; very close: *the House of*

Representatives' by-a-whisker vote (1970s +)

by cracky *interj* By Christ • A euphemistic form: *By cracky, he hit the jackpot! (1800s +)*

bye *See* TAKE A BYE

by ear *adv phr*: *He sort of made his judgments by ear* [fr the playing of music without the use of graphic notation, a term used since at least the 1840s] *See* PLAY IT BY EAR

bye-bye *n* Good-bye: *bye-bye for now (1867 +)*

by George *interj* A mild exclamation of surprise, approval, determination, emphasis, etc: *By George, I'll do it/I think she's got it, by George* [1731 +; A euphemism for *by God*]

-by God- *infix* Used for emphasis: *I was born in West-by God-Virginia*

by guess and by God *adv phr* By approximation and instinct; not by precise or infallible means: *She didn't know exactly how to make a quiche, so had to do it by guess and by God (1940s +)*

BYOB (pronounced as separate letters) *modifier*: *a BYOB party v phr*
Bring your own bottle, or your own booze (1950s +)

◁**by the balls**▷ *See* HAVE SOMEONE BY THE BALLS

by the bell *See* SAVED BY THE BELL

by the book *adv phr* According to correct procedures; as one should under regulations, law, contract, etc: *He said there would be no more corner cutting, we'd do everything strictly by the book (1840s +)*

by the numbers *adv phr* In a prescribed way; mechanically: *He even*

makes love by the numbers [WWI armed forces; fr the military training device of analyzing a complex action by breaking it into a numbered series of simpler actions, performed as the *numbers are called out*] **by the seat of one's pants** *adv phr* By instincts and feelings, without the benefit of formal training or procedures; BY GUESS AND BY GOD, BY EAR: *pushing his luck, living on the edge, playing brilliantly by the seat of his pants (1930s + Aviators)* **See** FLY BY THE SEAT OF ONE'S PANTS

by the short hairs **See** HAVE SOMEONE BY THE SHORT HAIRS

by the truckful *adj phr* (Variations: **boxcar** or **carload** may replace **truckful**) In great quantity; numerous; Up the Kazoo (1960s +)

C

C n Cocaine *See* BIG C, C-NOTE, H AND C

caballo n Heroin [1950s+ Narcotics; fr Spanish, “horse,” translating *horse*, “heroin”]

cabbage n Money; LETTUCE: *The salad boys in the back room, oiling up the cabbage. And it's big cabbage, too (1900+)* *See* FOLDING MONEY, HAPPY-CABBAGE

cabbagehead n A stupid person: *what cabbagehead left the light on?*

cabinet *See* KITCHEN CABINET

cabin fever n phr Restlessness, impatience, and other signs of having been restrained too long (1918+)

caboodle n A totality; discrete unit; BOODLE: *Keep the whole caboodle* [1840+; perhaps fr *boodle*] *See* KIT AND CABOODLE

caboose n A jail [1860s+; prob fr *calaboose*, “jail”]

ca-ca or caca or kaka cack (KAH kah) n 1 Excrement; SHIT: *Overweight is kaka (1870s+)* **2** Heroin; HORSE, SHIT (1950s+ Narcotics) [origin uncertain; perhaps fr late 1800s cack, “to defecate”; perhaps fr dialect *cacky*, “excrement,” attested by 1899; perhaps fr Latin *cacare*, “to defecate,” used as a euphemism in the presence of children; perhaps fr Modern Greek; ultimately fr the Indo-European

root *kakka* or *kaka*, designating defecation]

cack *v* **1** To defecate **2** To laugh uncontrollably

cackleberry *n* A hen's egg used for food

cackle-broad or **cack-broad** *n* A wealthy woman or society woman:

I knocks de pad with them cack-broads up on Sugar Hill (1940s +)

cactus juice *n* Tequila: *drank cactus juice in Cancun*

Cad or **Caddy** or **Caddie** *n* A Cadillac car: *And we'll rent a black*

Caddy (1920s +)

caddy *n* A Cadillac automobile: *Parfc that Caddy over there*

cadet *n* A despised person; GEEK: *Ignore him, he's such a cadet (1980s +*

Students) **See** SPACE CADET

cadge (CAJ, CAYJ) *v* To borrow; beg; BUM, MOOCH (1800s +)

Cadillac modifier: *It's Cadillac all the way. It's a Cadillac operation* *n* **1**

An ounce of heroin (1950s + Narcotics) **2** The best of its kind; standard of excellence; paragon: *Republicans call New York the Cadillac of welfare states/Revos are the Cadillac of sunglasses*

cafeteria modifier Allowing a range of choice; Smorgasbord: *cafeteria insurance plans (1980s +)*

cafeteria Catholic *n phr* A Roman Catholic who observes church prescriptions and prohibitions at his or her own discretion: *You know, cafeteria Catholics who want to pick and choose what they want to believe of Catholic teaching (1980s +)*

cage modifier: *a big cage star/the cage standing* *n* **1** A prison (1630s +)

2 A car or van: *The cage behind me bleated its horn (1970s + Motorcyclists)* **3** A basketball basket or net (1920s + Sports) **4** Basketball (1920s + Sports) **v 1**: *The punk concealed a genuine terror of being caged* **2** CADGE **See** RATTLE someone's CAGE, RATTLE CAGES

cager n A basketball player: *The eight-foot cager sped down the court like a maddened giraffe (1930s + Sports)*

cage rattler n phr A person not content with the humdrum or conventional: *The governor wants "cage rattlers"; thinkers, dreamers, and gadflies (1970s +)*

cagey or cagy adj Shrewd; wary; pawky: *a quiet, cagy observer* [1890s + ; perhaps fr the expression *play a caged game*, "be careful, keep your intentions concealed," attested in 1890s]

cahoots See IN CAHOOTS

Cain See RAISE CAIN

caj or cas or cazzh (CAZH, CAYZH) adj Casual; acceptable (1980s + Teenagers)

cake n <1> The female genitals (1940s + Black) **2** A sexually attractive woman; FOX (1940s + Black) **3** (also **cake-eater**) A ladies' man; DUDE: *his brown hat, fixed square-shaped the way the cakes were wearing them (1920s +)* **4** PIECE OF CAKE (1910 +) **See** BABY-CAKES, COFFEE AND CAKES, CUT CAKE, FRUITCAKE, ICE THE CAKE, NUTBALL, PIECE OF CAKE, TAKE THE CAKE

cake-cutter n A cashier or other person who gives short change (1930s + Circus)

cake job n phr An easy job; sinecure: *Meter maids have a cake job*

(1990s +)

Cakewalk *n* Something very easy; BREEZE, CINCH, PIECE OF CAKE: *Casey on his way to a cakewalk with the Senate Intelligence Committee/Our players thought this season was going to be a Cakewalk* [1890s +; fr the name of a 19th-century dance contest, influenced by *piece of cake*]

calaboose (KAL uh boos) *n* A jail or prison; cell [late 1700s +; fr Spanish *calabozo*]

calf *See* SHAKE A WICKED CALF

calf love *n phr* PUPPY LOVE (1890s +)

calico *See* PIECE OF CALICO

California blanket *n phr* Newspapers used as bedding: *spent his nights on park benches under California blankets* (1920s + Hoboes)

California kiss-off *See* KISS OFF

California stop *n phr* (also **Michigan stop**) An instance of rolling slowly past a stop sign, rather than stopping (1960s +)

Californicate *v* 1 To overdevelop the land: *bumper sticker: Don't Californicate Montana* 2 To seduce and infect with the moral and social standards of Southern California: *McKellen was, in the tradition of expatriate Englishmen, Californicated into a greater sense of individual freedom* (1990s +)

Californication *n* An instance of Californicating: *Gogarty said that his task was to prevent the Californication of Ireland* (1990s +)

call *n* A decision: *It was my call* [1980s +; fr the playing decisions of

managers, quarterbacks, etc, and the officiating decisions of umpires, referees, etc] **See** CATTLE CALL, CLOSE SHAVE

call someone's bluff v phr To force someone to justify or validate a pretense; require the truth: *When she called his bluff, he had to admit he was lying (1870s +)*

call-down n A reprimand; rebuke (1890s +)

call someone down v phr To reprimand; rebuke (1890s +)

call girl n phr A prostitute, esp one who may be engaged by telephone (1900 +)

call hogs v phr To snore very loudly: *after vacation, calling hogs all night*

call house (or joint) n phr A brothel, esp one where a prostitute may be engaged by telephone: *that call joint (1910 +)*

call in one's chits (or markers) v phr To collect what is owed to one, esp tit-for-tat political or other favors: *I have no chits to call in from politicians/You're calling in your chits, Ivor/For the Titian show, Michel Laclotte, soon to retire as director of the Louvre, has called in all his markers at once [1980s +; fr chit, "notation of something owed, IOU," attested fr the 1770s; the source is Hindi chitti; a marker is also a notation of debt, esp in gambling]*

call it v phr 1 To declare something over or done, such as to declare a medical patient dead: *surgeon called it at 1700 hours 2* To end a current task or end one's workday: *I've written enough definitions. I'm going to call it*

call it a day (or quits) v phr To stop or terminate something; declare one has had enough: *The Iraqi leadership has hunkered down; time to call it a day/Any sensible assassin would have called it quits* [first form 1840s +, second 1940s +; *Call quits* is attested from the 1890s]

call it like one sees it v phr To be honest and unbiased; be deaf to influence (1980s +)

call off the dogs v phr To relent; ease one's demands • A metaphor from hunting, where a trapped quarry is beset by dogs: *Holmgren basically called off the dogs in the third quarter* (1930s +)

call of nature or nature's call n phr The need to use the toilet, esp when urgent: *Where'd he go so quickly? To answer the call of nature, naturally* (1761 +)

call someone on the carpet v phr To reprimand or summon for a reprimand; CHEW someone OUT [1890s +; probably fr early 19th-century British *walk the carpet*, having the same sense and based upon a servant's being called into the parlor to be reprimanded]

call someone out v phr To challenge someone to a fight, esp a duel: *wanted to call him out*

call someone pisher sentence It's no big deal, so let's drop it • Often response to a rebuke one regards as trivial or undeserved: *So I'm five minutes late. Call me pisher/And what can I do if he refuses? Call him pisher?* [1940s +; fr Yiddish; a *pisher* is a little kid, a bed-wetter]

call shotgun v phr To claim the front passenger seat: *the tall guy*

called shotgun

call one's shots v phr To explain or predict what one will do: *She'll never try to trick you; she always calls her shots* [1930s + ; fr a target-shooter's announcement of where the next *shot* will hit]

call the shots v phr To be in charge: *Who's calling the shots around here?* (1960s +)

cally n A jail or police station [1920s + Hoboes; fr *calaboose*]

calm as a Christian with aces wired See COOL AS A CHRISTIAN WITH ACES WIRED

◁**camel toe**▷ **n** Unsightly crotch cleavage when a woman is wearing tight or see-through clothing: *yogis were showing some camel toe*

camera loves someone, the sentence The person named is very photogenic or telegenic: *The camera loved her dark good looks*

cammies or camies n A camouflage suit or uniform: *They said they would kill just to peel off their ripe desert cammies/There were kids whose cammies (camouflage suits) were still on fire* (1970s +)

cammo n Camouflage: *The Cammo Dudes are here* (1980s +)

camp adj 1: a camp bar/the camp scene 2: a camp advertisement/camp

clothing n 1 A male homosexual (1940s + *Homosexuals*) **2**

Effeminate behavior, such as mincing gait, fluttering gestures, or pronounced lisp (1920s + *Homosexuals*) **3** Something, esp in art,

decoration, theater, etc, so naively stylized, artificial, affected, old-fashioned, and inadequate to good modern taste as to be highly

amusing and inviting to parody: *television's inexhaustible supply of*

crash courses in camp (1960s +) **v 1** (also **camp it up**): *Malcolm was*

camping perilously in the blue-collar bar **2** (also **camp it up**) To behave in a humorously affected, exaggerated way, esp imitating the acting and oratorical styles of the 1800s: *She started camping, vamping me like Theda Bara (1960s +)* [origin uncertain; perhaps, as noted in 1909, referring to a sense “actions and gestures of exaggerated emphasis,” it is fr French *se camper*, “put oneself in a bold, provocative posture,” attested fr the mid-1600s; the more modern senses were revived, introduced, and popularized in Susan Sontag’s essay “Notes on Camp,” published in 1964] See BOOT CAMP, HIGH CAMP, LOW CAMP

campaign *See* WHISPERING CAMPAIGN

camp it up *v phr* **1** To behave dramatically or affectedly; overact: *can’t help camping it up* **2** To behave effeminately, to attract homosexuals

campy *adj* **1** Effeminate; overtly homosexual (*1940s + Homosexuals*) **2** Displaying naive, affected, and old-fashioned style: *a campy evocation of WWI patriotism (1960s +)*

can *n* **1** A toilet; JOHN • Said to be a shortening of *pisscan (1900 +)* **2** The buttocks; rump; ASS: *And that’s when I asked her about her fat can (1910 +)* **3** A jail or prison; cell (*1910 +*) **4** A destroyer; TIN CAN (*1930s + Navy*) **5** A hot rod (*1950s + Hot rodders*) **6** An ounce of marijuana or other narcotic (*1930s + Narcotics*) **7** A canvasback duck: *I know there are a lot of hunters here this weekend to try for cans (1990s +)* *v* **1** To discharge an employee; FIRE: *He is not the first commentator to be canned by an editor (1905 +)* **2** To stop; cease, esp some objectionable behavior • Usual a stern command: *Let’s can*

the noise (1906 +) 3: They caught him and canned him for two weeks

4 To score by throwing a basket: Shaq canned another 20-footer

(1980s + Basketball) See ASH CAN, GET A CAN ON, IN THE CAN, KICKING CAN, SHITCAN,

TIE A CAN ON someone, TIN CAN

canal water *See* SUCK CANAL WATER

canary *n* **1** A girl or woman; CHICK (1880s +) **2** A woman singer, esp

of popular music (1919 +) **3** An informer; STOOL PIGEON • Because a

canary sings (1920s + Underworld) v: She used to canary with Stan

Kenton See MOUNTAIN CANARY

can be *See* EASY AS PIE

cancelbot *n* A computer program that intercepts and destroys a network message automatically when triggered by elements of the message: *Even users who applaud such a use of what they call a “cancelbot” acknowledge that the situation raises broad and troubling issues* [1990s + Computer; fr *cancel* plus robot]

cancer stick *n phr* A cigarette: *You’ll find some cancer sticks hidden*

[1950s + ; The origin of the term coincides with the first national awareness of the relationship between cigarette smoking and lung

cancer]

candied *adj* Addicted to cocaine • Fr *nose candy*: *Moss is candied*

candlelight *n* Dusk or dawn

can do *modifier*: *The CIA was a can-do outfit/So far it’s been mostly a*

can-do spring for the 24-year-old righthander **sentence** I can do it; I’m

the one you want • The noun phrase *can do*, “good and willing

worker,” is attested from the 1830s: *We asked them to design a whole new bridge in a week, and they said “Can do”* (1900s +) **See** NO CAN DO

candy n 1 Cocaine or hashish (*narcotics 1900 +*) **2** A sugar cube soaked with LSD; LSD (1960s + *Narcotics*) **3** Any barbiturate drug; drugs in general (1960s + *Narcotics*) **4** Something easily done; BREEZE, CINCH, PIECEOFCAKE (1940s +) **See** NEEDLE CANDY, NOSE CANDY

candy ass n phr A timid person; weakling; WIMP (1960s +)

candyassed or candyass adj Timid; feeble; cowardly; WIMPY: *not that candyassed dreck played by legions of Spandexed clones/Some candyass Barry Manilow type might be at ease in this setting* (1950s +)

candy man n phr A narcotics supplier; CONNECTION, PUSHER (1960s + *Narcotics*)

candy store n phr 1 A place where wide-eyed dreams are or may be fulfilled: *The US market is the candy store for one and all* **2** Personal territory or property; TURF: *It’s Aidid’s candy store* (1990s +)

candy stripe n phr A secondary road on a map [1970s + *Army*; fr its pink color]

candy striper n phr A young woman who is a volunteer nurse’s aide in a hospital [1960s + ; fr the *stripes* on her uniform, resembling those on peppermint *candy*]

can house n phr A brothel: *him playing the races and going to can houses* [1900s + ; fr can, “buttocks, ass”]

can live with that, I sentence That’s acceptable; I’ll buy that: *You*

want 10 percent? *I can live with that* (1980s +)

canned *adj* **1** (also **canned up**) Drunk: *They was already pretty canned/They got canned up a little more* (1910 +) **2** Recorded; played from a phonograph record or magnetic tape: *canned music* (1900 +) **3** Not fresh for the occasion; kept for easy and general use: *The candidate uttered one or two canned one-liners, to small effect* (1890s +) **4** Filmed; completed • That is, put into one of the large flat circular tin cans used for holding movie film: *That scene is already canned* (1950s + *Movie studios*)

canned COW *n phr* Canned milk; condensed milk (1920s + *Cowboys*)

canned goods *n phr* A virgin, either male or female (1918 +)

canned hunt *n phr* A hunt arranged at a hunting ranch: *Farms and ranches offering what critics call “canned hunts” are springing up across the country* (1990s +)

cannery *n* A jail (1920s +)

cannibal *n* SIXTY-NINE (1970s +)

cannon¹ *n* A pistol; firearm; PIECE: *He holstered his own cannon* (1900 + *Underworld*) *See* LOOSE CANNON

cannon² *n* A professional thief, esp a pickpocket: *grand larceny, when a cannon lifts a wallet from a pocket v*: *You’re too small to cannon the street-cars* [1910 + *Underworld*; based on *gun*, “thief,” fr Yiddish *gonif*]

cannonball *n* **1** A fast express or freight train (1915 + *Hoboes*) **2** A message sent from one prisoner to another, or from a prisoner to

friends outside (1920+ *Prison*)

cannon fodder *n phr* **1** Common soldiers, esp young and relatively untrained infantry soldiers; BULLET BAIT **2** Any relatively low-ranking employee, associate, etc: *But I'm still cannon fodder when the crunch comes* (1930s+)

canoe *v* To kiss and caress, etc; MAKE OUT, NECK: *Her old man had been hearing about me and Daisy canoeing* [1930s+; probably fr *canoodle*]

◁**canoe inspection**▷ *n phr* Examination of the vulva and vagina for evidence of venereal disease • The female equivalent of the *short-arm inspection* (1960s+)

can (or **tall can**) of **corn** *n phr* A high, easy fly ball (1930s+ *Baseball*)

can (or **bag**) of **worms** *n phr* A complex and troublesome matter; a Pandora's box: *Leave it alone, don't kick the crawly old can of worms/the current bag of worms* (1950s+) **See** OPEN UP A CAN OF WORMS

canoodle or **kanoodle** *v* **1** To hug, caress, etc; make love **2** To coax, esp by lavishing affection [1850s+; origin uncertain; said to be Oxford University slang, "paddle a canoe," which might lead to amorous behavior and blandishment, as little as this seems likely in an unstable watercraft]

can-opener *n* Any tool used to open a safe (1910+ *Underworld*)

can really pick 'em, one, or one sure knows how to pick 'em
sentence One is very selective, accurate, and successful in choices • Nearly always used ironically: *Is this turkey your idea of a good*

show? You can really pick 'em (1960s +)

cans *n* <1> A woman's breasts; TITS: *that chanteuse with the huge cans (1950s +)* 2 Earphones worn over the ears (1920s +) [second sense perhaps fr the toy telephones made by punching a hole in the bottom of a tin *can* and connecting it to another such can by a string. When drawn taut, the string would carry the vibrations of a voice from one can and reproduce it in the other] **See** KNOCK

someone FOR A LOOP

can-shaker *n* A fundraiser • Fr the passing of a coin can, as at movie theaters

can't buy *v phr* To have no possibility of; be totally denied: *From then on, I couldn't buy a good review/You couldn't find a job. You couldn't buy a job (1960s +)*

can't carry a tune in a bucket, someone *sentence* Someone is tone-deaf; someone sings very badly: *Ashley can't carry a tune in a bucket (later 1800s +)*

can't fight city hall, YOU **See** YOU CAN'T FIGHT CITY HALL

can't fight (or punch) one's way out of a paper bag *v phr* To be a very weak or ineffective puncher; put up a poor showing (1940s + *Prizefight*)

can't find his ass with both hands, he *sentence* (Variations: **butt** may replace **ass**; **hold** may replace **find**; **in his back pocket** may be added) He is very stupid indeed; he is hopelessly drunk: *So drunk he couldn't find his butt with both hands/I'm a no-good scumbag who couldn't find his ass with both hands in his back pocket (1940s +)*

can't get over something *v phr* To be surprised and unable to recover from shock: *I can't get over how much weight she lost* (1899+)

can't get there from here, you See YOU CAN'T GET THERE FROM HERE

can't hit the side of a barn (or a barn door), someone *sentence* Someone is unable to throw accurately enough to hit anything at all (1930s+)

can't make an omelet without breaking eggs, you See YOU CANT MAKE AN OMELET WITHOUT BREAKING EGGS

canto *n* A round, inning, period, or other division of a contest: *Lefty got decked in the third canto* [1910+ Sports; fr Italian, "song," with reference to the 100 poetic divisions of Dante's *Divina commedia*]

can't win for losing, someone *sentence* Someone seems entirely unable to make any sort of success; someone is persistently and distressingly bested: *We busted our humps, but we just couldn't win for losing* (1970s+)

Canuck modifier: *Canuck booze/my Canuck pal* • Regarded as offensive by some, but apparently becoming more acceptable *n* A Canadian, esp a French-Canadian (1840s+)

canvas, the *n phr* A boxing ring; the SQUARED CIRCLE (1910+)

can you read lips See READ MY LIPS

cap¹ *n* **1** Captain **2** Mister; sir • Used in direct address to a man one wishes to flatter (1840s+)

cap² *n* A capsule of narcotics: *I didn't have the money to buy a cap with*

(1920s + *Narcotics*) **v 1** To buy narcotics; COP: *I capped me some more pot* (1950s + *Narcotics*) **2** To open or use a capsule of narcotics; BUST A CAP (1950s + *Narcotics*) **See** BUST CAPS

cap³ v 1 To best or outdo, esp with a funnier joke, stranger story, etc; TOP: *She told a lie that capped mine* (1940s +) **2** To shoot; kill by shooting • Compare bust a cap: *I should just cap you right now/I think I'm going to cap myself today* (1960s +) **3** CAP ON someone (1980s + *Teenagers*) [all in one way or another fr *cap*, “head covering”] **See** APPLEJACK CAP, GIMME CAP

◁**cap⁴**▷ **n** Fellatio; HEAD: *Give Jerry some cap* (1960s +)

Cape Cod (or **Cape Ann**) **turkey n phr** Codfish (1865 +)

capeesh or **coppish** or **capiche** or **capish** (kə PEESH) **affirmation I** understand: *Ten tonight? Capeesh. question* Do you understand?: *All right, class, that's all there is to it. Capeesh?/I owe it all to you. Strip Dealers School, capiche?/Sam fixed me with a pair of very cold eyes. “Capish?” he said* [1940s + ; fr Italian *capisci*, “Do you understand?”]

caper n 1 A drunken spree; a carouse; BINGE (1870s +) **2** A prank; stunt (1840s +) **3** A crime, esp a robbery (1920s + *Underworld*)

capital n Money; cash: *short of capital after the errands*

capo (KA poh, KAH-) **n** The head of a local unit of the Mafia; Mafia captain: *identified as Mafia capo by whatever's current crime commission* [fr Italian, “head, chief”]

capo di tutti capi (KAH poh dee TOOT ee KAH pee) **n phr** The chief

of all chiefs; HEAD OF ALL THE HEADS, HONCHO, MISTER BIG, TOP DOG: *The dissidents convened an extraordinary meeting of every capo di tutti baseball capi/Salvatore (Toto) Riina, the capo di tutti capi of the Sicilian mob (1970s +)*

cap on someone *v phr* **1** To outdo someone; CAP, TOP **2** To insult someone; DIS, PUT someone DOWN (1980s +)

capper *n* **1** A huckster's or professional gambler's helper, who attracts clients; SHILL (1750s +) **2** The climax or end of something (1940s +) **3** A story, joke, etc, that outdoes another one (1940s +)

car *n* A group of prisoners from the same city or other place; locational clique: *All these kids were in the Sacramento car (1980s + Prison)* *See* FUNNY CAR, PROWL CAR

carb *n* Carbohydrate; food mainly consisting of carbohydrates: *can't live without carbs*

carbo *n* A carbohydrate food: *She knew she shouldn't be munching out on carbo's like this (1970s +)*

carborundum *See* ILLEGITIMATI NON CARBORUNDUM

car bra *n phr* A protective covering for the front of a car, often made of black plastic (1980s +)

carcass *n* A human body; one's body, esp if heavy: *set his carcass on the couch*

card *n* **1** A remarkable person, esp an eccentric or amusing one (1830s +) **2** A portion of a narcotic; DECK (1920s + *Narcotics*) **3** A schedule; program of events: *six fights on the card (1930s + Sports)*

▼ To require someone to show identification, esp at a bar or liquor store: *So far my only success was not getting carded at the Wheaton Liquor Store (1970s +)* **See** FACE CARD, GET ONE'S CARD PUNCHED, IN THE CARDS, STACK THE DECK, WILD CARD

card-carrying *adj* Authentic; genuine and longstanding: *These women tend not to be card-carrying feminists/a service for all us card-carrying optimists* [1960s +; fr the *carrying* of a membership *card* in an organization; first used of Communists during the 1950s period of political inquisition]

carded or **proofed** *adj* Checked to determine if one is of legal age for a purchase or participation: *carded at the liquor store/got carded even though she is 50*

cardsharp (or **card shark**) *n phr* A very clever card-player, esp an unscrupulous poker or bridge player • Shortening of earlier *card sharper* (1880s +)

cardy or **cardi** or **cardie** *n* A cardigan sweater: *Blue cardy, \$100, by Lacoste (1960s +)*

care and feeding *n phr* Solicitous care and nurturing, like that given an infant: *Sununu devoted himself to the care and feeding of a five-member Executive Council (1960s +)*

carebear *n* A cuddly, nice person: *carebears won't get into fights* [1981 +; after American Greetings character]

care package *n phr* Gifts, money, etc, given to a relative or friend: *They try to help their son with occasional care packages* [1980s +; fr *CARE package*, a parcel of food, clothing, etc, sent to needy persons]

overseas through the Cooperative for American Relief Everywhere, in the aftermath of World War II]

carhop *n* A waitress or waiter who serves food to patrons in parked cars at a drive-in restaurant; Curbie *v*: *She carhopped at Beef Babylon* [1930s + ; formed on the model of *bellhop*]

carjacking *n* The armed and violent stealing of a car from its driver; GANKING: *At 15 he was arrested for carjacking and assault* [1990s + ; fr *car* plus *hijacking*]

carny or **carney** or **carnie** *modifier*: *corny talk/a carney family* *n* 1 A carnival 2 A carnival worker or member of such a worker's family: *outdoor show people, the "carnies," who travel from town to town with carnivals* 3 The occupational idiom or jargon of carnival people: *I thought you talked carney by now* (1930s +)

carpet *See* CALL SOMEONE ON THE CARPET, ON THE CARPET, RED CARPET, ROLL OUT THE RED CARPET

carpetbag *v* To try to make a good impression (1930s + *Students*)

carpet-bomb *v* To mount a highly destructive and intense opposition; CLOBBER: *The Bush campaign carpet-bombed Dukakis from Labor Day onward* [1980s + ; fr a 1950s term for total area bombing, laying as it were a *carpet* of bombs]

carpet-rat *See* RUG RAT

carrier *See* JEEP CARRIER

carrot-top *n* A redhead (1880s +)

carry *v* 1 To have narcotics on one's person (1920s + *Narcotics*) 2 To

be armed (1950s+ *Underworld*) [fr the 1920s phrase *carry iron*, “to be armed”]

carry a load v phr To be drunk (1890s+)

carry a lot of weight v phr To be important; have authority: *My opinions don't carry a lot of weight* (1690s+)

carry a tune in a bucket *See* someone CAN'T CARRY A TUNE IN A BUCKET

carrying adj 1 Armed, esp with a pistol: *He carrying, Mr Esteva* (1950s+) **2** Having narcotics on one's person (1920s+ *Narcotics*)

See CARD-CARRYING

carry the ball v phr To assume the active leading role: *While the boss is away, you must carry the ball* (1940s+ *Football*)

carry the banner v phr To walk the street all night for lack of a bed: *I have “carried the banner” in infernal metropolises* (1890s+ *Hoboes*)

carry the something chromosome v phr To have the characteristics indicated: *My husband, who knows I carry the restaurant chromosome, suggested that I get up on the steel catwalk that ran along one long wall to make a toast* [1990s+; fr the X and Y chromosomes that determine sexual and hence other characteristics]

carry the difference v phr To be armed: *If you're going to fool around with that guy, don't you think you ought to carry the difference?* (1900s+)

carry the load (or the ball) v phr To do or be responsible for the major part of a job: *His wife carried the load in that family* (1950s+)

carry (or haul) the mail v phr 1 CARRY THE LOAD (1950s+) **2** To go very

fast; BARREL (1920s +)

carry the stick v phr To be a hobo; BUM AROUND [1940s + Hoboes; fr the *stick* on which the hobo carried his or her bindle]

carry the torch v phr To love in a suffering way, esp because the desired one does not reciprocate: *She was carrying the torch for W C Fields* [1927 +; origin unknown; said to have been coined by a Broadway nightclub singer named Tommy Lyman, when he said, “My famous torch song, ‘come to me, my melancholy baby’”; Venus, of course, carried a torch regularly]

carry someone’s water v phr To do the menial jobs; be an underling, esp in politics: *I have carried the water for the Democratic Party for years/The White House doesn’t have to call. They have other people carrying their water for them* (1980s +)

car-surf v To ride on the outside of a car, esp on the trunk: *The boy was thrown from the trunk early Saturday morning while “car-surfing”* (1990s +)

car-surfing n Riding on the outside of a car: *He and a 12-year-old girl tried a round of “car-surfing”* (1990s +)

cart v To transport; move; take: *I carted him over to the drug store/Jesse James could have waltzed in there and carted off all the patio furniture* (1880s +)

cartload n A large amount; lots; HEAPS, SHITLOAD: *Government documents tend (especially when there are cartloads of them) to induce a certain myopia* (1570s +)

cartwheel *n* A dollar, esp a silver dollar (1850+)

carve *v* To give one a thrill; SEND: *He carves me. Does he carve you?*
(1930s+ *Jive talk*)

carved in stone, not *See* NOT CARVED IN STONE

cas (CAZH) *adj* (also **caj**, **cazh**) Casual; informal; LAID-BACK: *It's gonna be a very mellow night; laid back and cazh* (1980s+ *Teenagers*)

◁**casabas**▷ *n* A woman's breasts [1970s+; fr *casaba*, a kind of melon, fr *Kassaba*, a Turkish town that exported them]

Casanova or **casanova** *n* A ladies' man and seducer; LOVER-BOY: *Do ravish me, you wicked casanova you* [1880s+; fr the name of Giacomo Girolamo *Casanova*, 1725-98, a writer and legendary debaucher]

case *n* 1 An odd, eccentric person; CARD, CHARACTER (1833+) 2: *Lefty gave the bank a case v* (als **case out**) To inspect, scrutinize, esp with a view to robbery or burglary • *Keep the cases* in the sense "keep close watch" is attested fr 1856, with reference to faro: *I've cased this one and it's ripe* (1914+ *Underworld*) *See* BUTTERFLY CASE, COUGH CASE, DROP CASE, GET DOWN TO CASES, GET OFF **someone's** CASE, GET ON **someone's** CASE, HAVE A CASE OF THE DUMB-ASS, HAVE A CASE ON **someone**, HEADCASE, MAKE A FEDERAL CASE OUT OF **something**, NUTBALL, OFF **someone's** CASE, ON **someone's** CASE, WORST-CASE SCENARIO

case dough *n phr* A small amount of money set aside for emergencies; MAD MONEY (1940s+)

case out *v phr* To accompany someone, esp in order to share winnings, luck, etc: *Can't I case out wit'you, Frankie?* (1940s+)

case the joint v phr To look at how to break into a place, mainly to find something to steal; also, to check out a location: *I thought the real estate agent brought people who were casing the joint/cased the joint for possible future parties*

cash See COLD CASH

cash COW n phr A source of money, esp a generous one: *But all this leaves The New Republic Inc without a cash cow/For a fairly blatant cash cow, Pisces Iscariot delivers some fine milk (1970s +)*

cashd adj 1 Expired or depleted: *my supply is cashed* 2 Burnt out; tired: *cashd and going home*

cash flow n Available money; cash: *what's your cash flow tonight*

cash-for-trash modifier Sordid, and told only for payment: *The White House is not going to comment on any cash-for-trash stories (1990s +)*

cash in one's chips v phr 1 (also **cash it in**) To die; KICK THE BUCKET (1870s +) 2 To withdraw from some arrangement, esp a business deal (1890s +) [fr the redeeming of gambling chips for money, signifying the end of the game]

cash in on something v phr To get profit or advantage from something, esp from something unexpected (1920s +)

cast n Interpretation; opinion; SPIN, TAKE • In the sense of a personal turn or inclination of mind, *cast* is attested by 1711: *He has his own cast on this (1990s +)*

cast a kitten See HAVE KITTENS

cast in concrete, not See NOT CARVED IN STONE

casting couch *n phr* The fancied sofa in a theatrical or film decision-maker's office upon which he appraises the talent of young women seeking roles: *only slightly detoured by a refusal to join Darryl F Zanuck on the casting couch (1920s +)*

cast-iron balls *See* HAVE BRASS BALLS

cat¹ *n* **1** A hobo or a migrant worker (1890s + *Hoboes*) **2** A prostitute (1535 +) <3> The vulva; PUSSY (1730s +) **4** A woman who, often subtly, attacks and denigrates other women; a spiteful and malicious woman: *Dorothy Parker was a super cat (1760s +)* **5** A man who dresses flashily and ostentatiously pursues worldly pleasure; DUDE, HEPCAT, SPORT: *I was a sharp cat/The cool chick down on Calumet has got herself a brand new cat (1950s + Black & teenagers)* **6** A jazz musician: *It was all right to the early cats (1920s + Jazz musicians)* **7** HIPSTER (1960s +) **8** Any man; fellow; GUY: *Who's that cat sitting next to the Pope? (1940s +)* **9** A sailboat with one fore-and-aft sail; a catboat: *He sails a little cat (1880s +)* **10** Metcathe-none, an addictive synthetic narcotic similar to but more powerful than cocaine: *For a few hundred dollars, dealers can produce thousands of dollars' worth of cat (1990s +)* **v** **1** (also **cat around**) To spend time with women for amatory purposes; chase and stalk women; TOMCAT (1725 +) **2** To move stealthily: *began to cat toward the door (1960s + Black)* **3** To loaf and idle; spend one's time on street corners admiring young women (1920s +) [black sense, "dude," may be influenced by a Wolof term] *See* ALLEY CAT, ASH CAT, FAT CAT, FRAIDY CAT, HELLCAT, HEPCAT, HIP CAT, KICK AT THE CAT, LET THE CAT OUT OF THE BAG

cat² or **Cat** *n* A bulldozer or Caterpillar tractor [1940s + ; fr

Caterpillar, trademark for a kind of continuous-track tractor]

cat³ n A catamaran boat (1960s +)

Cat n A Cadillac: *Tia Juana pulled up in his long green Cat (1940s + Black)*

catbird seat n phr An enviable position; a controlling position: *The owners are in the catbird seat (1930s +)* **See** SIT IN THE CATBIRD SEAT

catch n 1 A highly desirable acquisition or engagement: *Getting Von Karajan for our benefit would be a catch (1740s +)* **2** A hidden cost, qualification, defect, etc; something to make one think twice: *It looks like all gravy, but there's a catch to it (1855 +)* **v 1** To see, hear, or attend a particular entertainment: *I caught Mickey Rooney on TV (1906 +)* **2** CATCH ON (1880s +) **3** To do desk duty, answering the telephone and receiving complaints: *Thompson was catching in the squad room at Manhattan South (1950s + Police)* **4** To be penetrated in an anal sex act (1970s + *Homosexual*) **See** SHOESTRING CATCH

catch someone somewhere, doing something, etc **sentence** You will never discover this person in the situation or activity named • A vigorous denial with nearly interjectional force: *Catch Eddie allowing himself to be dated like that!/Catch me in a tux! (1830 +)*

catch a rail See TAKE GAS

catch-as-catch-can modifier Precarious; requiring keen readiness: *We lived a catch-as-catch-can life those first few years (1880s +)*

catch one's death v phr To get very cold, esp due to not dressing properly: *come in or you'll catch your death*

catch dog n phr A scapegoat: *We are the catch dogs for everyone who comes along looking for something to kick at* [1980s+; evolved fr Southern dialect *catch dog*, “dog used to round up animals, herd dog,” perhaps because the herded animals would kick at the dogs]

catch fire v phr To become markedly successful; CATCH ON: *It was a good idea, but it never really caught fire* (1980s+)

catch someone flat-footed (or on their heels) v phr To surprise someone; catch someone unprepared: *When the market crashed they were caught flat-footed/Milwaukee was caught on its heels as Doran added his second goal* [1940s+; fr baseball, referring esp to a base runner who is caught off-base and thrown out]

catch flies v phr 1 To distract the audience’s attention from another performer by making unnecessary gestures and motions (1940s+ Theater) 2 To gape and yawn, esp from boredom (1940s+)

catch hell (Variations: **holy hell** or **merry hell** may replace **hell**) **v phr** 1 To be severely rebuked or punished 2 To be severely damaged or injured: *The dock caught holy hell in that last approach* (1920s+)

catch it v phr To be very severely rebuked or punished: *Uh-oh! This time we’ll catch it!* (1835+) **See** GET IT IN THE NECK

catch on v phr 1 To see and understand, esp with insightful suddenness; grasp; DIG, GET: *As long as they don’t catch on, we can cheat them forever* (1880s+) 2 To be accepted and approved; succeed with the public: *The wing-dancing and funny acts catch on big* (1880s+)

catch some rays v phr To sunbathe: *The prince seized the opportunity to leave his chilly isle behind and catch some rays (1980s +)*

catch some z's v phr To get some sleep • Fr z as the sound of snoring: *catch some z's on the train*

catch the wave v phr To seize an opportunity; take advantage of present trends: *Television is the central fact of political life: deal with it or die—catch the wave [1990s + ; fr surfing, with a possible echo of Hamlet: “There is a tide in the affairs of men/Which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune”]*

catch-22 or Catch-22 modifier: *puts me in a Catch-22 fix n A* condition or requirement very hard to fulfill, esp one which flatly contradicts others: *It was a classic catch-22. The problem was that it was a top-secret project they weren't supposed to know about [1960s + ; fr the title of a 1961 satirical novel by Joseph Heller]*

catch-up See PLAY CATCH-UP

catch someone with someone's hand in the till (or the cookie jar)

See WITH ONE'S HAND IN THE TILL

catch someone with their pants down v phr To find someone in the wrong with no possibility of evasion; catch someone in flagrante delicto: *Every time someone catches us with our pants down, catches us in an outright lie, up pops Ron to admit it/The insensitive, bumbling male senators caught with their political pants down suggested a watershed in American politics (1920s +)*

catchy adj Seizing attention or admiration; attractive: *You need a really catchy logo (1830s +)*

Catch you later *sentence* I will see you or talk to you later: *catch you later, alligator*

catch you on the flip side *sentence* I will see you or talk to you later or tomorrow

catch Zs *See* COP ZS

cat fight *n phr* A particularly noisy and vicious struggle or squabble: *to judge from the cat fight that erupted among members of the advisory council (1970s +)*

Catholic *See* IS THE POPE POLISH

catholic bagel *n* A nontraditional bagel, esp flavored: *ok, black pepper and cheese catholic bagels*

cathouse *n* 1 A cheap lodging house; FLOPHOUSE (1915 + *Hoboes*) 2 A brothel: *New Orleans was proud and ashamed of its cathouses (1890s +)* [second sense fr earlier *cat*, “prostitute, vulva”]

catnap *n* A short doze while sitting up: *The Senator was enjoying a cat-nap at the time [1850s +; Attested in form cat’s nap by 1823]*

cats and dogs *n phr* Low-priced stocks, such as those returning no dividends at all (1870s + *Stock market*) *See* RAIN CATS AND DOGS

cat’s meow, the *n phr* (Variations: **ass** or **balls** or **eyebrows** or **nuts** or **pajamas** or **whiskers** may replace **meow**; the phrase may be shortened to **the cat’s**) Something or someone that is superlative: *The cat’s pajamas!—anything that is very good/that you are on top of things and that you are, therefore, the cat’s ass [1920 +; the entry form and pajamas form are said to have been coined by the*

cartoonist and sports writer Tad Dorgan, who died in 1929]

catsuit *n* A tight-fitting garment covering the entire body: *Michelle is wearing a skintight black catsuit and short high-heeled boots* [1990s + ; Perhaps suggested by the seeming-epidermal garb of a character named *Catwoman*, played by Julie Newmar in the 1970s television show *Batman*, and by characters in the show *Cats*]

cattle call *modifier*: *Nonprofessionals may vie for spaces in “cattle-call” auditions* *n phr* An audition announcement, esp for a number of extras; also the crowd resulting from such an announcement: *Mr Allen is having what is known in show business as a cattle call/I can’t speak for the other agencies, but we’ve just about done away with the cattle call* (1950s + *Show business*)

cattle show *n phr* A convention or other occasion where political candidates display their notions, charisma, etc: *raise money for themselves by holding “cattle shows”* (1970s +)

catty *adj* Inclined to discredit others; malicious; spitefully gossipy: *Karla and Susan were being catty about Dusty* [late 1800s + ; but *cat*, “spiteful woman,” is attested from the 1760s]

catty-cat *See* CAT¹

caught dead, be *See* NOT BE CAUGHT DEAD

caught in a rundown *adj phr* In an embarrassing and untenable plight: *The imperilled Cuomo seemed to be constantly in motion. Sometimes he moved so desperately that he seemed to be caught in a rundown—a reminder that he had briefly been a center fielder with a Pittsburgh Pirates farm team* (1970s + *fr* baseball)

caught looking *adj phr* Called out on strikes from not swinging
(1970s+ *Baseball*)

cauliflower ear *n phr* A boxer's or wrestler's ear deformed by
injuries and accumulated scar tissue (1900s+)

cavalier *n* A skillful boxer as distinct from a slugger or caveman
(1920s+ *Prizefight*)

cavalry *n* Last-minute rescue forces; a deus ex machina: *Powell*
likened the Somalia operation to "the cavalry coming to the rescue"/not
the time for a President who avoided the draft to call up the
cavalry/Democrats hear hoofbeats—the cavalry's arrival, in the nick of
time [1980s+; fr the numerous cases in cowboy movies when the
US Cavalry would arrive to rescue various beleaguered persons]

cave *n* A room; PAD (1930s+) **v** (also **cave in**) To surrender; give
way; CHICKEN OUT: *The Russians will cave when they find we are in*
earnest/OK, so I caved in on the white sugar, the TV, the war toys
(entry form 1850s+, variant 1830+)

caveman *n 1* A strong, crude man, esp one who is sexually rough
and masterful; MACHO (1900s+) **2** A strong hitter or slugger
(1920s+ *Prizefight*)

cazh *adj* Casual: *don't dress up; it is cazh*

CCM (pronounced as separate letters) *n* Money; cash [1990s+ *Black*;
fr *cold cash money*]

Cecil or Cee *n* Cocaine (1930s+ *Narcotics*)

ceiling *n* An upper limit: *The Gov put a two-billion-dollar ceiling on*

office expenses [1930s+; probably fr *ceiling*, “the highest an airplane can go,” which is attested from 1917] **See** HIT THE CEILING

cel *n* A celluloid sheet made for an animated cartoon, now prized by collectors: *Cartoon lovers have been buying drawings and celluloids, or “cels” (1990s+)*

celeb (sə LEB) *n* A celebrity: *each a certified celeb from the realms of cafe, style, or theatrical society/surrounded by giggling celebs (1913+)*

celestial discharge *n phr* Death: *Mr Jones got his celestial discharge today (1990s+ Medical)*

cellar, the *n phr* The lowest standing in a sports league, esp in a baseball league: *struggling not to finish in the cellar (1900s+)*

cellar-dwellers *n* The team in last place in a sports league (1970s+)

cement **See** IN CEMENT

cementhead *n* 1 A stupid person; dolt; BOOB, Dufus, Spazz (1980s+) 2 A player known more for his combative than athletic skills; GOON: *That cementhead gave him a lumber facial, but the ref didn’t call it (1990s+ Hockey)*

cement mixer *n phr* 1 A dance or other act that includes a swiveling of the pelvis; GRIND (1940s+) 2 A noisy car or truck: *Some jerk pulls alongside and guns his cement mixer (1930s+ Truckers)*

cement overcoat (or kimono) *n phr* A casing of cement containing a corpse for disposal in deep water (1940s+)

cent **See** a RED CENT

center *See* DEAD CENTER, FRONT AND CENTER

centerfold *n* A sexually desirable person: *a woman with a centerfold's chest going for her* [1960s + ; fr the photographs of such persons decorating the *centerfolds* of erotic magazines]

center stage *n phr* The place of maximum visibility; forefront: *When women's issues were brought to center stage, the Democrats caved* (1990s + fr theater)

central *n* The most important site of what is indicated: *Israel claims U.S. is Terror Central/quickly turned the Odessa into Mob Central/This is a small town, but if it's cocaine central then it's a pretty tough town* (1990s +)

Central Casting *n phr* The putative office whence ideal and stereotypical persons, products, recipes, etc, come: *He is a white, male, married Protestant, middle to upper class, with children and dogs. He comes straight out of Central Casting/This is salsa from Central Casting* [1980s + ; fr the Hollywood office that provides actors for film producers] *See* STRAIGHT FROM CENTRAL CASTING

cents *See* PUT one's TWO CENTS IN, TEN CENTS

centurion *n* A dependable defender; loyal soldier: *Adm William Crowe, the Democrats' favorite centurion* [1990s + ; the Roman officer who commanded 100 legionaries]

century *n* A hundred dollars: *For two centuries a week I had me a bodyguard* (1850s +)

certifiable *adj* So deranged as to be officially certified insane: *her*

comments suggest she's certifiable (1919+)

chain *See* BALL-AND-CHAIN, DAISY CHAIN, PULL someone's CHAIN

chain-drink *v* To have drink after drink without pause: *a man who chain-drinks Pepsis* [1970s+; modeled on *chain-smoker*]

chain gang *n phr* The football officials who carry and set the chain that marks off the ten yards needed for a first down (1980s+)

chain lightning *n phr* Inferior whiskey (1843+)

chain locker *n phr* A wretched dockside bar [1960s+ Nautical; fr the filthy and dangerous compartment where anchor *chain* is stowed aboard ship]

chain-smoke *v* To smoke cigarette after cigarette, lighting the next one from the current one (1900s+)

◁**chain-snatcher**▷ *n* A petty thief; PUNK: *The buppie asks Yolanda what she's doing with this chain-snatcher*

chair, the *n* 1 The electric chair; the HOT SEAT 2 Death by legal electrocution: *They convicted him, and he got the chair* (1895+)

chair-warmer *n* An untalented and dispensable person; WARM BODY (1909+)

chalk *n* A horse favored to win [1950s+ Horse racing; References to winning by a *long chalk*, an allusion to scoring points by a chalk mark, date from the 1830s]

chalk-eater or **chalk-player** *n* A person who bets only on the horse favored to win (1950s+ Horse racing)

chalk-talk *n* A lecture, lesson, etc, accompanied by sketches: *The coach gave us a chalk-talk about the blitz (1880s +)*

chalk something up *v phr* To record credit or debit, as if by a chalk mark: *She won easily, and we must chalk it up to her careful preparation (late-1500s +)*

champagne (or boss) trick *n phr* A rich or high-paying client: *I take only champagne tricks, \$100 an hour (1970s + Prostitutes)*

champ at the bit *v phr* To be eager or enthusiastic: *champing at the bit to run the race (mid-1600s +)*

chance *See* OUTSIDE CHANCE, **a** SNOWBALL'S CHANCE IN HELL

change *n* Money: *a sizable chunk of change (1880s +)* *See* LOOSE CHANGE, PIECE OF CHANGE, SMALL POTATOES

change, and *n phr* A small additional amount: *The book value of the Thunderbird was \$3,900 and change/At an hour and change before midnight there was still a line of people waiting to get into the Opera Cafe/An average sentence is 27 words and change (1980s +)*

change hats *v phr* To change one's affiliations, role, etc: *changed hats and supported Maggie Thatcher (1990s +)*

change the channel *v phr* To shift the topic of conversation
(1950s + *Teenagers*)

change-up *n* **1** A slow pitch delivered after a motion that might precede a fast pitch; a change of pace (1950s + *Baseball*) **2** Any change, esp a pronounced one: *McDowell exhibits a first-rate change-up/Four costume changes served as a change-up in the manic pace*

(1970s +) **v**: *Holy cow! He changed him up for a strike!* (1950s + Baseball)

channel *n* A vein, usu in the crook of the elbow or the instep, favored for the injection of narcotics; MAIN LINE (1950s + *Narcotics*) **v**
1 To lower the body of a car by opening channels around parts of the frame: *Johnny Slash, the punk in wraparound shades, lusts for a chopped and channeled '49 Merc* (1950s + *Hot rodders*) **2** To be a medium of communication for a unbodied spirit: *Just some guy she channels for. Don't worry, the viewers love him* (1980s +)

channel surf *v phr* To shift rapidly from one television channel to another: *people who channel surf, using a remote control* [1990s +; *Channel-hop*, in the same sense, is attested from 1971, but did not thrive]

channel surfer *n phr* A person who channel surfs; GRAZER, TRAWLER (1990s +)

chap or **chappie** *n* A man; fellow; GUY, JOE • Predominantly British use: *Which of you chaps is ready?/This may amuse the chappies* [1700s +; fr a shortening of *chapman*, "peddler; peddler's customer," hence analogous with *customer* in the same sense]

chapped *adj* Angry; PISSED OFF (1960s +)

chaps *See* CHOPS

chapter *n* **1** A division of a sports contest, esp an inning of baseball; CANTO **2** An episode, period, or passage: *Please don't remind me of that revoltingly squalid chapter in my life* (1940s +)

chapter and verse *adv phr*: *He knew it chapter and verse* **n phr** **1** An exact detailed account: *I can give you chapter and verse about that night* **2** The guiding documents or principles; rules: *I know the chapter and verse of the university's policy (1700s +)*

character **n** **1** A person who behaves oddly and often amusingly; an eccentric: *My uncle's quite a character (1770s +)* **2** A person; JOKER: *You know a character name of Robert Ready? (1920s +)*

charge **n** **1** An injection of a narcotic (1920s + *Narcotics*) **2** (also **large charge**) An acute thrill of pleasure; BLAST, KICK, RUSH: *What kind of ol' creep'd get a charge out of this stuff? (1930s + Jazz musicians)* **3** Marijuana (1950s + *Narcotics*) **v** To rob (1930s + *Underworld*) *See* GET A BANG OUT OF someone or something, LARGE CHARGE

charged up *adj phr* **1** Intoxicated by a narcotic; HIGH (1920s + *Narcotics*) **2** In a state of excited preparedness and heightened keenness; PUMPED UP: *They lost, the coach declared, because they were not charged up*

charger **n** A driver, esp of a hot rod (1950s + *Hot rodders*)

chariot **n** A car (1930s +)

charity *See* COLD AS HELL

charity girl *n phr* A sexually promiscuous young woman (1940s +)

charity stripe (or **line**) *n phr* The free-throw line: *The Hawks knew the game would be decided at the charity stripe (1930s + Basketball)*

charity toss *n phr* A free throw (1940s + *Basketball*)

Charley **n** CHARLEY HORSE

Charley coke or **Charlie** *n phr* or **n 1** Cocaine **2** A cocaine addict
(1940s+ *Narcotics*)

Charley (or **Charley**) **horse** *n phr* A stiff and painful inflammation of
a muscle, esp of the large thigh muscle (1887+)

Charlie *n* The Vietcong or a Vietcong soldier [Vietnam War armed
forces; fr Victor *Charlie*, military voice alphabet designation for
VC] **See** MISTER CHARLIE

Charlies *n* Army Crations, packages of tinned and dried food
[1970s+ *Army*; fr *Charlie*, the letter C in the military phonetic
alphabet formerly used for voice communication]

chart *n 1* Figures and other material showing past performance, esp
of a race horse; FORM, TRACK RECORD (1940s+ *Horse racing*) **2** A musical
arrangement or score (1950s+ *Cool musicians*)

charts, the *n phr* The listings that show the popularity of a song, a
record, etc: *Stevie's latest single is way, way up on the charts*
(1960s+) **See** OFF THE CHARTS

chase *v* To take a usually milder drink after a drink of liquor: *Let's
chase this with a little Perrier* (1906+) **See** PAPER CHASE

chase one's own tail *v phr* To go on frantic and futile pursuits: *It's
been fun watching the press chase its own tail on the persistent rumors
of his extramarital escapades* (1960s+)

chaser *n 1* A drink, often water, taken immediately after a drink of
liquor (1897+) **2** A man in amatory pursuit of women; SKIRT-CHASER:
Mark always was a lady-killer, a chaser (1894+) **3** An employee

assigned to hurry others in their work (1920s + *Truckers*) 4 An exit march; music played as the audience is leaving; recessional (1930s + *Show business*) 5 A guard (1960s + *Prison*) **See** AMBULANCE CHASER, FLY-CHASER, WOMAN-CHASER

chase the dragon v phr To inhale heroin fumes: *I was chasing the dragon, strung out on junk* (1970s + *Narcotics*)

chassis n The human physique, esp the body of a well-built woman; BUILD (1920s +) **See** CLASSY CHASSIS

chat n The capability of exchanging personal messages on a computer network: *As you play, you can exchange typed messages—that’s a feature called “chat” in computer lingo—with other players* (1980 + *Computer*)

chattering classes n phr Sets of persons who are habitually and professionally garrulous: *writers, scholars, politicians and other members of the chattering classes* (1990s +)

chat up v phr To charm and seduce with talk: *You hear Elvis laughing, chatting up the crowd/while Dartmouth seniors, a little tight, chatted up Smithies* (1960s +)

chauvinist pig See MALE CHAUVINIST PIG

chaw-head n A person who chews tobacco or something else habitually: *I used to watch baseball; then I witnessed one too many newsclips of brawling, drunken chaw-heads* (1990s +)

cheap adj 1 Stingy; overly frugal; CHINTZY: *Cheap old bastard won’t give you the time of day* (1827 +) 2 Reputedly easy of sexual conquest; ROUNDHEELED: *a cheap tramp with a heart of gold* (1950s +) **See** DIRT CHEAP,

ON THE CHEAP

cheap date (or drunk) *n phr* A person who needs very few drinks to become intoxicated: *All it took was one small sherry; she's such a cheap date (1940s +)*

cheapie or cheapo *modifier*: *cheapie ripoffs of The Godfather/Our Tenth Annual Cheapo Guide* ***n*** Any cheaply made or cheaply sold item: *No ticket in town is a cheapie these days/retreads, ethnic shoes, and Woolworth cheapos/Wood made this fairly ordinary cheapie a mere year after Glenn or Glenda (first form 1898 + , second 1950s +)*

See EL CHEAPO

cheap is cheap *sentence* You get what you pay for: *In culture as in commerce, cheap is cheap*

cheapjack or Cheap John *modifier* Inferior and cheap; obscure and third-rate; shoddy [*Cheap Jack* and *Cheap John*, "itinerant huckster, merchant of shoddy," are attested from about 1850]

◁**cheapshit**▷ ***adj*** Inexpensive and inferior: *ten million pair of cheapshit jeans without any labels on them (1970s +)*

cheap shot *modifier*: *some dirtymouth comedian who made cheapshot race jokes* ***n phr*** (also **shot**) A malicious insult or action; something crude, underhanded, and damaging: *Well, the race for governor isn't a festival of cheap shots/Keenan shouted, "Didn't you just take what is known as a cheap shot?"* ***v phr***: *He'd say "Hey, don't cheap shot my son"/If a person's going to cheapshot me, it just shows how low he is (1960s + Sports)*

cheapshot artist or cheap-shotter *n* A person who takes cheap

shots: *Immigrant bashing is a handy charge for cheap-shotters and fear-mongers (first form 1960s + , second 1970s +)*

cheapskate *n* A nasty stingy person; TIGHTWAD: *and cheapskate Goodman's not going for a renewal (1896 +)*

cheat *v* To be sexually unfaithful; GET A LITTLE ON THE SIDE (1930s +)

cheaters *n* 1 Spectacles • Attributed to the cartoonist and sports writer Tad Dorgan, who died in 1929 (1920 +) 2 Marked playing cards (1940s +)

cheat sheet *n phr* 1 A paper used to replace or reinforce one's memory; CRIB: *his notes and data on enemy hitters, which he consults in preparing game notes—a cheat sheet/During cooking demonstrations, a paper cheat sheet sits nearby on the counter (1950s + Students)* 2 SWINDLE SHEET

check *interj* An expression of understanding, approval, etc: *I'll say check to that!/It's time to leave? Check! (1922 +)* *n* A small quantity of a drug (1950s + *Narcotics*) *v* 1 (also **check that**) To cancel; introduce a correction: *He made eight yards; check that, six yards (1950s + Sports broadcasting)* 2 To look at; pay attention to; CHECK OUT: *Check the guy at the end of the counter (late 1700s +)* **See** GIVE SOMEONE A BLANK CHECK, PICK UP THE TAB, RAIN CHECK, RUBBER CHECK, TAKE A RAIN CHECK

check bouncer *n phr* A person who writes checks on bank accounts with insufficient funds or none whatever (1920s +)

checkers **See** PLAY CHECKERS

check in *v phr* 1 To die; CHECK OUT (1912 +) 2 To indicate one's arrival at a hotel, motel, etc (1918 +)

check into the net *v phr* To announce one's arrival or departure; keep others informed (1970s + *Army*)

check it *v phr* To leave; BUG OFF, SPLIT • Usual irritated command (1990s + *Teenagers*)

check minus *n* A mark indicating that one completed an effort, but it was wanting: *He got a check minus on his math homework*

check out *modifier* **1:** a check-out counter/check-out person **2:** *When's check-out time tomorrow?* *n:* express check-out/slow sloppy check-out *v phr* **1** To look closely at, esp for evaluation; scrutinize; GIVE someone or something THE ONCE-OVER: *For this style of music, if you prefer twang to snarl, check it out live at the Rodeo Bar (1960s +)* **2** To prove valid; be accurate: *Your story checks out (1940s +)* **3** To examine and approve one's competence: *I'm checked out on that machine (1940s +)* **4** To add up purchases and collect money at a supermarket or similar store: *I'll check you out over here (1960s +)* **5** To pay for one's purchases at a supermarket or similar store: *It took me an hour to check out of that place (1960s +)* **6** To pay one's bill and leave a hotel or motel: *When did Almendorfer check out of this fleabag? (1920s +)* **7** To leave; depart; BOOGIE, BOOK, SPLIT: *Let's check out of this joint and find a livelier one (1920s +)* **8** To die: *She checked out before they reached the hospital (1920s +)*

check that *v phr* Ignore that last remark; never mind: *Salt and pepper. Check that*

check the plumbing *v phr* To go to the toilet; SEE A MAN ABOUT A DOG (1940s +)

check one's wallet *v phr* To make sure that one has not been robbed or deluded: *He's too eloquent for his own good. Sometimes you want to check your wallet when he's done talking (1960s +)*

check your six *v phr* Look behind you [Fr the aviation term "your six o'clock," referring to the relative location of an aircraft with 12 o'clock being directly in front of the airplane]

cheddar or **chedda** *n* Cash; ready money: *out of chedda*

cheeba or **chiba** or **chiba chiba** *n* Marijuana (1970s + *Narcotics*)

cheechako *n* A newcomer; GREENHORN [1890s + ; fr Chinook jargon *chee chahco*, "newcomer"]

cheek *n* **1** Impudence; audacity; BRASS, CHUTZPA: *She had the infernal cheek to stick out her tongue at me (1840 +)* **2** A buttock; BUN: *I took the injection in the left cheek (1600 +)* [first sense apparently related to *jaw*, suggesting insolent speech]

cheek it *v phr* To deceive by pretending more knowledge than one has; BLUFF, FAKE IT, WING IT (1895 + *Students*)

cheeky *adj* Impudent; impertinent; rude (1850s +)

cheer *See* BRONX CHEER

cheerio or **cheery-bye** *interj* Good-bye • Used as a conscious amusing Britishism: *Cheerio, pip-pip, and all that! (1910 +)*

cheers *interj* A salute or toast on taking a drink: *Cheers and bottoms up, one and all! (1919 + British)*

cheese *n* **1** Nonsense; lies; exaggerations; BALONEY: *What a line of cheese*

(1950s +) **2** A fastball (1980s + *Baseball*) **3** Vomit: *There was cheese all over the floor in the subway station* **4** Something out of date, often something so appallingly out of date that it has a certain chic appeal; CAMP, CORN: *That brown dress you're wearing is total cheese/Lime-green shag carpeting is Cheese. Wide-bodied neckties are Cheese (1980s + Students)* **5** Money; CHEDDAR **v 1** CHEESE IT **2** (also **cut the cheese**) To fiatulate; FART (1970s +) **3** To vomit; BARF (1970s +) **4** To make someone look outlandish; make cheesy: *A lot of actresses want to preserve the integrity of their characters, but I said "Cheese me up! Go ahead" (1990s +)* **See** BIG CHEESE, EAT CHEESE, HARD CHEESE, MAKE THE CHEESE MORE BINDING

cheese, the *n phr* A superior person or thing: *She's the real cheese* [1818 + ; perhaps fr Anglo-Indian slang *chiz* fr Hindi fr Persian, "the thing"]

cheeseball modifier Stupid; inferior; CHEESY: *One theater near city hall played the kind of cheeseball samurai movies that never quite made it to the more respectable Japanese theaters* • Sometimes as noun (1980s +)

cheesecake modifier: unless one perceives in cheesecake photographs illicit and limitless pleasures *n 1* Photographs and photography of women in clothing and poses that emphasize their sexuality: *a magazine full of cheesecake (1930s +)* **2** A woman's legs, breasts, hips, etc: *standing on the corner scoping out the cheesecake (1940s +)* [apparently fr the appreciative comments of one or another New York City newspaper photographer at the ocean-liner docks who posed women so that their legs were featured, and

pronounced the pictures to be “better than *cheesecake*”]

cheesed off *adj phr* Bored; disgusted: *if superbored, you’re “cheesed off” (WWII Air Forces fr British Armed forces)*

cheese eater (or bun) *n phr* (also **cheese eater, cheesy rider**) An informer or other despicable person; RAT (1940s +)

cheesehead *n* **1** A stupid person: *You let this cheesehead insult me? (1920 +)* **2** A native or resident of Wisconsin: *He knows how much one of these jets costs the average Wisconsin taxpayer. Why should he upset us cheeseheads needlessly? (1980s +)*

cheese it *interj* An exclamation of alarm and warning uttered when properly constituted authorities are approaching: *Cheese it, Muggsy, the cops!* **v phr** To leave; depart; SCRAM (1811 + *Underworld*)

cheese whiz (also **cheez whiz**) *modifier* Out of date; CHEESY: *Her shoes were total cheez whiz* **◀n phr▶** An unattractive girl; DOG, TWO-BAGGER [1980s + Students; fr the trademark name of a kind of soft cheese spread]

cheesing *adj* Smiling • Fr saying “cheese”: *cheesing for the camera*

cheesy *adj* **1** Lacking in taste; vulgarly unesthetic: *an altogether hideous room, expensive but cheesy/The acting was so cheesy. It was like porn acting (1950s +)* **2** Of inferior workmanship; shoddy: *This is accomplished through some really cheesy special effects (1896 +)* **3** Shabby; ugly: *“I thought that was kind of cheesy,” Harding said (1896 +)* **4** Not real or genuine; false; FAKE, PHONY (1970s +) **5** (also **cheese dog**) Out of date, often so appallingly so that it has a certain chic appeal; CAMPY, CORNY: *The runway stuff? Cheese dog./I*

included the big hair to cause a little friction. They both almost unanimously referred to it as “cheesy”/And the Cheesy Award goes to Tony Bennett (1980s + Students)

chef *n* A person who prepares opium for smoking (1911 + *Narcotics*)

chemical blonde *n phr* (also **bleached blonde**, **peroxide blonde**, **bottle blonde**) A blonde whose hair is given its colors by a bleach or another compound: *That’s why both the chemical blonde and the pony-tailed pugilist made my stomach perform a nauseous little flip (1990s +)*

chemistry *n* Feelings between persons; attractions and repulsions, but mainly attractions: *Miss McElderry feels the unusual chemistry between her and Mr Pfeiffer has been beneficial/He also struck up what one aide calls “instant chemistry” with US Secretary of State George Shultz*

Cher (SHEHR) *adj* Personable; attractive: *He’s a real cher cat [1960s + Teenagers; fr French “dear”]*

cherries *n* The flashing lights atop a police car or other emergency vehicle; GUMBALL, PARTY HAT (1980s +)

cherry *adj* <1> Virgin; sexually uninitiated: *She confessed she was cherry* 2 In an unproved or maiden state of any sort: *He hasn’t published anything yet; still cherry* **modifier** In mint condition; pristine: *Mint is what I’m saying. Cherry/including cherry restorations of Belairs and Fairlanes from the Fifties (1950s + Hot rodders)* *n* <1> A virgin, of either sex (1935 +) <2> Virginity: *Does he still have his cherry? (1928 +)* <3> The hymen 4 An inexperienced soldier sent

to the front lines as a replacement: *A Cherry who survived long enough earned the right to harass the next rookie (Army)* [sexual senses fr the fancied resemblance between the hymen and a *cherry*]

See COP A CHERRY, HAVE **one's** CHERRY, POP **someone's** CHERRY

cherry-pick *v* To select the best and most profitable elements; PICK AND CHOOSE: *When a bank fails, a healthy competitor often buys it and cherry-picks the safest and most profitable loans/ Small insurance companies survive by cherry-picking their clients (1990s +)*

cherry-picker *n* <1> A man who especially prizes the sex act with young girls (1950s +) 2 A switch operator (1940s + Railroad) 3 An articulated crane with a bucketlike platform: *a guy in a cherry-picker fixing the phone lines (1940s +)*

cherry-picking *n* The selection of only what is most helpful to one's case: *The Justice Department report on the Waco raid was cherry-picking (1990s +)*

cherry pie *n phr* 1 Something easily done or gotten; PIECE OF CAKE 2 Money easily obtained (*Circus*) (1950s +)

cherry-top *n* A police car; PROWL CAR (1960s + Teenagers)

chest **See** PLAY CLOSE TO THE CHEST

chestnut *n* A trite old story, joke, song, etc [1816 +; probably fr a play, *The Broken Sword*, in which one character tells a story 27 times, naming a *chestnut* tree, then abruptly changes it to a cork tree, whereupon another character recalls the repetition of *chestnut*, and the first says, "Well, a chestnut be it then"]

chesty *adj* **1** Having large breasts; bosomy: *watching two chesty girls in tube tops (1950s +)* **2** Prone to boast about one's virility, boldness, etc: *When you have money in the bank it will be time enough to get chesty (1899 +)*

chev *See* SHIV

chevy *See* CHIVVY

Chevy or **Chev** (SHEH vee, SHEHV) *n* A Chevrolet car (1930 +)

chew *n*: He had big chew in his cheek (1920s +) **v** **1** To chew tobacco (1930s +) **2** To eat (1890 +) **3** (also **chew over**) To talk; converse; discuss; JAW: *We got together to chew about the election/ Drop up and chew it over (1890s +)*

chewallop or **chewalloper** (chee WAH ləp) *n* A fall or dive that makes a loud splat (1836 +)

◁**chew someone's ass (or ass out)**▷ *n phr* CHEW someone OUT (WWII armed forces)

chew someone's ear off *v phr* To talk overlong and tediously to someone: *I just wanted the time, not to get my ear chewed off (1919 +)*

chewed *adj* Tired; defeated; BEAT: *I know you feel chewed (1940s + Black)*

chewed up *adj phr* **1** Badly damaged or worn: *The transmission's all chewed up (1930s +)* **2** CHEWED (1940s + Black)

chew gum at the same time *See* NOT HAVE BRAINS ENOUGH TO WALK AND CHEW GUM AT THE SAME TIME

chew light bulbs v phr To do something extremely painful and nasty: *Would you rather chew light bulbs than go shopping for jeans?* (1990s +)

chew nails v phr To be very angry; be livid: *We'd better get out before he starts chewing nails* (1970s +)

chew someone out (or up) v phr To reprimand severely; rebuke harshly; EAT SOMEONE OUT, REAM: *He got chewed out for it more than once by the platoon sergeant (WWII armed forces)*

chew the fat (or the rag) v phr To converse, esp in a relaxed and reminiscent way • In earlier senses the terms meant “to complain; wrangle”: *You want a press conference, or do you want to chew the fat?* (1900s +)

chew someone up and spit them out v phr To demolish someone; treat someone very harshly (1920 +)

chew up the scenery v phr To overact; HAM: *Beery and Lionel Barrymore chew up all the scenery that isn't nailed down/ Neeson doesn't chew up the scenery when he works* [1930s + Show business; originally fr a 1930 theater review by Dorothy Parker: “More glutton than artist, he commences to *chew up the scenery*”; in an 1881 glossary a loud actor is said to “eat scenes,” which may or may not be related]

chewy adj 1 Substantial and desirable; rich: *Hepburn may have a less chewy part than has Fonda/ “chewy wordplay” on Elvis Costello's new LP 2* Needing thought and discussion; challenging; tricky: *The hegemony of CNN raises lots of chewy questions* (1920s +)

Chi(town) *n* Chicago: *love visiting Chitown See CHI*

chib *See* SHIV

chiba *See* CHEEBA

chiba shop *See* SMOKE SHOP

Chicago overcoat *n phr* A coffin: *A Chicago overcoat is what blasting would get you (1920s +)*

chichi (SHEE SHEE, CHEE CHEE) *adj*: Fifth and 57th is no longer so chi-chi *n* Something frilly, fancy, precious, and overdecorated: *Another bit of chichi that has come to our notice lately is Eleanor Roosevelt's letterhead/ So much chichi. The pretty glass people [1940 +; fr French fr chic]*

◁**chi-chi**▷ (CHEE chee) *n* 1 A woman's breasts; TITS 2 Anything sexually attractive [late 1940s + & Korean War armed forces; fr a corruption of Japanese *chisai chichi*, "little breasts"]

chick *n* A woman, esp a young woman [1927 + Black; fr *chicken*; popularized in the beat and hippie movements] *See* HIP CHICK, SLICK CHICK

chicken *adj* 1: *He seems like a chicken guy* 2 CHICKENSHIT *modifier*: had I written extensively about the mechanics of chicken sex *n* 1 CHICK (1711 +) 2 An adolescent boy regarded as a sexual object for an adult homosexual; catamite; PUNK (1940s + *Homosexuals*) 3 A coward; an overly timid person; SISSY: *Don't be a chicken; dive right in (1707 +)* 4 A trial of valor in which two persons drive cars at each other down the middle of a road, the first to swerve aside being designated "chicken" (1950s + *Hot rodders*) 5 The eagle worn as

insignia of rank by an Army colonel (1920s + *Army*) **6** CHICKEN SHIT (1940s +) **7** The victim of a robbery or swindle; MARK, SUCKER (1950s + *Underworld*) [homosexual senses perhaps fr late 19th-century sailor term for a boy who takes a sailor's fancy and whom he calls his *chicken*] *See* RUBBER CHICKEN

chicken colonel *n phr* A full colonel; BIRD COLONEL (*WWI Army*)

chicken feed (or money) *n phr* A small amount of money; PEANUTS, SMALL POTATOES: *Two million? That's chicken feed in this milieu (1830s +)*

chickenhawk *n* **1** An adult homosexual who relishes young boys as sex partners: a "*chickenhawk*," a man who likes sex with "*chickens*," that is, boys in their middle teens (1960s + *Homosexuals*) **2** A child molester; SHORT EYE (1980s + *Police*)

chickenhead *n* **1** A stupid person (1950s +) **2** A petty criminal; PUNK (*police 1990s +*) *n* or *n phr* **3** A crack-addicted woman who prostitutes herself for narcotics: *someone who would trade her body for crack, in street lingo, a chicken head*

chickenheart *n* A coward

chickenhearted *adj* **1** Cowardly; SISSIFIED: *Here's a potbellied, chickenhearted slob* **2** Squeamish; overly fastidious (1680s +)

chicken-livered *adj* Cowardly; CHICKENHEARTED (1870s +)

chicken out *v phr* To cancel or withdraw from an action because of fear; HAVE COLD FEET: *You'll think of something to chicken out/ But I chickened out. I felt sorry for him (1960s +)*

chickens come home to roost *sentence* (Variations: other things

may replace **chickens**) Consequences, although delayed, will happen: *The chickens are coming home to roost on Reagan economics/ However the Gulf affair is resolved, it represents large chickens of the 1980s coming home to roost/ Higher interest rates are coming home to roost (1810+)*

chicken scratch *n* Illegible handwriting resembling the marks left by chicken feet on the ground: *can't read his chicken scratch on the grocery list*

◁**chickenshit**▷ *modifier* **1** Contemptible; trivial; petty (1930s+) **2:** *a chickenshit requirement/ chickenshit new task force (WWI armed forces, but esp WWII)* **3** Cowardly; CHICKEN (1940s+) *n* **1** The rules, restrictions, rigors, and meanness of a minor and pretentious tyrant, or of a bureaucracy: *The new regulations are so many parcels of chicken shit (WWI armed forces, but esp WWII)* **2** An excessive display of authority; a hectoring insistence (WWI armed forces, but esp WWII) **3** A coward (1940s+)

chicken (or egads) switch (or button) *n phr* **1** A control used to destroy a malfunctioning rocket in flight; a destruct switch **2** A control used to eject an astronaut or pilot from a damaged vehicle [1950s+ Astronautics; *chicken* fr the sense “coward”; *egads* an acronym for *electronic ground automatic destruct sequencer* and coincides with an archaic interjection of dismay]

chicken tracks *See* HEN TRACKS

chickie *interj* An exclamation of alarm and warning, uttered when properly constituted authorities are approaching; CHEESE IT, JIGGERS

(1940s+ New York City teenagers) **n** A young girl; CHICK: *But I do not really envy the guys my age who are making out with the young chickies (1920+)*

chicklet or **chiclet** **n** A young girl; CHICK: *Teenies and chicklets came into fashion [1920+; a normal diminutive form, reinforced by Chiclet, trademark of a brand of chewing gum sold as small sugared bits]*

chick movie (or **flick**) **n phr** A motion picture that appeals to women but not to men: *“Chick movie” is simply a shorthand term to describe the genre of films that do not feature car chases, explosions, sports, or battle scenes/ starring alongside Meryl Streep in the ultimate “chick flick” (1990s+)*

chief **n 1** A man; fellow; GUY, MAC • Usu in direct address to a stranger, with a sense of ironic deference (1930s+) **2** LSD (1960s+ *Narcotics*)
See TOO MANY CHIEFS AND NOT ENOUGH INDIANS

chief or (head) **cook and bottle washer** **n phr** The person in charge;
HONCHO (1830s+)

chief of staff **n phr** An army officer’s wife (1970s+ *Army*)

child **See** FLOWER CHILD

child’s play **n** Something easy to do: *writing a novel isn’t child’s play (1380s+)*

chill **adj** (also **chilled**) Excellent; wonderful; COOL, FRESH, RAD: *A “chill” outfit for a girl is tight Sergio Valente or Tale Lord jeans/ The top accolades (in 1986) include cool, chill or chilly, although froody and*

hondo also get high marks (1980s+ Teenagers) **n** A glass or can of beer (1960s+ Students) **v** 1 To render someone unconscious; KNOCK someone OUT: *She chilled him with a kick on the chin (1930s+ Boxing)* 2 To kill; murder: *Remember the night Stein got chilled out front? (1930s+)* 3 To quench enthusiasm and amiability abruptly; snub: *He chilled me with a glance (1920s+)* 4 CHILL OUT: *As my daughter often tells me, I need to learn how to “chill” (1970s+ Students)* 5 To stay or become calm; relax; COOL IT, KICK BACK • Often a command or exhortation (1980s+ Students) **See** PUT THE CHILL ON someone

chiller or **chiller-diller** **n** A film, play, etc, intended to evoke delicious shudders of fear; horror show or story (1950s+)

chillin’ **adj** 1 Excellent; the best; COOL, RAD: *But, Ma, this is “the style”! This is chillin’* 2 Relaxing; being quiet and carefree: *She told the magazine she was chillin’, just having fun (1980s+ Teenagers)*

chill out **v phr** To relax; calm oneself; COOL OUT, KICK BACK: *He offers her a lit joint. “Chill out,” he says/ She has become synonymous with bingeing celebrities who need to chill out (1980s+ Teenagers)*

chill pill **n phr** A tranquilizer: *They seem to have taken a chill pill musically, but the lyrics are as biting as ever (1990s+)*

chilly or **chili** **adj** Wonderful; excellent; COOL, NEAT: *You’re chilly. You’re okay, Sarge (1980s+ Teenagers)*

chilly mo **n phr** An aloof and unengaged person; COLD FISH [1980s+ Black; fr *mo*, “motherfucker”]

chime in **v phr** 1 To interrupt and intrude one’s counsel; BUTTIN, KIBITZ 2 To offer comment: *Chime in whenever you want (1840s+)*

chin *n* A talk; a chat (1890s+) **v** 1 To talk; converse: *happily chinning in the corner* (1870s+) 2 To talk to: *The cop was chinning a nurse* (1880s+) **See** TAKE IT ON THE CHIN, WAG one's CHIN

china *n* 1 The teeth (1940s+) 2 Money (1930s+ *Jazz musicians*) 3 A cup of tea (1960s+ *Lunch counter*)

China Cat *n phr* A strong kind of heroin: *Police say a potent batch of heroin called China Cat may be to blame for at least 13 deaths in Manhattan in just six days* (1990s+)

china chin **See** GLASS JAW

China (or china) doll *n phr* A woman of very delicate beauty; a pretty and fragile woman (1940s+)

◀**Chinaman**▶ *n* 1 A sailor who works in a ship's laundry (1950s+ *Merchant marine*) 2 A police officer's patron and influential political friend; RABBI: *police officer needed a Chinaman, or sponsor* (1970s+ *Police*)

◀**Chinaman's chance, a**▶ *n phr* No chance at all • Nearly always in the negative: *He hasn't got a Chinaman's chance of landing that job* [1910+; said to be fr the unfortunate situation of Chinese prospectors in the 1840s California gold rush, who were forced to work exhausted or unpromising claims, although no contemporary examples of use remain]

China White *n phr* A very high grade of heroin: *"It's China White," he said. Jesus, I thought, I'm out here with junkies* (1970s+ *Narcotics*)

chinch pad *n phr* A cheap hotel or lodging house; FLOPHOUSE (1950s+)

Black)

chinchy *adj* Parsimonious; stingy; mean; CHINTZY [1300 + ; Middle English fr Old French *chiche* in same sense]

‘**chine** (SHEEN) *n* A machine, esp a car (1960s + *Teenagers*)

◀**Chinese fire drill**▶ *n phr* Something incredibly confused and confusing: *an eight-page letter with a Chinese fire drill of your life/ did their Chinese fire drill of calling the fix-it man* [perhaps fr the WWII Marine Corps expression “fucked up like *Chinese fire call*”]

◀**Chinese opera**▶ *n phr* An extremely elaborate event, parade, briefing, etc (1970s + *Army*)

chinfest *n* A session of talk and gossip; BULL SESSION, GABFEST (1940s +)

◀**Chink or chink**▶ *adj*: Chink food/ a chink chick *n* A Chinese person (1900 +)

chin music *n phr* **1** Talk, esp inconsequential chatter; CHITCHAT: *chin music calculated to allay her trepidation* (1830s +) **2** Various kinds of raucous shouting at a baseball game, from the crowd, from the players to each other, from the players or manager to the umpires, etc (1880s + *Baseball*) **3** A pitched ball that passes close to the batter’s face; BEANBALL: *You ever face major league pitching, Berkowitz? You ever face chin music?* (1980s + *Baseball*)

chintzy¹ *adj* Parsimonious; stingy; CHEAP, CHINCHY • The spelling imitates that of *chintzy*²; a dialect spelling *chinsy* is attested from 1940: *Ask them to validate both tickets, she’d think I was chintzy* [1950s + ; probably fr *chinchy*]

chintzy² *adj* 1 Cheap and ill-made, but showy: *the window filled with chintzy plastic couches* 2 Lacking chic and style; unfashionable: *White shoes with a dark dress is considered very definitely “chintzy”* [1850s +; fr Hindi fr **chintz**, a printed cotton fabric regarded as cheap, gaudy, and unstylish]

chin-wag *n* A conversation, esp a long and intimate chat: *You haven’t had a good chin-wag with your sister-in-law since she got the joystick for her Apple (1870s +)*

chip *n* A flat piece of dung (1848 +) *v* 1 To hit a short, usu high shot onto the green (1920s + *Golf*) 2 To use a drug or drugs clandestinely while abstaining from using the drug for which one is being treated or is undergoing psychotherapy: *The men and women of the group also look at the man who is chipping. There is some palpable dismay (1960s + *Narcotics*)* **See** BARGAINING CHIP, BLUE-CHIP, HAVE A CHIP ON **one’s** SHOULDER

chiphead *n* A computer enthusiast: *I’m not a chiphead, but if you don’t keep up with the new developments, you’re not going to have the competitive edge* [1980s + *Computer*; fr silicon *chip* plus *head*, “addict”]

chip in *v phr* 1 To contribute, esp a share of some expense: *We each chipped in twenty bucks and got him a new suit (1861 +)* 2 To interject a comment; contribute to a colloquy: *She chipped in some honeyed reminiscences (1970 +)* [fr the adding of poker *chips* to the pot]

chip off the old block, a *n phr* A child that resembles one or both

parents, esp a boy that resembles his father [1920s + ; The form *chip of the old block* is attested fr the 1620s]

chipper¹ *n* An occasional, nonaddicted user of narcotics; JOY-POPPER: *Amy, who is only a “chipper,” wanted to meet somebody* [1960s + Narcotics; fr *chip*, “small quantity, bit”]

chipper² *adj* Energetic and jaunty; lively; PERKY [1830s + ; fr British dialect *kipper*]

chippy or **chippie** *n* **1** A woman presumed to be of easy virtue; woman who frequents bars, public dance halls, etc: *the same as in Storyville except that the chippies were cheaper* (1880s +) **2** A simple buttoned dress: *A chippie is a dress that women wore, knee length and very easy to disrobe* (1900s +) **v** **1** To be sexually unfaithful to one’s wife; CHEAT, GET A LITTLE ON THE SIDE (1930 +) **2** To take narcotics, esp cocaine, only occasionally; CHIP (1920s + Narcotics) [origin unknown; senses relating to women possibly from the chirping sound of a sparrow, squirrel, or other small creature, suggesting the gay frivolity of such women]

chippy house or **joint** *n phr* A brothel (1920s +)

chips *n* Money (1850s +) **See** CASH IN one’S CHIPS, IN THE CHIPS

chips are down (or **on the table**), the **sentence** The time of final decision and hard confrontation has come; resolution is at hand • Usu with *when*: *When the chips are down he goes to pieces/ For a change, when the chips were on the table, came up with some good stuff* [1940s + ; fr the final bets of a poker hand]

chip shot modifier: I liked my chances of kicking a chip-shot field

goal n phr 1 A shot, usu a high shot made onto the green (1909 + *Golf*) **2** An easy field goal or field-goal opportunity (1970s + *Football*) [perhaps fr hitting under the ball as if to chop a *chip* from it]

chirp v 1 To sing: *She chirps with the orchestra* (1930 +) **2** To inform; SING, SQUEAL (1830s + *Underworld*)

chirpy adj Bright and energetic; vivacious: *a nice, wholesome, chirpy, reasonably intelligent woman* (1830s +)

chisel v 1 To cheat or defraud, esp in a petty way; deal unfairly; SCAM: *Every time I buy a car part, he chisels a buck or two* (1808 +) **2** To get without necessarily intending to repay or return; BUM, MOOCH: *Can I chisel a cigarette from you, pal?* (1920s +)

chiseler n A person who defrauds: *chiseler who we called an accountant* (1918 +)

chisel in v phr To intrude oneself; MUSCLE IN (1920s + *Underworld*)

chit¹ n An impudent and spirited young woman: *a saucy chit* [1640s +; origin uncertain]

chit² n A bill for food or drink, which one signs or initials instead of paying immediately [1920s +; In the sense “note,” *chit* is attested from the 1780s; shortening of Anglo-Indian *chitty*, “letter, note,” fr Hindi]

chitchat n Talk, esp relaxed and idle conversation; CHIN MUSIC: *The members were enjoying a bit of chitchat when the gavel sounded* (1710 +)

chitlin circuit *n phr* Theaters and clubs featuring black entertainers [1970s + ; fr *chitlins*, a form of *chitterlings*, the entrails of a hog, which when fried are a great delicacy among poor people, esp in the South]

chiv or **chive** *See* SHIV

chivvy or **chivey** or **chevy** (CHIH vee, CHEH vee) *v* To harry and annoy; badger; BUG, HASSLE [1821 + ; perhaps fr *Chevy Chase*, site of a skirmish between the English and the Scots, which came to mean “a running pursuit” in Yorkshire dialect; *chivy* came to mean “pursue”]

chiz *v* To relax: *chiz for a while*

◁**choad** or **chode**▷ *n* **1** The penis or an imaginary penis: *choad veins are pulsing love songs* **2** A fool; jerk: *feel like a total choad* **3** The perineum or anus: *stationary bicycle seat irritating the chode*

◁**chocha**▷ (CHOH chah) *n* The vulva [1960s + ; fr Spanish, literally “woodcock”]

chockablock *adj* Crammed; crowded full: *The plays and stories are chockablock with figures* [1840s + Nautical; fr a nautical rhyming phrase used to mean that the two *blocks* of a block and tackle are touching after the device has been tightened to its limit]

chock-full *adj* Absolutely full; crammed; CHOCKABLOCK [perhaps 1400 + , certainly 1751 + ; origin uncertain; perhaps “full to the point of choking”]

chocoholic *n* A person somewhat addicted to chocolate • Patterned

on *alcoholic*

chocolate *n* Opium; BIG O (1950s +)

chocolate tide *n* A kind of marijuana (1990s + *Narcotics*)

chog *n* An Easterner (1990s + *Midwestern*)

choice *modifier* Very nice; sweet: *had a choice time at the event*

choi oy *interj* An exclamation of disgust, dismay, etc [Vietnam War armed forces; fr Vietnamese]

choirboy *n* Altar boy: *This brilliant, coldly efficient crime boss makes John Gotti look like a choirboy* (1970s +)

choke *v* To become ineffective because of tension or anxiety; CHOKE UP: *I studied all night for my test and I totally choked* (1980s +)

choke a horse *v phr* To be very large: *That bankroll would choke a horse* (1900 +) **See** ENOUGH TO CHOKE A HORSE

choked out *adj phr* Intoxicated by narcotics; HIGH, STONED (1990s + *Narcotics*)

choke point *n phr* A place where activity, passage, etc, cannot continue; Bottleneck: *The choke point is in the few blocks between our homes and the telephone company's switch/ Processing plants, with antiquated equipment and unable to deal with large shipments, are another choke point* (1960s +)

choker *n* **1** Anything worn about the neck, such as a collar or necktie (1840s +) **2** A short necklace (1920s +) **3** A person who becomes ineffective because of tension or anxiety: *Still, Jansen can't forget the*

sting of being called a “choker” (1980s +) See HERRING CHOKER

◁**choke the chicken or gopher**▷ **v phr** To masturbate (1970s +)

choke up v phr 1 To become tense and ineffective under pressure;

CHOKER, SWALLOW THE APPLE, TAKE THE PIPE: *He choked up, lost his concentration, and got clobbered in the third (1940s + Sports)*

2 To hold the bat high on the handle, in effect shortening the bat (1940s + Baseball)

3 To cause one to be speechless with pleasure: *Your new book*

doesn't exactly choke me up (1960s +) **4** To become speechless with grief (1960s +)

cholo adj Very virile; MACHO (1970s +) **n** A fellow gang member: A

cholo (streetwise young Latino male) (1980s + Prison) [fr Spanish, literally “mestizo, half-breed,” used contemptuously of a lower-class Mexican]

chomp v To chew [1840s + ; By 1640s in form *champ*]

chomp (or champ) at the bit v phr To be eager for action; be

impatient: *He'd been chomping at the bit real hard the last three weeks (1640s +)*

◁**chooch**▷ **n** The vulva; CHOCHA: *Ah, yuh mudduh's chooch (1920s +)*

choo-choo See PULL A TRAIN

chop n Grade or quality: *The food here is first chop* [1823 + ; fr Hindi,

“seal”] **n** A rude or mean-spirited remark: *a chop to the innocent girl*

chop block n phr A dangerous and illegal block made at the knees: *I*

can tolerate the holding, the chop blocks I can't tolerate (1990s + Football)

chop-chop *adv* Quickly; at once • Used as a command or exhortation as well as a modifier: *They cut out chop-chop* [1830s+; fr Pidgin English, “fast,” fr Chinese]

chopped *adj* **1** Of a car, having the chassis lowered or the fenders removed or both (1950s+ *Hot rodders*) **2** Of a motorcycle, having the front brake and fender removed, the wheel fork extended forward, and the handlebars raised (1950s+ *Motorcyclists*)

chopped liver *n phr* An insignificant person or thing; nothing • Often in the negative: *We have spent \$25 million to adapt. And that isn't chopped liver/ It ain't chopped liver/ I'm not chopped liver. I feel too good to retire/ What the hell is the faculty lounge? Chopped liver?* (1930s+) *See* THAT AINT HAY

chopped top *n phr* A car with the windshield, windows, upper body, etc, removed (1950s+ *Hot rodders*)

chopper *n* **1** A submachine gun, esp a Thompson; TOMMY GUN (1920s+) **2** A gangster who uses a submachine gun: *Johnny Head had met the “chopper”* (1920s+) **3** A helicopter: *the traffic reporter from the chopper* (1950s+) **4** A chopped car or motorcycle (1950s+ *Hot rodders & motorcyclists*) *See* PORK-CHOPPER

choppers or **chompers** *n* Teeth, esp false teeth (1930s+)

chops *n* **1** (also **chaps**) The jaws; the mouth; the cheeks beside the mouth; jowls: *old turkey with pendulous chops/ Open your chops and sing* (1500+) **2** Musical technique or ability: *With electronically amplified music you lose your chops, your right hand, you lose your dexterity* (1960s+ *Jazz musicians*) **3** Talent or skill in general: *We'll*

see what kind of chops they got/ First of all, you got the chops for it, bod-wise [senses related to skill fr notion of a jazz musician's lips, chops, the essential for technique in "blowing" the instrument] See

AX, BAT **one's** GUMS, BREAK CHOPS, BREAK **someone's** CHOPS, BUST **one's** ASS, LICK
one's CHOPS

chop shop modifier: mixed up with chop shop operators in the Midwest **n phr** A place where stolen cars are dismantled to be sold as parts • A slang dictionary of 1883 defines *chopped up* as "Stolen goods divided into small lots and hidden in different places": *in Detroit, where Axel and his fellow cops are about to raid a chop shop/ I started off takin' 'em to a chop shop for \$100*

chop one's teeth v phr BAT **one's** GUMS

chord See PINK CHORD

chow n Food; meals; fare: *How's the chow at Maxim's these days? (1856 +) n: OK gang, let's chow (1900 +)* [perhaps fr Pidgin English *chow-chow*, "a mixture (of foods)," but also a dog of China that is eaten by the poor]

chowderhead n A stupid person (1830s +)

chow down v phr To eat; have a meal: *They should bundle up, chow down, and stay home (WWII Navy)*

chow hall n phr A room where meals are served, esp a military mess hall (1940s + Army)

chow hound n phr A person keenly and actively interested in eating; glutton (1920s + Army)

chow line *n phr* A line of persons waiting to get food (1920s +
Armed forces)

christen *v* To use for the first time: *let's christen the new bed* (1990 +)

Christian with aces wired *See* COOL AS A CHRISTIAN WITH ACES WIRED

Christmas goose *See* AS FULL OF SHIT AS A CHRISTMAS GOOSE

Christmas tree *n phr* **1** The assembly of valves, pipes, and gauges used to control the output of an oil well (1920s + *Oilfield*) **2** A display of colored lights that flash in sequence, used to start drag races (1950s + *Car racing*) **3** The control panel of a submarine (1940s + *Navy*) *See* LIT UP

chrome-dome modifier: Reggie Rivers doesn't have a fancy name for his chrome-dome hairdo **n** EGGHEAD: *just to catch up on what the liberal chrome-domes are thinking/ The Carter Center has its share of chrome-domes, eggheads, incompetents and hangers-on* (1960s +)

chrome pony *n phr* A motorcycle; BAD BOY, IRON, Sled (1990s +)

chronic *n* Marijuana; POT: *Smoking a spliff of high-octane chronic* (1990s +)

chub(by) *n* A penile erection: *a chubby in your pants*

chubbette *n* A chubby woman, esp a small one: *The poor thing was petrified that Graig would find out what a chubbette she'd become/ a chubbette with "railroad tracks" across her teeth* (1970s +)

chubbo *n* An obese person (1980s + *Students*)

chuck *n* **1** Food; a meal; CHOW, EATS: *She invited us in for some chuck*

(1850+ *British*) **2** A white male • Often a term of address used by blacks **v 1** To throw, esp to throw or pitch a ball: *chuck a mean slider (1590s+)* **2** To discard; throw away: *Is it possible she has chucked her aloofness (1850+)* **3** To vomit; UPCHUCK: *He looked like he was going to chuck his breakfast (1940s+)*

chuck-a-lug *See* CHUG-A-LUG

chuck something down v phr To eat something very quickly: *chucked down the Whopper*

chuckers or **chucks n** Voracious hunger; enormous appetite: *smelling the burgers, got the chuckers*

chuck habit or **chuck horrors** or **chucks n phr** or **n 1** The intense hunger felt by a drug addict whose narcotics intake is cut off: *He'd gotten the chuck horrors: for two full days he'd eaten candy bars, sweet rolls and strawberry malteds* **2** The voracious eating that comes from extreme hunger: *the "chuck horrors," that awful animal craving for food that comes after missing half a dozen meals* **3** Insanity resulting from imprisonment or fear of imprisonment (1920s+)

chuck it in v phr To give up or quit: *chucked it in a long time ago*

chucklehead n A stupid person (1730s+)

chuckleheaded adj Stupid; dim-witted, DUMB: *so strangely assembles, so Britishly chuckleheaded (1764+)*

chuck you, Farley interj (Variation: **and your whole famn damily** may be added) May you and yours be reviled, abused, humiliated, rejected, etc; FUCK YOU, UP YOURS • This amusing variant of the damning

formula goes beyond the brevity of an interjection but retains the force [1970s +; based on earlier *fuck you*, *Charley* and the euphemism *whole famn damily*]

chug¹ v To drink very quickly and in volume, as alcohol: *chugged six milks at lunch*

chug² v To move along, esp slowly and laboriously: *The USS Saratoga came chugging up the Delaware* [1900 +; echoic of an engine, esp a steam engine, operating]

chug-a-lug or **chug** or **chuck-a-lug v** To drink the whole of what is in a glass or bottle without pausing: *I tried to chug-a-lug a quart bottle of Schaefer/ He chugged a liter of vodka and dropped dead* [1940s +; echoic of the sound of repeated swallowing; perhaps related to Scots dialect *chug*, “a short tug or pull”]

chug out v phr GRIND OUT: *cheerfully sifted through hard copy of the bug-checked code he'd been chugging out (1990s +)*

chukker n A division of a sports contest; CANTO, STANZA [Sports; fr a division of a polo game, fr Hindi *cakkar*, “circular running course”]

chum¹ n 1 A very close friend; BUDDY, PAL (1680s + *Students*) **2** Man; fellow; GUY • Used in direct address esp to strangers, usu with mildly hostile overtones: *Keep guessing, chum (1940s +)* **v** (also **chum around**): *He chums with Georgie Ogle (1880s +)* [origin uncertain, but earlier uses strongly suggest *chamber-mate* or *chamber-fellow* as the etymon]

chum² n: Augie, start dumping the chum over **v** To throw ground-up bait into the water to attract fish: *to chum for blues* [1850s +; origin

unknown]

chum-buddy *n* A particularly close friend: *Yesterday's villains are tomorrow's chum-buddies (1950s +)*

chummy *adj* Very friendly; BUDDY-BUDDY, PALSY-WALSY (1880s +) *n* CHUM¹ (1840s +)

chump *modifier*: The honest, hardworking immigrant was a chump game *n* A stupid person, esp a dupe; SUCKER: *I look like a chump these days (1877 +)* *v*: *You were chumped, Donna Rice and Marla Trump (1920s +)* [origin unknown; perhaps an alteration of *chunk* referring to blockheadedness] **See** OFF one's CHUMP

chump change *n phr 1* A small or relatively small and meager amount of money; a pittance: *A hundred dollars a day to the town is chump change/ Latinos rejecting \$4.50 an hour as chump change (1950s + Black)* **2** Carnival tokens customers can redeem for cash (*Carnival*)

chumphead *n* A stupid person: *What are you, a chumphead*

chunder *n* A substance vomited *v* To vomit [probably rhyming slang *Chunder Loo spew*, from the name of an Australian cartoon character]

◀**chungo bunny**▶ *n phr* A black person: *looked like he hadda be the biggest chungo bunny inna world [1970s +; fr jungle bunny]*

chunk *v* To throw; CHUCK (1830s +)

chunk up *v phr* To gain weight; become chunky (1990s +)

chunky *modifier* Chubby; fat: *lookin'a little chunky in that dress*

chuppie *n* A Chinese yuppie: *Some Chinatown residents call the Planning Council Chuppies (1990s+)*

church key *n phr* A bottle or can opener (1950s+)

churn *v* To artificially increase the level of activity in a law firm, insurance company, or other enterprise in order to increase commissions, feign busyness, etc: *Policyholders have launched class-action suits alleging churning (1940s+)*

churn out *v phr* To produce written matter very rapidly and mechanically; CRANK OUT: *The sci/ fi fantasy cartoons being churned out in Japan these days (1912+)*

chute *n* A parachute (1920+) *See* POOP CHUTE

chutzpa (HÖÖTS pə, KHÖÖTS-) *n* (Variations: **chuzpa** or **hutzpa** or **hutzpah**) Extreme and offensive brashness; arrogant presumption; hubris: *Chutzpa is that quality enshrined in a man who, having killed his mother and father, throws himself on the mercy of the court because he is an orphan/ The hutzpah of using Studio 54 was much commented on (1892+)*

ciao (CHOW) *interj* A salutation either on meeting or parting [1920s+; fr Italian, fr *schiaivo*, “I am your slave”]

cig *n* A cigarette (1880s+)

cigarette or **cigarette boat** *n phr* An open-cockpit inboard power boat used for offshore racing, and to some extent for transporting contraband: *the look on Bush’s face as he pushes up the throttle on his cigarette boat: demonic/ a speedboat, one of those cigarettes like the*

black one out there [1970s + ; fr their elongated shape]

cigaroot *n* A cigarette [influenced by *cheroot*]

ciggy or **ciggie** *n* A cigarette: *a ciggy outside*

cinch *n* **1** A certainty; something sure to happen; SURE THING: *It's a cinch they'll win* (1880s + *Cowboys*) **2** Something easily done; BREEZE, PIECE OF CAKE: *Going up is a bother, coming down's a cinch* (1890 +) **v** To make something certain; CLINCH, NAIL something DOWN: *We cinched it with a last-second field goal* (1883 +) [fr Spanish *cincha*, "saddle girth," which, when tight, fosters certainty] **See** HAVE something CINCHED, LEAD-PIPE CINCH

cinched **See** HAVE something CINCHED

cinchers *n* The brakes of a truck, car, or bus; BINDERS (1930s + *Truckers & bus drivers*)

circ *n* A circumcision (1990s +)

◁**circle jerk**▷ *n phr* **1** A sex party of mutual masturbation (*esp teenagers*) **2** Any futile occasion, meeting, session, etc (1940s +)

circle the drain **v phr** To be dying; *Go Down the Drain: And how do some cops describe the condition of a traffic victim who is near death? Circling the drain* (1980s + *Medical and police*)

circle the wagons **v phr** To take up a defensive posture or position: *"It's time to circle the wagons and suck it up," veteran guard Mark Bortz said/ You might say Polaroid Corp circled the wagons to repel a \$3.2 billion assault* [1980s + ; fr the action taken in a cowboy movie when a wagon train is threatened by hostile Indians]

circuit *See* BORSCHT CIRCUIT, CHITLIN CIRCUIT

circuit clout (or blow or wallop) *n phr* A home run (1908 +
Baseball)

circuit slugger *n phr* A talented home-run hitter: *Gil Hodges became the greatest circuit slugger ever to wear Dodger flannels (1940s + Baseball)*

circular file *n phr* A wastebasket (1940s +)

circus *n* **1** Any bright and uproarious occasion: *You should have been there—it was a circus (1885 +)* **2** A sex show, often featuring bestial couplings (1870s +)

circus catch *n phr* A spectacularly good and difficult catch [1880s +
Baseball; fr the seemingly superhuman feats of *circus* performers]

circus play *n phr* A spectacularly good play (1880s + *Baseball*)

citizen *n* A person of a more conservative, established, and prosaic caste than oneself; SQUARE (1960s + *Black & counterculture*)

Citizen *See* JOHN Q CITIZEN

cits *n* CIVVIES (1829 +)

city combining word **1** The place or milieu of what is indicated: *hamburger city* **2** A prevalence or instance of the thing indicated: *trouble city/ dumb city/ fat city* [1930s + Jazz musicians; coined on the model of the *-ville* suffix] *See* FAT CITY, FUN CITY, SOUL CITY, TAP CITY, WRINKLE CITY

city hall *n phr* The political powers and their haunts; those who control purse strings and patronage: *see how city hall reacts*

(1890s +) **See** YOU CAN'T FIGHT CITY HALL

city slicker *n phr* A shrewd and modish urban person, esp as distinct from the honest and gullible provincial: *A small-town beauty shop, where city slickers can really let their hair down* (1920s +)

civvies *n* Civilian dress; mufti (1880s +)

clam *n* **1** A silent, secretive person, esp one who can be trusted with a confidence (1860s +) **2** A dollar: *That'll be eight clams for the oil* (1930s +) **3** A wrong or sour note; CLINKER (1940s + *Jazz musicians*) **4** The vulva; BEARDED CLAM • The term is probably older than indicated. An English dialect dictionary of 1857 hints as much with two senses of *clam*: “a slut”; “to snatch, to shut” (1916 +) **v** CLAM UP • The term must be earlier than the date given, although no examples can be provided. Middle English *clum*, “be quiet! shut up,” of obscure origin, may not be related to *clam* (1916 +) **See** BEARDED CLAM, HAPPY AS A CLAM

clambake *n* **1** Any gathering, meeting, convention, party, etc, esp a happy and noisy one (1940s +) **2** JAM SESSION (1930s + *Jazz musicians*)

◁**clam bumper**▷ *n phr* A lesbian (1990s +)

clamp down *v phr* To increase the severity of measures against persons who break rules and laws; punish rather than tolerate: *The whole country's clamping down now on drunk drivers* (1940s +)

clamps, the **See** PUT THE CLAMPS ON

clam shells (or trap) *n phr* The mouth and jaws (1830 +)

clam up *v phr* To stay or become silent; stand mutze; BUTTON UP: *When I*

ask for details he just clams up (1916 +)

clanger *n* A big mistake: *made a clanger on that project (1948 +)*

clanked *adj* Exhausted; BEAT, POOPED (1960s + *Students*)

◁**clap, the**▷ *n* Gonorrhea: *If a guy said 'I ride bareback,' I'd tell him he needs a raincoat. Instead of gonorrhea, I'd talk about the clap [1587 +; fr early French clapoir, "bubo, swelling"]*

clapped-out *adj* Worn-out; ready for the junk heap; BEAT-UP: *The civilian jumped into his clapped-out Mercury (1940s + Royal Air Force)*

◁**clapped-up**▷ *adj* Infected with gonorrhea: *In reality she's a gotch-eyed, clapped-up hooker (1960s +)*

claptrap *n* Nonsense; mendacious cant; BULLSHIT [1819 +; fr early 1700s theatrical use, literally "a *trap* to get a *clap*," a device, verbal or otherwise, for milking applause]

claret *n* Blood [1604 + *Prizefight*; fr the red color of *claret wine*]

class modifier: a real class joint *n* High quality; admirable style; *cachet*: *quiet dignity under fire, real class (1870s +)* **See** WORLD-CLASS

class act, a *n phr* A person or thing of admirable style, quality, competence, etc: *48 HRS clicks anyway. It's a class act/ Monaco was, as Arthur Lewis said, a class act (1970s +)*

classic modifier Being genuine and worth remembering: *He made another one of his observations and it was classic* *n* 1 Powdered cocaine; BLOW, COKE: *Grain, glass, classic, Jock, motor, harp, what you need is what we got (1980s + Narcotics)* 2 Something that is brilliant

and unique: *joke was a classic*

classy *adj* **1** Of high quality; first-rate; superior: *That's a very classy speech you just made* **2** Having or showing prestige; aristocratic; POSH: *a classy school/ classy manners (1891 +)*

classy chassis *n phr* A good figure; trim body: *sassy lassie with a classy chassis (1950s +)*

Claus *See* SANTA CLAUS

claw *n* A police officer **v** To arrest (1917+ *Underworld*) *See* HAVE one's CLAWS OUT

Claymore *n* A danger; an unpredicted peril: *skipping from television to a feature-film career has its built-in Claymore [1990s +; fr the US claymore antipersonnel mine, named in turn for a Scottish broadsword]*

clay pigeon *n phr* **1** A person who is easily duped; EASY MARK (1920s +) **2** An aircraft catapulted from a ship (1940s + *Navy*) **3** Something easily done; CINCH (1950s +)

clean *adj* **1** Not carrying anything forbidden, esp a firearm: *Cops gave him a body-shake and he came out clean (1926 +)* **2** Innocent; unincriminated (1300 +) **3** Not producing radioactive contamination: *a clean bomb (1950s +)* **4** Lacking money; BROKE, CLEANED OUT (late 1900s +) **5** Not lewd or obscene; morally unexceptionable: *a couple of clean jokes/ a clean old man (1867 +)* **6** Trim; neat; elegant: *Mies' clean lines and crisp angles (1400 +)* **7** Free of drug addiction (1950s + *Narcotics*) **8** Well-dressed; clad in the latest style: *Danny, he was really clean. He had new clothes*

(1960s + Black) **adv**: *I was crazy about Lester. He played so clean and beautiful* **See** COME CLEAN, KEEP **one's** NOSE CLEAN, SQUEAKY-CLEAN

Clean See MISTER CLEAN

clean and green adj phr Clear of police and other obstructions
(1970s + *Citizens band*)

clean as a whistle (or a hound's tooth) adj phr Perfectly clean (*first form 1828 +, second 1940s +*)

clean someone's clock v phr 1 To attack and punish someone:
Carlson suddenly really wanted to clean Ron Connelly's clock **2** To defeat; trounce; CLOBBER: *The DA had his clock cleaned for him/ "She just cleaned my clock," Mrs King said [1960s +; perhaps fr the notion of clock as "face"; perhaps fr the earlier underworld and railroad term *clean the clock*, "stop, esp suddenly"]*

cleaned out adj phr Lacking money, esp having lost it gambling or speculating; BROKE, TAPPED OUT: *Georgie was cleaned out after the third race (1812 +)*

cleaners, the See GO TO THE CLEANERS, TAKE **someone** TO THE CLEANERS

cleaning See HOUSE-CLEANING

clean someone out v phr 1 To win all of someone's money at gambling, esp in a crap game (1812 +) **2** To require or use up all of someone's money: *Buying the condo just about cleaned them out (1860s +)*

clean sweep n A broad change that has a sweeping effect: *made a clean sweep of his life*

cleanup modifier 1: another cleanup campaign 2 Batting fourth in the lineup: *He did better as the cleanup hitter (1910+ Baseball)* **n** An intensive effort or campaign against crime, filth, etc, of the sort periodically undertaken by the authorities: *The Mayor vowed another definitive cleanup of the Times Square area (1920s+)*
[baseball sense fr the sanguine notion that the first three hitters will reach base and the bases will be emptied, *cleaned up*, by the fourth hitter]

clean up v phr To make a large profit; get an impressive return for one's money; MAKE A KILLING: *The West today knows many a ghost town where men of too much enterprise cleaned up and cleared out (1830s+)*

clean up one's act (or <shit>) v phr To correct one's behavior; act properly and decently; STRAIGHTEN UP AND FLY RIGHT: *I told the kid to clean up his act or leave (1960s+)*

clean up on someone v phr To defeat someone decisively; trounce; thrash; CLEAN someone's CLOCK: *We really cleaned up on them in the second half (1860s+)*

cleanup spot (or slot), the n phr The fourth position in the batting order: *The manager didn't have a very reliable hitter for the cleanup spot [1910+ Baseball; fr the fact that the batter in this position may, or ought to, get a hit and clean the runners off the bases by driving them in to score]*

clean (or wipe) up the floor with someone v phr To defeat someone decisively; CLEAN UP ON someone: *If he said that to me I'd clean up the*

floor with the bastard (1890s +)

clear v To earn a certain amount of money after taxes: *cleared 100 Gs*

clear someone v To show or declare someone free of suspicion: *He looked guilty, but the investigation cleared him (1940s +)* **See** READ

SOMEONE LOUD AND CLEAR

clear as mud adj phr Entirely unclear; lacking lucidity: *I think I get it, though your explanation is as clear as mud (1880s +)*

clear off v phr To go away: *let's clear off after graduation (1816 +)*

clear out v phr To depart; HIT THE ROAD: *obliged every colored man to "clear out" of the streets (1839 +)*

clear sailing n phr Easy and unimpeded progress; easy going: *After a rough couple of months it was clear sailing (1850s +)*

clear up v phr To stop using narcotics; get help in withdrawing from drug addiction (1960s + *Narcotics*)

clem n A fight between show people and the local citizenry: *It'd start a clem, with me in the middle v* To disperse rioting customers at a circus or carnival (1920s + *Circus & carnival*)

Clem interj A cry used by circus people to rally forces in a fight with townspeople **n 1** A small-town resident; rural person, esp one who is easily duped **2** An inhabitant of the place where the circus is playing (1920s + *Circus*)

cleo n 1 Executive clemency **2** A prison escape (1950s + *Prison*)

Cleveland n A thousand dollars; a thousand-dollar bill: *The British*

publicist offered me an exclusive with King Freddy for a Cleveland—\$1,000—but I passed [1990s + ; fr the presidential portrait on the banknote]

click *n* 1 An insight, esp a sudden one; flash of comprehension: *She gifts us with this click: Most men want their wives to have a jobette/ and finally to a click when it began adding up* 2 A clique (1920s +) 3 (also **klick**, **klik**) A kilometer: *a hundred and sixty clicks north of Saigon (1960s + Armed forces)* *v* (or **click with**) 1 To succeed; please an audience or constituency: *If I can click with wholesalers I should be ready to open up in about 3 weeks (1910 + Theater)* 2 To evoke or precede a flash of insight: *Something clicked. I thought, This is what I want to do for the rest of my life (1930s +)* 3 To fit together precisely; go well together: *Those two really click, like a well-oiled machine (1920s +)*

clicker *n* The remote-control device of a piece of electronics (1980s +)

cliffhanger *n* A very suspenseful story, film, game, situation, etc: *The election was a cliffhanger, right through the recount [1937 + ; fr the fact that the actress Pearl White actually ended some episodes of her early serial movies hanging from the Palisades above the Hudson River]*

climb someone *v phr* To reprimand severely; Chew Out, REAM • *Climb over someone's frame* has the same sense in college slang of the 1890s: *The old man really climbed me for that stupid trick (WWI Army)*

climber *n* an ambitious person: *not your average social climber*
(1833 +)

climb on the bandwagon *See* GET ON THE BANDWAGON

climb (or go up) the wall *v phr* To become frantic, esp from frustration or anxiety; GO OUT OF one's SKULL: *By the time the cops came I was about to climb the wall* (1970s +)

clinch *n* **1** A close contact of two boxers, where they hold each other's arms to stifle blows (1870s + *Prizefight*) **2** An embrace; passionate hug (1899 +) *v* **1**: *Two palookas clinched through six rounds* **2** To determine conclusively; finish definitively and positively; NAIL something DOWN: *They claim new evidence that'll clinch their case* (1716 +) [fr the bending over, clinching, of the point of a nail to ensure it does not pull out; ultimately fr *clench*]

clincher *n* The deciding or conclusive element; BOTTOM LINE: *One smudged fingerprint was the clincher* (1830s +)

clink *n* A black person; BROTHER (*Black*)

clink, the *n phr* A jail or prison; the SLAMMER [1770s +; fr the old prison on *Clink* Street in the Southwark district of London]

clinker *n* **1** A biscuit (1900 +) **2** the CLINK (1920s +) **3** A squeak or unintended reed sound made on the clarinet, saxophone, or oboe (1930s + *Musicians*) **4** An obvious wrong or sour note: *One of the louder sopranos hit an excruciating clinker* (1930s + *Musicians*) **5** An error; BONER (1934 +) **6** Anything inferior in workmanship, esp a play, movie, or other show; LEMON, TURKEY (1940s +) **7** An incompetent person; a failure; DUD, LOSER: *There have been some*

ultraconservative judges, but there has been an absence of real clinkers (1940s +) **8** Something damaging, esp when unseen or unforeseen; a hidden flaw: *There was a clinker in the works apart from his writing, a sort of catch (1960s +)* [fr *clinker*, “unburnable cinder”]

clip n 1: *You hit him a good clip (1850s +)* ◀**2**▶ CLIPPED DICK (1940s +) **3** Pace; rate: *She took off at a real good clip (1860s +)* **4** Each one; each occasion; POP: *two treatments at \$100 a clip/ Every clip cost him half a day’s pay (1801 +)* **5** A clipping from a newspaper, magazine, etc: *Thanks for sending the clips about the kid’s wedding (1920s +)* **6** A portion of a movie or television tape: *television clips from the period of the accident (1960s +)* **7** A cut-apart or dismantled section of a car: *Salvage yards will pay \$5,000 for the front end, back clip, engine, radio, doors, and bumpers (1970s +)* **v 1** To hit; strike sharply and neatly: *He clipped and decked the local goon* **2** To steal; SWIPE: *Where’d you clip the new car? (1930s +)* **3** To cheat someone, esp by overcharging: *That joint’ll clip you every time (1920s +)* **4** To arrest (1940s +) **5** To kill, esp by shooting: *You think he clipped three people, including a seventeen-year-old kid (1920s + Underworld)* **6** (also **clip it**) To move rapidly; run; BARREL, CARRY THE MAIL (1830s +) **7** To cut a car into sections, usu in an illegal operation (1970s +) [senses denoting fraud and theft are probably fr the practice of *clipping* bits of metal off coins and passing them at face value] **See** PUT THE CLIP ON someone, ROACH CLIP

clip-artist n A professional swindler or thief: *A gentle clip-artist, Abadaba robbed bookmakers as well as bettors (1940s + Underworld)*

clip joint n phr 1 A gambling establishment where the customer is

regularly cheated **2** Any business establishment that regularly overcharges, or where one is likely to be cheated: *One man's gourmet nosherly is another man's clip joint (1920s +)*

clipped *adj* **1** Arrested: *clipped for petty larceny* **2** Cheated: *clipped leaving the party* **3** Circumcised: *full front showed he was clipped*

◀**clipped dick**▶ *n phr* A Jewish male (1940s +)

clipper *n* A pickpocket: *accused her of being a clipper, or pickpocket (1970s + Police)*

clipping *n* **1** Illegal blocking from behind (1930s + Football) **2** The repairing of a car by joining together two undamaged halves after either the front or rear end has been damaged: *Front and rear clips are attached to the remains of vehicles that have been seriously damaged, but clipping is dangerous (1970s +)*

clip someone's **wings** *v phr* To reduce someone's privileges as a punishment: *after the accident, they clipped his wings*

◀**clit**▶ *n* The clitoris; BUTTON (1960s +)

◀**clit-licker**▶ *n* A person who does cunnilingus; MUFFDIVER (1970s +)

clobber *v* **1** To hit or attack very hard; BASH • Appears to have been popularized by WWII RAF **2** To defeat decisively; *trounce*; MURDER, WIPE OUT: *Rommel got clobbered at El Alamein [1940s + ; origin unknown; perhaps fr Scots *clabber*, "spatter, cover with mud"]*

clobbered *adj* Drunk: *those who are, to use a word presently popular with the younger drinking set, clobbered (1950s +)*

clock *v* **1** To hit; SOCK: *who clocked me when I wasn't looking/ She*

clocked him with the portable telephone (1920s + Australian) **2** To time, esp with a stopwatch: *They clocked her at 6 :05 :03.65 (1880s +)* **3** To achieve a specified time: *I clocked a two-minute lap yesterday (1892 +)* **4** To get; amass: *Malcolm Forbes is clockin' megadollars (1980s + Teenagers)* **5** To watch; keep one's eye on: *He is always clockin' girls (1980s + Teenagers)* **6** To waste one's time; detain one: *Why're you clockin' me? I got people to see (1980s + Teenagers)* [first sense probably related to *clock*, "face"] **See** CLEAN someone's CLOCK

clocker n: A clocker is a nickel-and-dime crack dealer who hustles round the clock (1990s +)

clock in (or out) v phr To come or go at a certain recorded time, esp to or from a job where a time clock is used; PUNCH IN (OR OUT) (1920s +)

clock (or meter) is ticking (or running), the *sentence* or *v phr* A decreasing amount of time is available; the end draws near: *Baker and Aziz were preparing to hold last-minute talks, and the clock was ticking toward war/ But the clock is ticking down for the 49-year-old ex-lineman/ One of the banks has suffered twenty million dollars in unrecoverable loans and the meter is still running* [1990s + ; fr sports, astronautics, bomb disposal, and other contexts where a *clock* measures the time remaining]

clockwatcher n phr A person who vouchsafes more attention to the time of quitting than to work: *a hard worker, no clockwatcher (1890 +)*

clod *n* A stupid person [1605 + ; fr *clodpate* or *clodpole*, “clodhead”]

clodhopper *n* **1** A farmer; rustic; SHIT-KICKER • Originally a plowman (1690 +) **2** An old vehicle, suitable for only short passages; CLUNKER, JALOPY (1940s +)

clodhoppers *n* Strong, heavy shoes, esp workshoes; BOONDOCKERS, SHIT-KICKERS (1830s +)

clone *n* An imitation, esp a person who imitates or emulates another; a mindless copy: *Not a clone in sight. No one has the same color hair* [1970s + ; fr clone, “the asexually produced offspring of an organism,” ultimately fr Greek *klon*, “twig, branch”]

clonesome *adj* Tending to copy; unoriginal; robotlike: *a tall, dark, clonesome actor* (1970s +)

cloning *n* A cellular telephone fraud in which a personal code is stolen and sold to someone else (1990s +)

clonk *v* CLUNK (1930s +)

close *adj* **1** Parsimonious; stingy (1600s +) **2** Very good; extraordinary: *Oh, man, this is crazy close!* (1960s+ Students) *See THAT'S CLOSE*

◁**close as stink on shit**,▷ *as modifier* Very close; intimate

close but no cigar *adv phr* Very nearly correct; not quite the thing: *One package, that was acceptable. Too many amounted to her idea of close-but-no-cigar/ If you answered George Lucas' Star Wars you're close, but no cigar* [1970s + ; fr carnival feats where one gets a cigar as a prize]

close-fisted *adj* Unwilling to give; niggardly; stingy; CLOSE (1608+)

closer (KLOH zer) *n* A relief pitcher who usu comes in for the ninth inning: *You can't expect your closer to go out and save 60 games* (1980s+ Baseball)

close shave (or call) *n phr* A very narrow avoidance or evasion of some danger; SQUEAKER (1834+)

closet *modifier* Secret; unsuspected • Although this sense is much earlier, it has recently been revived by the homosexual use: *Puddin' calls me his closet redneck/ fellow who was known around the White House as a "closet liberal"* (1600s+)

closet, the *n phr* The condition of concealment in which a homosexual or other nonconforming person lives: *If you're out of the closet, you're out of the armed service* (1960s+) **See** COME OUT OF THE CLOSET

close to the chest (or vest) *adj phr*: Janet Reno is very close to the vest about her personal feelings (1950s+) **See** PLAY CLOSE TO THE CHEST

closet queen (or queer) *n phr* A secret male homosexual (1960s+)

close-up *modifier* Made or done from very near: *a close-up view/ close-up study* *n* 1 A photograph or movie or television sequence shot close to the subject (1913+) 2 A biography: *It is becoming commonplace for a literary critic to describe a biography as a "close-up"* (1930s+)

clothes *See* SUNDAY CLOTHES

clotheshorse *n* A fashionably dressed person; a person who wears clothes becomingly and perhaps does nothing else (1850+)

clothesline *n* A very flat, fast line drive; FROZEN ROPE, ROPE (1930s+ *Baseball*) *v* To block or tackle by holding out one's arm in the path of a running player: *He clotheslined him* (1960s+ *Football*)

cloud *See* ON CLOUD NINE

cloud-buster *n* A very, very high fly ball (1950s+ *Baseball*)

cloud nine (or seven) *n phr* A state of total euphoria: *Capriati's coach knew he had to "get her off Cloud 9"* [1950s+; fr the notion of clouds as heavenly locations] *See* ON CLOUD NINE

clout *n* **1** A heavy blow: *She gave him a clout on the snoot* (1400+) **2** Force; power; impact; PUNCH: *This wimpish paragraph lacks clout* (1950s+) **3** Influence or power, esp of a political sort: *He has lots of friends in high places, but no clout* (1950s+) *v* **1** To hit; strike; BASH: *My old man would have clouted the hell out of me* (1890s+) **2** To hit the ball, esp to hit it hard (1910+ *Baseball*) **3** To steal, esp to shoplift or steal a car (1940s+)

clover *See* IN CLOVER, LIKE PIGS IN CLOVER

clown *n* A person for whom the speaker feels mild contempt, esp one whose behavior merits derision: *Get this clown off my back and let me help you* (1920s+) *v* (also **clown around**) To behave frivolously; persist in inappropriate levity (1940s+)

club *See* BOTTLE CLUB, DEUCE OF CLUBS, KEY CLUB, MILE-HIGH CLUB, RAP CLUB, WELCOME TO THE

CLUB

clubbing *n* Participation in a party scene, individually or as part of a group, esp in an urban setting; going out to nightclubs: *tired of reading about Paris Hilton and Lindsey Lohan's clubbing*

Club Fed *n phr* A minimum-security federal prison: *Set on 42 campus-like acres, Club Fed had neither walls nor armed guards* [1980s+; after *Club Med*, trademark name of a chain of holiday resorts]

clubhouse *modifier* Having to do with routine and sometimes shady urban partisan politics: *Dinkins, 62, is a classic clubhouse politician* (1960s+)

clubhouse lawyer *n phr* A baseball player who is a prominent self-appointed authority on the game and its regulations, and who generously instructs his associates (1940s+ *Baseball*)

cluck or **cluckhead** or **kluck** *n 1* A stupid person; idiot: *The champion cluck of all time/ If I defend myself you two clucks are going to need a lot more backup* (1920s+) ◀2▶ A very dark black person (1950s+ *Black*) **See** DUMB CLUCK

cluck and grunt *n phr* Ham and eggs (1950s+ *Lunch counter*)

cluckish *adj* Stupid (1920s+)

clue *v* or *v phr* (also **clue in**) To inform someone of pertinent facts; PUT SOMEONE IN THE PICTURE: *I'll clue ya/ Neil Sheehan and I were terribly clued-in. We had a lock on that story* (1940s+) **See** GET A CLUE, HAVE A CLUE, NOT HAVE A CLUE

clued out *adj phr* Unaware; ignorant: *I like Elvissa, but she can be so clued out* (1990s+)

clueless *adj* Ignorant; hopelessly unaware: *We'll have to endure loads of clueless reporters raving on/ You're probably just a clueless newbie* [1980s + Students & 1930s + Royal Air Force; perhaps a revival, perhaps a new coinage] **See** TOTALLY CLUELESS

cluelessness *n* Total stupidity or ignorance: *cluelessness in that department*

cluelessly *adv* In a clueless way: *the Bumbling Around Cluelessly Phase* (1990s +)

clunk *n* **1:** *He hit me a good clunk* **2** A stupid person; dupe; CLUCK: *scheming maids who have been working on the poor clunks all spring* (1940s +) **3** An old and worn-out machine, esp a car; CLUNKER: *Look at that fuckin' broad in the clunk next to us/ He hauled a junk car on the ice and took bets. This contest was called "Dunk the Clunk"* (1940s +) **v** **1** (also **clonk**) To hit; strike; CLOCK: *She clunked him in the teeth* (1940s +) **2** To move awkwardly and slowly: *The plot just clunks forward, for two hours and 10 minutes* (1970s +) [probably all based on *clunk*, "make a dull sound," found by 1796]

clunker *n* **1** Anything inferior; LEMON, TURKEY: *His last clunker was Lolly Madonna* (1940s +) **2** An old, worn-out machine, esp a car; CLUNK, JALOPY: *let in someone in an old clunker with a broken muffler and a fuming exhaust* (1950s +) **3** A clumsy person, esp an unskillful athlete; DUFFER, HACKER: *Tell one of those clunkers what a great stroke he has* (1940s +)

clunkhead *n* A stupid person: *Some clunkhead sent me three live quail* (1950s +)

clunkily *adv* Ungracefully; stolidly: *Her clunkily earnest lyrics are very big on concepts like the Necessity of Being Your Own Person (1970s +)*

clunky or **clunkish** *adj* Blockish and ungraceful; stolidly unsophisticated: *a pair of clunky Sonora biker boots/ a clunkish magazine called Pick-Up Times/ The ads are so clunky and quaint that they transport one back to a seemingly more innocent consumer past (1970s +)*

clutch *modifier* done or accomplished in a critical situation: *a clutch hitter/ clutch play* **n** 1 An embrace; CLINCH (1950s +) 2 A group; bunch: *a clutch of drunken sailors (1908 +)* 3 A customer who does not tip, or tips too little; STIFF (1950s + *Restaurant*) **v** (also **clutch up**) To panic; be seized with anxiety: *If that's what's got you clutched up, don't worry about it (1950s +)*

clutch, the **n phr** A moment when heroic performance under pressure is needed: *You could always depend on Gladys when the clutch came (1920s +)*

clutched *adj* Nervous; tense; UPTIGHT (1950s +)

clutcher *See* DOUBLE-CLUTCHER

clutching *See* DOUBLE-CLUTCHING

clutchy *adj* 1 Likely to become nervous or anxious 2 Difficult; dangerous; HAIRY (1960s +)

clutz *See* KLUTZ

clyde **n** A person who does not appreciate the current music, culture, etc; SQUARE (1940s + *Students*)

C-note *n* A hundred-dollar bill; FRANKLIN: *staring at that C-note*
(1920s +)

coach *See* SLOW COACH

coal *See* HAUL someone OVER THE COALS, POUR ON THE COAL

coast *n* Effortless result; smooth ride: *The flip side gave us a coast v 1*
To go along without effort: *I coasted through the two exams*
(1880s +) **2** To be exhilarated by a narcotic, by music, etc; be
euphoric: *That first fix had sent him coasting one whole week*
(1940s +)

coast (or **Coast**), the *n phr* The Pacific coast, esp California, or the
Atlantic coast (1870s +) *See* LEFT COAST

coast is clear, the *sentence* Danger is past; resistance no longer
impends: *I'll be back here as soon as the bomb squad says the coast is*
clear (1630s +)

coat *See* PINE OVERCOAT

coattail *modifier* Based on another person's achievement or quality;
derivative: *But the Sephardim are not likely to remain contented with*
coattail power for long v To keep the same musical tempo: *You're*
still keeping the same time. We called it coattailing (1950s +
Musicians) *See* ON someone's COATTAILS

cob *See* OFF THE COB, ROUGH AS A COB

cobble together *v phr* To make or construct, esp by assemblage:
They still reject computers for production, preferring to cobble together
layouts by hand (1830s +)

cock *n* ◁1▷ The penis; PRICK: *The youth's cock was by now rock hard* (1618+) 2 A friend; PAL • Chiefly British: *How goes it, old cock?* (1830s+) [origin uncertain; perhaps based on *cock*, “spigot”] *See* DROP YOUR COCKS AND GRAB YOUR SOCKS, POPPYCOCK

cockamamie or **cockamamey** or **cockamamy** (kahk ə MAY mee)
adj Crazy; confused: *The picture ends with a cockamamie implication that love will conquer all/ this cockamamie little tort* [1920s+ New York City children; fr New York City dialect, perhaps fr British; somehow connected with *decalcomania*; perhaps because decalcomanias as given in candy boxes and chewing-gum packets were used by children for antic self-decoration]

cock-and-bull story *n phr* An improbable account, often an alibi; a mendacious farrago: *He gives me this cock-and-bull story about six flat tires* [1620+; origin uncertain; the French term “cock and donkey” is analogous]

cock a snook *v phr* To show derision and contempt by thumbing one's nose: *The “world's Greatest Rock and Roll Band” took the occasion to cock a snook at their chief competitors* [1791+; origin unknown; the spread hand resembles a rooster's head, and the dialect verb *snook* means “to seek by smelling,” but the semantics are not otherwise useful]

cocked *adj* Drunk (1730s+) *See* HALF COCKED

cocked hat *See* KNOCK something INTO A COCKED HAT

cocker *See* ALTER KOCKER, OLD COCKER

cockeye *n* A left-handed pitcher; SOUTHPAW (1940s+ *Baseball*)

cockeyed *adj* **1** Crosseyed; walleyed; strabismic (1820+) **2** Crazy; weird; all wrong; SCREWY: *Anybody who thinks I'm kidding is cockeyed/ In this cockeyed caravan called the 90s (1930s+)* **3** Drunk: *He is in a doghouse at home on account of coming home cockeyed on his wedding anniversary (1722+)* **4** Unconscious: *Izzy knocks him cockeyed (1920s+)* **5** Genuine; absolute; FUCKING: *You're a cockeyed wonder, you know that? (1920s+)* *adv* Askew; crooked; Slonchways: *He put his hat on cockeyed and got a polite chuckle (1910s+)* **See** I'LL TELL THE WORLD

◀**cock is on the block, one's**▶ *sentence* One is in grave and imminent peril: *He'll cop a plea if you tell him his cock is on the block for the murder (1970s+)*

◀**cocksman or cock hound**▶ *n* An ardent womanizer and copulator; STUD, Swordsman: *In those days Harry was a big cocksman/ Valdez was a cock hound, no question (first form 1916+, second 1940s+)*

cocksmanship *n* The practice of being a cocksman: *In "Mambo Mouth," cocksmanship is portrayed as the only surviving romance in lives bereft of other dreams (1990s+)*

◀**cocksucker**▶ *n* **1** A person who does fellatio, esp a male homosexual (1890s+) **2** A man held by the speaker in extreme contempt; BASTARD, PRICK: *Oh, Sid, you fucking cocksucker. You nailed me again (1920s+)*

◀**cocksucking**▶ *adj* **1** Despicable; contemptible: *So I told the cocksucking little pimp to get lost* **2** Wretched; DAMNED • A very general intensive use, often for euphony: *Don't give me no cocksucking grief/ Here, take your cocksucking money* *adv*: *Don't talk so cocksucking silly*

(1910+)

cocktail *n* **1** A cigarette of marijuana and tobacco, with marijuana put into the end of an ordinary cigarette **2** A cigarette of more than a single narcotic (1960s+ *Narcotics*) **See** MOLOTOV COCKTAIL

cock-tease *v* To permit sexual familiarities but deny the sex act: *They were chivying a string of suitors and behaving like overage sorority sisters. They cock-teased* (1950s+)

◁**cock-teaser** or **prick-teaser** or **prick-tease**▷ *n* A woman or a male homosexual who arouses a man sexually by granting certain favors, then denies him the sex act (*entry form 1891+*, *variants 1960s+*)

coconut *n* **1** The head (1834+) **2** One dollar: *the whole hundred thousand coconuts* (1920s+) **3** A Hispanic person who truckles to or imitates the values of the non-Hispanic majority; Tio Taco: *Maldonado ridicules him for selling out, for being a coconut, brown on the outside, white on the inside* (1970s+)

cocoon *n* One's cozy home: *Each morning he leaves his domestic cocoon in Rancho Palos Verdes* *v* To stay at home, and, often, to be inactive: *The couch potatoes are going to be cocooning in their families' personal oases* (1980s+)

code brown *n* A fecal accident: *code brown in the children's ward*

code yellow *n* A urinary accident: *code yellow in the baby's bed*

codger *n* An old man, esp an eccentric one • Usu with *old*: *Look at those happy codgers on the shuffleboard court* [1756+; probably fr *cadger*, "moocher, wheedling beggar"]

coffee *See* CUP OF COFFEE

coffee and *n phr* A cup of coffee with an accompaniment, as a doughnut or pastry: *let's stop for coffee and*

coffee and cakes or coffee-and-cake money *n phr* Small wages; a pittance; PEANUTS: *playing for coffee and cakes in an obscure Washington nightspot (1920s +)*

coffee break *n phr* A respite of ten or twenty minutes during the workday (1940s +)

coffin *n* 1 A ship regarded as unsafe; later, any unsafe vehicle (1830s +) **2** A tank or armored car (WWII Army)

coffin corner *n phr* Any corner of the football field [1940s + Football; because any player running the ball upfield from a corner is dangerously trapped]

coffin nail (or tack) *n phr* A cigarette; BUTT (1880s +)

cog in the machine *n* Someone with a necessary but insignificant role in a large organization or group: *cogs in the bureaucratic machine (1934 +)*

coin *n* Money; BREAD, LOOT (1870s +)

coin money *v phr* MAKE MONEY HAND OVER FIST (1840s +)

co-jock *n* A computer science major [1980s + Students; fr computer jockey]

cojones (coh HOH neez) *n* Courage; audacity; BALLS: *requiring cojones the size of the award-winning cabbages at the state fair/ You've got*

stainless steel cojones, Dave [1932+; fr Spanish “testicles”]

coke modifier: coke peddlers/ coke sniffer **n** Cocaine (1908+)

Coke n Coca-Cola, trademark name of a soft drink (1909+)

Coke-bottle (or Coke-bottle-bottom) glasses n phr Very thick eyeglass lenses: *He had thinning hair, Coke-bottle glasses, a big nose/ Every maladjusted sociopath with Coke-bottle-bottom glasses has no trouble finding this stuff* [1970s+; fr their resemblance to the thickness of the bottom of a soft-drink bottle]

coked or coked-up or coked-out adj Intoxicated with cocaine; HIGH: *the new generation of “coked” gunmen/ the pair of strippers, a coked-out Pakistani princess and a coked-up Fire Island queen/ Marvella, you coked-out cunt* (1920s+ Narcotics)

cokehead n A cocaine addict (1920s+ Narcotics)

coke slut n phr A woman who exchanges sexual favors for narcotics: *A coke slut, she said, would do anything for drugs* (late 1980s+)

cokie or cokey adj Relaxed and sleepy-looking; inattentive (1930+ Black) **modifier:** *a cokey friend/ cokie chat n* A narcotics addict, esp a cocaine addict: *the horde of Hollywood cokies* (1920s+ Narcotics)

cola n 1 A soft drink flavored with cola-nut seeds (1910s+) **2** Cocaine: *paying upwards of \$75 for a gram of cola* (1970s+ Narcotics) [second sense a wordplay on *Coca-Cola*, a trademark]

colaholic n A person who drinks a great deal of cola: *Many colaholics revealed that they would find it difficult to give up the habit* (1970s+)

cold adj 1 Unconscious; OUT: *The snowball knocked him cold* (1896+)

2 Undergoing a spell of bad luck: *I got out of that game because I was cold and Pop was hot* **3** Without rehearsal, practice, or warmup: *When the star got sick, this woman had to take over the part cold* (1890s +) **4** Insulting; cruel: *That's really cold, Duffy* (1980s +) **adv**
1 Perfectly; in every detail; BLIND: *She knew the subject cold* (1890s +)
2 With no possibility of evasion; definitively; DEAD TO RIGHTS: *After that slip they had him cold* (1908 +) **See** BLOW HOT AND COLD, HOT AND COLD

cold as (or colder than) hell **adj phr** (Variations: **a witch's tit** may replace **hell**) Very cold: *In Chicago, that December 1955, it was cold as a welldigger's ass in the Klondike/ It's cold as a witch's tit outside* [charity 1835 +, witch's tit 1932 +, welldigger's ass 1940s +]

cold-blooded **adj** Absolutely first-rate; the very best; ZERO COOL
(1960s + *Black teenagers*)

cold-call **n**: Canvassing is the equivalent of cold calls in the sales field **v** To make a sales call without an appointment: *It's difficult to cold-call a corporation and ask them to give you five figures up front* (1970s +)

cold cash **n phr** Unmistakably valid money, as distinct from checks, promises, etc; *Hard Cash: The place wants payment in cold cash, nothing less* [1884 +; fr the notion that definite and inalterable things, like gold and silver coins, are *cold* and hard]

coldcock **n** The act of knocking someone unconscious quickly before the victim can resist **v** To knock someone unconscious; KNOCK
someone OUT: *He told me to step aside and I wouldn't, so he cold cocked me/ He was going to die, coldcocked and kicked senseless by a*

couple of redneck ranchers [1918+; origin uncertain; perhaps fr the hammering of *caulking* into a boat's or ship's seams; perhaps related to Canadian loggers' *put the caulks to someone*, "stamp in someone's face with spiked boots"]

cold day in hell, a *n phr* An impossible time; never: *It'll be a cold day in hell when you catch me smoking dope* (1940s+)

cold deck *n phr* A dishonest deck of playing cards, usu stacked or marked (1856+) ***v phr*** To take advantage of someone; dishonestly assure one's own winning; RIG, STACK THE DECK (1884+)

cold-decker *n* A swindler; cheat (1920+)

cold-dis *v* To snub; behave dismissively toward: *Why did you cold-dis me at the party and leave without me?* (1980s+ Teenagers)

◁**cold enough to freeze the balls (or nuts) off a brass monkey**▷
adj phr Very cold indeed [1928+; A politer version citing the *tail of a brass monkey* is attested in 1928]

cold feet *See* HAVE COLD FEET

cold fish *modifier*: Jackson offered a cold-fish handshake to Antrim after the game ***n phr*** A person who lacks emotional warmth, compassion, sociability, etc; ICEBERG (1920s+)

cold haul *v phr* (also **cold haul it**) To leave; depart; HAUL ASS: *He cold hauled it!* (1940s+ Black)

cold meat *n phr* A cadaver; corpse; DEAD MEAT (1819+)

cold-meat party *n phr* A wake or funeral: *You were at that cold-meat party; I spotted you coming out of the cemetery* (1908+)

cold one, a n phr A bottle or glass of beer; BREW, BREWSKI: *when someone from far away stops in for a cold one (1990s +)*

cold pricklies n phr Unpleasant and unwelcome comments; adverse criticism: *The cast needed strokes, but they got cold pricklies* [1970s +; the opposite of *warm fuzzies*]

cold shoulder n phr A deliberate snub; display of chilly contempt (1816 +) **v**: *I cold-shouldered him and he looked puzzled (1845 +)*

cold shower modifier: hard-line, cold-war, cold-shower Republican Protestants **n phr** A remedy for illusions; an imposer of reality; a dampener of spirits: *turning a cold shower on the grimy, corrosive residue of 73 years of communism* [1990s +; Attested in 1866 in the form *a douche of cold water*; it should also be recalled that *cold baths* and *showers* have been a traditional prescription for calming the rampant male]

cold snap n phr A short spell of cold weather (1776 +)

cold sober adj phr Completely sober (1930s +) **See** STONE COLD SOBER

cold storage See IN COLD STORAGE

cold turkey adj Requiring abrupt and complete deprivation: *They tried the cold-turkey cure (1921 +)* **adv phr 1** Without warning, rehearsal, overture, etc; COLD: *simply walk in cold turkey and talk things over (1940s +)* **2**: *He kicked his habit cold turkey* **modifier** Basic; unadorned; HARD-CORE: *Stalin didn't like certain cold-turkey facts Kennan reported (1920s +)* **n phr 1** The plain truth; the STRAIGHT SKINNY (1928 +) **2** Total and abrupt deprivation of narcotics, as distinct from gradual withdrawal (1921 +) **v phr 1**: *I'll cold-turkey right*

now: the butler did it (1920s +) **2** To stop auction bidding and sell at a previously set price (1940s + *Auctioneers*) **See** TALK TURKEY

collar *n* An arrest • The earliest form is *put the collar on: The bull makes a collar on me/ The best collar in recent years (1865 +)* **v** **1** To seize or take, later esp to arrest: *He collared the muggers in the next block (1830s +)* **2** To comprehend; grasp; **DIG:** *I don't collar your meaning, Sam (1940s + Teenagers)* **See** ACCOMMODATION COLLAR, HOT UNDER THE COLLAR, WHITE-COLLAR

College **See** JOE COLLEGE

college try **See** the OLD COLLEGE TRY

collywobbles, the *n phr* A stomachache (1823 +)

colonel **See** CHICKEN COLONEL, LIGHT COLONEL

color *n* Interesting background, esp details about players, etc, as used in sports coverage • A scholar in the mid-1920s wrote of *color stuff* as the enlivening human interest and spicy, inventive language used by sports writers to avoid mere facts: *doing color, spoke of a shot put up by one of the players by calling it "a Perot hook": in, out, and in/ I told him I need some color for a magazine piece I'm doing (1938 + Media)* **See** OFF COLOR

Colorado koolaid *n* Coors™ beer: *Colorado koolaid is always advertised on television [1970s + ; fr KoolAid™, a soft-drink powder; the beer is brewed in Colorado]*

color me something *sentence* I am what is indicated: *Color me gone/ Color me ready [1980s + ; fr a child's book in which colors are added to outline drawings]*

colors *n* Dress and insignia that identify members of motorcycle clubs and other gangs: *Many bars had signs on their doors listing their dress codes or other rules. The phrase “no colors” was almost always part of such a list/ I’ve never seen anything that resembled colors or signs or whatever (1960s + Motorcyclists)* **See** WITH FLYING COLORS

color-struck *adj* Harboring prejudice against darker-skinned black persons (1970s + *Black*)

Columbia **See** HAIL COLUMBIA

combination-platter *modifier* Containing a little of everything; GRAB-BAG: *legislature submitting gigantic combination-platter spending bills (1980s +)*

combo *n* **1** A musical group or band: *a combo like Led Zeppelin (1920s + Musicians)* **2** The combination of a safe, lock, vault, etc (1920s +) **3** Any combination: *gin and tomato juice combo/ boy-girl combo (1920s +)* **4** A bisexual: *We had deep concerns that Andy was becoming a combo (1980s + Students)*

◁**come**▷ *n* (also **cum**) Semen, or any fluid secreted at orgasm (1920s +) **v** To have an orgasm; ejaculate semen (1650 +) **See** HOW COME, WHAT GOES AROUND COMES AROUND

come a cropper *v phr* **1** To take a sudden violent fall **2** To fail; suffer a setback [1870s +; origin uncertain; perhaps fr a British dialect word *crop*, “neck”]

come across *v phr* **1** To give something, esp to do so somewhat reluctantly: *When will you come across with the rent? (1908 +)* **2** To accede to the sex act; bestow oneself sexually: *She came across*

without more fuss (1930s +) **3** To seem to be; give the impression • Often with *as* or *like*: *Walter doesn't come across as a crusader, or muckraker/ This guy always comes across very hostile (1930s +)*

come again v phr To repeat something; RUN something BY AGAIN •

Nearly always a request, or an expression of disbelief at what one has heard: *Come again? Did I hear what I hope I didn't? (1884 +)*

come apart at the seams v phr To lose coherence; disintegrate: *It was rather a long kiss. Silas felt himself coming apart at the seams/ I would choose not to give the Republicans any advice, rather just stand back and watch them coming apart at the seams*

come at someone like six headlights (or like a Mack Truck) v phr

To confront someone honestly and forcibly: *I'd rather sit in a room with a guy that comes at you like six headlights, like a Mack Truck (1980s +)*

comeback n 1 A quick and witty retort; a withering riposte: *Dorothy Parker was famous for devastating comebacks (1889 +)* **2** A regaining of success, fame, health, etc: *He's trying another comeback at 38 (1908 +)* **3** A customer who returns merchandise; also, the returning itself (1950s + *Salespersons*) **4** A response to a call: *Thanks for your comeback, Dead Duck (1970s + Citizens band)*

come back v phr To regain success, renown, health, etc; make a comeback: *It's hard to come back after a fiasco like that (1910 +)*

come back and bite one v phr (Variations: **in the ass** or **in the fanny** may be added) To reappear as punishment or retribution; boomerang; backfire: *It has come back to bite him/ They don't want*

any of their used boxes to come back and bite them in the fanny
(1990s +)

come back for more v phr To return repeatedly, either bravely or foolishly, to a bad situation; not know when one is beaten:
Pathetically, no matter how treacherously venomous they were, she came back for more (1950s +)

come clean v phr To tell the truth, esp the whole truth; make a plenary confession (1919 +)

comedown n 1 A reduction of one's status; loss of prestige: *Riding the bus was a comedown for her* (1840 +) **2** The ending of a drug experience: *I cooled it with Quaalude. The comedown wasn't too bad* (1950s + *Narcotics*) **3** LETDOWN (1950s +)

come down v phr 1 To experience the ending of a drug intoxication: *as if he had just come down off methedrine* (1950s + *Narcotics*) **2** To become firmly established: *when a chick's habit came down on her* (1960s + *Narcotics*) **3** To happen: *Sir Morgan's cove, where the Great Event was coming down/ Something weird had to be coming down* (1960s + *Black*)

come down hard on someone v phr To criticize or punish severely:
came down hard on him for getting home at 3 a.m.

come down on someone (or something) v phr To criticize severely; savage: *If I did that, the press would come down on me very hard* (1881 +)

come down on someone like a ton of bricks v phr To punish or suppress severely; CLAMP DOWN: *When he heard about it he came down*

on them like a ton of bricks [1920s+; The earlier version *like a thousand of bricks* is found by 1836]

come down the pike v phr To appear; come on the scene: *every dumbass little news story that comes down the pike* (1950s+)

come hell or high water adv phr No matter what happens; in any event: *I'll find out come hell or high water* (1916+ fr cowboys)

come-in n 1 The line of people waiting to buy tickets **2** The time between the opening of the main tent and the beginning of the entry procession (*Circus*)

come in for v phr To receive; be given something: *He came in for a lot of grief after that decision* (1665+)

come in from the cold v phr 1 To retire from espionage service: *coming in from the cold and staying free might be out of reach* (1960s+) **2** To return to comfort, acclaim, etc, after a period of relative obscurity: *An Osmond comes in from the cold* (1980s+) [popularized by the John le Carré 1963 novel *The Spy Who Came In from the Cold*]

come-lately See JOHNNY-COME-LATELY

come off v phr 1 To succeed: *To everybody's astonishment, the scheme came off* (1590s+) <2> To have an orgasm; ejaculate semen; COME (1650+) **3** To happen; GO DOWN (1855+) **4** To seem to be; give the impression; COME ACROSS • Often with *as*: *Geronimo comes off as ersatz tragedy/ She comes off softer than you would think* (1990s+)

come off something v phr To stop doing or saying something

immediately: *Come off that crap. Keep your jaw shut/ Give me a break and come off it (1880s +)*

come off it sentence I don't believe it: *come off it, Charlie (1912 +)*

come off one's perch v phr To stop behaving in a superior or haughty manner; GET OFF ONE'S HIGH HORSE (1890s +)

come-on modifier: football bowls baited with \$100,000 or so of come-on money **n** Anything designed to attract or seduce; an enticement: *I gave her a big grin, but she knew it was a come-on (1902 +)*

come on interj An exclamation of disbelief, disapproval, request, etc: *Come on, Arnold, don't give me that shit (1603 +)* **v phr** To show as; present oneself as; act; COME ACROSS: *Your friend comes on real dumb (1950 +)*

come on like gangbusters v phr To begin or proceed in a vigorous fashion: *I come on like the Gang Busters and go off like The March of Time [1942 +; fr the radio program *Gangbusters* of 1937-1942, which was introduced by a noisy miscellany of sirens, shots, screeches, music, etc]*

come on strong v phr **1** To gain steadily and rapidly in a race (1940s + *Horse racing*) **2** To be vehement and positive: *He always comes on a little too strong about taxes (1970s +)*

come on to someone v phr To make a sexual advance; PROPOSITION, PUT A MOVE ON: *The way I came on to you the other night; I thought you'd be miffed (1980s +)*

come out v phr 1 To declare oneself; take a position • The original action was that of declaring a religious conversion: *Did she come out for the Equal Rights Amendment? (1840s +)* **2** To end; eventuate: *How'd that whole deal come out? (1896 +)* **3** To acknowledge one's homosexuality; COME OUT OF THE CLOSET: *Their eldest son had "come out" (1970s + Homosexuals)*

come out ahead (or on top) v phr To win: *Who came out ahead in the poll? (1930s +)*

come out in the wash v phr To be dealt with as a natural consequence: *you'll see that it will come out in the wash*

come out of a bag v phr To act contrary to expectation (1990s + *Black*)

come out of the chute v phr To begin; inaugurate something: *If we had come out of the chute conservatively, we would have been projecting a sense of doubt [1980s + ; fr the rodeo, where bucking horses, rampaging bulls, etc, come out of a chute at the edge of the arena]*

come out of the closet v phr 1 To acknowledge one's homosexuality; COME OUT: *He came out of the closet last year and his parents damn near died (1960s + Homosexuals)* **2** To reveal or acknowledge some personal conviction, political position, etc: *In 1978 Timmy came out of the closet and showed a genuine interest in the club/ James Robinson, a fiery, red-faced orator with a Bible clenched in his upraised hand, thundered that it was "time for God's people to come out of the closet and the churches and change America"*

come out of the woodwork *See* CRAWL OUT OF THE WOODWORK

come out swinging (or smoking) v phr To be eager and aggressive;

COME ON STRONG: *Labor chief comes out swinging/ the fighter came out smoking, trying to dazzle the audience with a flurry of quips (1990s +)*

come over someone v phr To convince or influence, esp by force or fraud: *Then I realized he was just trying to come over me, not inform me (1609 +)*

◁**come-queen**▷ **v** A person who prefers and practices fellatio: *a nutty come-queen named Linda Lovelace (1970s +)*

comer n A person doing very well and promising to do better in a certain field: *She's a comer, a potential champ (1880s +)*

come running v phr Join one in a hurry; appear immediately: *Once you've asked her these questions, let her make up her own mind, and be there if she comes running (1596 +)*

comes around *See* WHAT GOES AROUND COMES AROUND

come through v phr 1 To succeed as expected and desired: *Jim Thorpe always came through to win (1899 +)* **2** To cope successfully with perils and troubles; weather adversity: *All seems bleak, but we'll come through unscathed (1899 +)* **3** COME ACROSS (1907 +)

come (or bring) to a screeching halt v phr To be finished or finish abruptly and immediately: *when the 1994 season came to a screeching halt/ I've got to bring this to a screeching halt (1970s +)*

come unglued (or unstuck or unwrapped) v phr To go out of control; deteriorate to chaos; disintegrate; COME APART AT THE SEAMS: *Mr*

*Foster succeeded in keeping the proceedings from coming unglued/
Dole's constant anxiety that it could all come unstuck has set the
dynamics of his campaign/ Everybody knew she was bound to come
unwrapped (1910+)*

come up for air *v phr* To pause, take a break: *been at this since 8 and
need to come up for air*

comeuppance or **comeuppings** *n* A deserved chastening, esp some
event that checks a wrongdoer; just desserts (1958+)

come up roses *v phr* To turn out well; succeed: *Will Dodgers' crop
come up roses? (1960s+)*

come up short *v phr* To be deficient; not add up to what it ought:
*Shelton slugged 15 aces, but the rest of his game came up short
(1980s+)*

come up smelling like a rose (or with the five-dollar gold piece)
v phr To have extraordinarily good luck; emerge from peril with
profit [1950s+; fr the traditional image of the happy person who
“falls in the shitpile and *comes up smelling like a rose*”]

come up to the wire *v phr* To approach the finish; come near the
end: *The crucial project is coming up to the wire and we're a bit
nervous* [1970s+; fr the *wire* that marks the finish line of a race]

come up with the goods *v phr* To succeed in providing what is
required: *you'll come up with the goods or be fired (1879+)*

come within an ace *v phr* To come very near to doing something,
winning something, etc: *She came within an ace of getting the world*

title [1704 + ; probably a version of the 13th-century term *within ambs ace*, “very close to,” *ambs ace* being the lowest point in dice, two ones or snake-eyes, fr Old French fr Latin *ambas as*, “both ace”]

come with the territory (or turf) *See* GO WITH THE TERRITORY (OR TURF)

comfort station *n* A restroom; public toilet: *Pull over. I need the comfort station*

comfy *adj* Comfortable and comforting; pleasant and easy: *Just reeling off their names is ever so comfy (1829 +)*

comics, the *See* the FUNNIES

coming from *See* WHERE SOMEONE IS COMING FROM

coming out of one’s ass (or ears) *adj phr* In surfeit; in overplenteous supply; Up the Kazoo: *I got plenty of problems, problems coming out of my ass/ We had weekly updates: We had statistics coming out of our ears (1960s +)* *See* STEAM WAS COMING OUT OF SOMEONE’S EARS

comma-counter *n* A person who overstresses minor details; a pedantic and picayune perfectionist (1940s +)

commando *n* A person who behaves roughly and overeagerly, esp in lovemaking [Students fr WWII Army; fr the *Commandos*, elite British shock troops of WWII] *See* BEDPAN COMMANDO

commercial *n* **1** Any endorsement or recommendation: *I like the idea, so spare me the commercial (1930s +)* **2** Obviously designed for wide audience approval: *How can it be commercial? It’s Jelly Roll (1920s + Jazz musicians)*

Commie or **Commy** *adj*: *Commy plot/ Commie rhetoric* **n** A Communist (1930s +)

commish **n** A commissioner, esp a police commissioner: *create a high school that would focus on criminal justice studies, a kind of High School for the Commishes of tomorrow* (1908 +) *See* OUT OF COMMISH

commo¹ **n** Treats, cigarettes, etc, from the commissary (1950s + *Prison*)

commo² *modifier*: *went over the commo signals for the fiftieth time/ Murphy's selling commo systems out of a place out in Rockville* (Army) **n** Communications: *Commo okay?* (1970s + *Army*)

comp **n** **1** A complimentary ticket; ANNIE OAKLEY (1885 +) **2** A nonpaying guest at a hotel, restaurant, casino, club, etc (1930s +) **3** Something given free to a privileged guest or customer: *The first was the comps he got in the casino for dropping his \$2,000* (1960s +) **4** Compensation, esp worker's compensation or unemployment compensation: *I've got three more weeks of comp coming* (1970s +) **v**: *The hotel will comp you for just about anything you want/ Now, because I'm a high roller, everything is comped. I don't pay for anything*

Company, the **n** *phr* The US Central Intelligence Agency (1960s +)

company man **n** *phr* One who is, esp from the point of view of union members, devoted to the interests of the employer (1920 + *Labor union*)

comped *modifier* Given free; free of charge; complimentary: *including the bill for the comped room at the Oaks and Pines* (1960s +)

compleat *See* REET

compusex or **cybersex** *n* Sexual talk, innuendo, proposals, titillations, etc, on a computer network: *But more often than not, it's a stop for compusex, that information-age version of phone sex* [1990s + ; fr *computer plus sex*]

con¹ *n* A convict or former convict; prison inmate: *You're a "con," you've no rights* (1893 +)

con² *n* **1** SCAM: *It's a clever con and you're a greedy rat* **2** A dishonest sort of persuasion; PUT-ON: *a slick young man with a line of deferential con* (1900s +) **v** **1** To swindle; work a confidence game: *We conned the old fart out of three big ones* (1896 +) **2**: *He conned her into thinking he'd marry her*

con artist *See* CON MAN

concern *See* a GOING CONCERN

conchy or **conchie** *n* A conscientious objector to military service (*WWI British*)

cone *See* GIVE CONE

conehead *n* **1** An intellectual; POINTY HEAD: *These coneheads are retards* **2** A stupid person (1970s +)

Coney Island whitefish *n phr* A discarded condom, esp a floating one; MANHATTAN EEL (1930s +)

confab (KAHN fab) *n* A talk; discussion (1701 +) **v**: *Let's confab a bit about that idea* (1740 +) [fr *confabulation*]

confetti *See* IRISH CONFETTI

con game (or job) n phr A confidence game; swindle; SCAM
(1880s +)

Congrats interj Congratulations: *You're in? Congrats* (1884 +)

conk¹ n The head • *Conk* designated the nose earlier, by 1812
(1860s +) **v 1** To hit on the nose or head: *I got conked by the bat*
(1925 +) **2** To defeat utterly; CLOBBER (1950s +) [probably fr *conch*]
See BUST ONE'S ASS

conk² or gonk n: *I couldn't get over marveling at how their hair was straight and shiny like white men's hair; Ella told me this was called "conk"* **v** To apply a mixture sometimes containing lye to the head in order to straighten kinky hair [1940s + Black; probably fr *Congolene*, trademark of a preparation used to straighten hair, influenced by *conk¹*]

conk³ v To die; cease to operate; CONK OUT: *A year after that, a spinster aunt conked (WWI Royal Flying Corps)*

conk-buster n 1 Cheap and inferior liquor **2** Any difficult problem **3** An intellectual (1940s + Black)

conked adj Of hair, straightened by application of lye or other chemicals: *pegged pants, conked heads, tight skirts* (1940s + Black)

conk off v phr 1 To go to sleep; sleep: *You been conking off for eight hours* (1940s +) **2** To stop work; rest when one should work; GOOF OFF (1950s +)

conkout n An act or instance of conking out: *I did a swift conkout*

when I got to bed

conk out v phr 1 To stop running or operating: *if this plane conked out (WWI Royal Flying Corps)* 2 To lose energy and spirits suddenly; become abruptly exhausted (1920s +) 3 To go to sleep; CONK OFF (1940s +) 4 To die: *So she's conked out, eh?/ John Le Mesurier wishes it to be known that he conked out on Nov 15. He sadly misses family and friends (1920s +)* [probably echoic]

con man (or artist) n phr 1 A confidence man (1889 +) 2 One adept at persuasion, esp at dishonest or self-serving persuasion (1900s +)

connect v 1 To hit someone very hard: *He connected with a rude one to the jaw (1930s +)* 2 To buy narcotics or other contraband (1960s + *Narcotics*) 3 To get along with; establish rapport with; CLICK: *She's never been able to connect with her tenant (1940s +)*

connection n A seller of narcotics; a person who can get drugs; PUSHER (1925s + *Narcotics*) **See** KILO CONNECTION

connect the dots modifier From one fixed point to another: *rarely venture out of their own connect-the-dots puzzle: from home to work, on to local haunts, and home again* **v phr** 1 To draw a conclusion from disparate facts: *He calls this connecting the dots because it links bits of information to form a big picture* 2 To do something very simple: *He couldn't even figure out how to connect the dots* [1980s +; fr a child's puzzle, where a picture emerges when one connects a number of dispersed dots on the paper]

conniption fit or conniption n phr A violent tantrum; hysterics; Catfit, DUCK FIT: *Please don't throw a conniption fit over the news* [first

form 1833 + , second 1848 + ; origin unknown; the later term *catnip fit* is a stab at folk etymology]

cons *See* MOD CONS

constant *See* FINAGLE FACTOR

constructed *adj* Having an attractive body; generously built; STACKED (1950s +)

contact high *n phr* A seeming intoxication induced by being with persons who are intoxicated with narcotics: *that sympathetic vibration known as the “contact high”* (1950s + Narcotics)

contract *n* 1 An arrangement to have someone murdered by a professional killer: *The word is there’s a contract out for Taffy Taylor* (1930s +) 2 Any illegal or unethical arrangement: *contract, any favor one policeman says he’ll do for another* (1950s + Police) *See* SWEETHEART CONTRACT

contraption *n* A contrivance or device; piece of machinery: *What’s this ugly contraption in the corner?* (1820s +)

conversate *v* To socialize and chat; to converse with another • Back formation from conversation: *We conversated about the weekend plan*

conversation pit *n phr* A sunken area in the floor of a living room where people may gather to chat (1960s +)

convict *n* A zebra (1940s + Circus)

cooch *modifier: an old-time circus cooch show* *n* 1 Any sexually suggestive or imitative dance, esp a striptease dance; HOOTCHIE-COOTCHIE (1920s +) <2> The female crotch; vulva (1950s +)

coo-coo *See* CUCKOO

cook *v* **1** To be put to death in the electric chair; FRY (1930s +) **2** To happen; occur: *Is anything cooking on the new tax rule?* (1940s + *Jive talk*) **3** To do very well; excel: *if the performers begin cooking together and most of the director's intuitions and skills pay off* (1930 + *Jazz musicians*) **4** To falsify; tamper with: *The British government cooked press stories shamelessly in order to deceive the Argentine enemy/ She cooked the statistics* (1636 +) **5** To dissolve heroin in water over a flame before injecting it (1960s + *Narcotics*)

cookbook *modifier* Routine; mechanical; unimaginative: *All he did was adopt the cookbook solution* (1970s +) **n** **1** A chemistry laboratory manual (1950s + *Students*) **2** Any guide, manual, protocol, etc: *We use a cookbook of procedures* (1970s +)

cooked *adj* **1** Ruined; hopelessly beaten; FINISHED: *After the fourth fumble they were cooked* (1850 +) **2** Altered; falsified; Doctored: *His miracle rise turned out to be based more on cooked books than shampooed rugs* (1860 +)

cooked-up *adj* Specially contrived; expedient and dishonest: *It's insane why we give ourselves cooked up reasons for not moving the issue* (1940s +)

cooker *See* FIRELESS COOKER, PRESSURE COOKER

cook someone's **goose** *v phr* To ruin or destroy someone; FINISH • Very often in the passive form, "our goose is cooked": *I know I've basically cooked my own goose here* [1845 +; origin uncertain; one legend has it that a Swedish king Erik was mocked, as he

approached a town, by a goose hanging over the wall, the goose being a symbol of folly and stupidity. The king thereupon burned the town and cooked the goose]

cookie or **cookey** *n* **1** (also **cookee**) A cook or cook's helper (1840s +) **2** A person who prepares opium for smoking; opium addict (1950s + *Narcotics*) **3** An attractive young woman (1920 +) **4** A person; GAL, GUY • Most often modified by *smart* or *tough*: "What do you really want?" *Smart cookie* (1930 +) <5> (also **cookies**) The female genitals; vulva (1950s + *Black*) **6** A base hit: *knowing I was going to get at least one cookie every game* (1970s + *Baseball*) **7** A short line of text added to one's computer upon accessing a Web site, to identify the user **See** GRIFE one'S ASS, THAT'S THE WAY THE BALL BOUNCES, TOUGH COOKIE

cookie-cutter or **cooky-cutter** *modifier* (also **cookie-cut**) Identical and unoriginal; standardized; stereotyped: *Each store is a cookie-cutter copy, laid out according to plans devised at the corporate headquarters/ I'd never want to read that kind of cookie-cut magazine* *n* **1** A police officer's badge; POTSY, TIN (1920s + *Circus*) **2** A weak and unenterprising person; COOKIE-PUSHER, WIMP (1950s +) **3** An inadequate weapon, esp a knife (1950s +)

cookie jar **See** WITH one'S HAND IN THE TILL

cookie monster *n phr* Someone who is voracious and destructive: *The policy got eaten up by a Cookie Monster named Richard Darman, director of OMB* [1970s +; fr a television hand-puppet character so named who noisily devours huge amounts of cookies]

cookie-pusher or **cooky-pusher** *n* **1** A weak and unenterprising

person; **WIMP 2** A person who pampers and flatters superiors; APPLE-POLISHER, BROWN-NOSE **3** A government career person, esp in the Department of State (1940s +)

cookies *See* COOKIE, SHOOT one's COOKIES

cook the books v phr To tamper with and falsify records, esp financial accounts: *The managers had cooked the books to the tune of \$34 million/ He's been cooking the books for so many of those companies (1940s +)*

cook up v phr To devise; fabricate; HOKE UP: *We'll cook up a story to explain your swollen lip (1750 +)*

cook up a pill v phr To prepare opium for smoking (1960s + *Narcotics*)

cook with gas (or on the front or top burner) v phr To perform very commendably; GROOVE: *I am cooking with gas on this project (1930s + jive talk)*

cool adj 1 In control of one's feelings; stoic: *Learn to be cool under fire (by early 1700s)* **2** Aloof and uninvolved; disengaged, as an expression of alienation; BEAT, HIP: *He's cool, don't give a shit for nothing (1940s +)* **3**: *cool jazz/ a real cool passage* **4** Excellent; good: *a cool shirt/ cool sermon (1940s +)* **5** Pleasant; desirable; COPACETIC: *You enjoying it? Is everything cool? (1950s +)* **6** Not less than a certain amount: *cleared a cool million n 1: He lost his cool and bolted like a rabbit (1960s +)* **2**: *My guru drifted me to a total spiritual cool* **3** Jazz marked by soft tones, improvisation based on advanced chord extensions, and revision of certain classical jazz idioms (1940s +)

Cool musicians) **v** 1 To postpone; await developments in: *Let's cool this whole business for a week or so (1950s +)* 2 To kill: *Who knew what he wanted to make it look like when he cooled her (1920 +)* **See**

BLOW **one's** COOL, LOSE **one's** COOL, PLAY IT COOL, ZERO COOL

cool (or calm) as a Christian with aces wired **adj phr** Serenely assured; tranquilly confident: *"We will take care of that," he says, cool as a Christian with aces wired (1970s +)*

cool as a cucumber **adj phr** Very calm, and often haughty or callous (1730s +)

cool beans or **bananas** **modifier** Excellent; wonderful; COOL, FRESH, RAD: *Cool Beans "superlative, a highly desirable situation" (1980s + Students)*

cool cat **n** A stylish and admirable person

cool down **v phr** To calm down: *cool down before he gets here*

cooled-out **adj** Relaxed; passionless: *a cooled-out sign linked to the mass media (1970s +)*

cooler, the **n** 1 A jail; the SLAMMER 2 A cell or cellblock for solitary confinement (*Prison*) (1880s +)

cool guy **n phr** A conventional, tedious, or pretentious person who thinks he is up-to-date, aware, interesting, etc (1990s + *Teenagers*)

cool hand **modifier**: *these four cool-hand lunatics* **n phr** A person not easily disconcerted • Sir Thomas Overbury (d. 1613) wrote that a *cool hand* is "one who accounts bashfulness the wickedest thing in the world, and therefore studies impudence" (1600s +)

cool one's heels v phr To wait, esp to be kept waiting: *I cooled my heels for two hours before the great one would see me (1608+)*

cool it v phr **1** To relax; stop being excited or angry **2** To slow one's pace; stop being strenuous **3** To stop what one is doing, esp what is annoying the speaker • In all senses often an exhortation or irritated command (*1950s+ Beat & cool talk*)

cool million n phr A whole big million dollars [1890s+; *Cool* as applied to a large sum of money is attested by 1728; with currency inflation the use has progressed from hundred to thousand to million to (very likely) billion, on the way to *cool trillion*]

cool off v phr **1** To become calmer and less explosive; moderate: *When he cooled off I spoke sweet reason (1860s+)* **2** To kill; COOL: *Somebody cools off Mr Justin Veezee*

cool-out n A device or strategy intended to relax someone, esp to calm justified apprehensions: *cooperating in an Uncle Tom cool-out this late in the game/ This begins what he calls the "cool out." This prepares the man to accept defeat philosophically (1940s+)*

cool out v phr **1** To walk a horse after a race to calm and moderate it gradually (*1910+ Horse racing*) **2** To do the sex act (*1970s+ Beat & black*) **3** To relax; become calm; COOL IT: *He was cooling out now, not sprinting, just sitting straight up on the seat, riding without hands at a lazy relaxed rhythm (1980s+)*

cool someone out v phr **1** To mollify and appease someone; calm someone's apprehensions or anger: *White Americans found a new level in which to cool the blacks out/ He is the one who has to cool*

people out and pay off State officials (1940s +) **2** To relax; calm someone (1900s +) **3** To kill someone; COOL, OFF • The date is based on an 1833 text by Davy Crockett (1830s +)

coolster *n* A stylish and admirable person; DUDE, STUD: *If you see said coolsters in the cafeteria, ask if it's OK to sit with them (1990s + Teenagers)*

coolth *n* Coolness • Based on *warmth*

coolville or **Coolville** *modifier* (also **coolsville** or **Coolsville**) Excellent; splendid: *Your little scheme's coolville (1950s +)*

◀**coon**▶ *n* **1** A black person (1862 +) **2** (also **coon's ass**) A carnival worker who is too aggressive and mistreats the customers (1990 + *Carnival*) **See** ACE BOON COON

coon's age, a *n phr* A very long time: *I haven't seen her in a coon's age (1843 +)*

coopn *n* **1** A jail or prison (1785 +) **2** A place, esp a patrol car, where police officers sleep while on duty: *all the cops will be in the coop (1960s + Police)* **v**: *There were the cats, the milkmen, and the cops cooping in a police car at the corner* [police senses based on earlier *coop*, "any shelter used by the police to avoid the elements"; fr *chicken coop*] **See** FLY THE COOP, HENCOOP, IN THE COOP, RAIN CATS AND DOGS

co-op or **coop** (KOH ahp) *modifier*: *co-op prices/ coop apartment complex* *n* A cooperative apartment house, store, etc (1870s +) **v** To convert an apartment or building from a rental to a cooperative unit: *The old Sussex Arms got co-oped last year (1950s +)*

coot *n* A stupid or silly person, usu an aged one: *a harmless old coot* (1760s +) **See** CRAZY AS A LOON

cootchie **See** HOOTCHIE-COOTCHIE

cootie or **cooty** *n* A body louse [WWI Army fr British; origin uncertain; perhaps fr Malay *kutu*, “dog tick”; one study suggests London cockney slang as the source]

◁**cooz**▷ (Variations: **cooze** or **cou** or **couz** or **couzie** or **couzy** or **cuzzy**) *n* **1** A woman: *We killed two quarts of tequila last night in Olvera Street, this Mexican cooz and I/ He runs. He screams like a cooze* **2** The female genitals; vulva **3** A person, esp a woman, viewed solely as a sex object: *a piece of beautiful dumb eighteen-year-old cooze* (1920s +)

cop *n* **1** A police officer (1850s +) **2** A theft **3** An arrest **v** **1** To arrest (1850s +) **2** To steal: *He copped six PCs from the shop* (1900 +) **3** To win; be awarded: *to cop second place* (1914 +) **4** To comprehend; grasp: *I don't quite cop your sense, pal* (1940s +) **5** To buy or get narcotics: *The pusher has appeared, and they will make their round-about way to him to “cop”* (1960s + *Narcotics*) [origin uncertain; perhaps ultimately fr Latin *capere* “seize,” by way of French; police officer sense a shortening of *copper*; second sense “seize, catch” attested by 1704] **See** GOOD COP BAD COP

copacetic or **copasetic** (KOH pə SET ik) *adj* As it should be; quite satisfactory; COOL, OK [1919 + fr black; origin unknown; perhaps fr Louisiana Creole French *coupe-sétique* in the same sense, semantically related to *cope*, attested fr about 1880; perhaps fr

Hebrew *kol ba seder*, “all in order,” which may have been acquired by black customers of a Jewish merchant]

◁**cop a (or someone’s) cherryr**▷ **v phr** To deprive someone of virginity; deflower someone (1930s +)

cop a feel v phr To feel or caress someone’s body, esp the sex organs, usu in a sly or seemingly inadvertent way: *I thought he wanted to help me into the car, but I think he just wanted to cop a feel (1930s +)*

cop an attitude See HAVE AN ATTITUDE

cop a plea v phr To plead guilty to a lesser charge than one might otherwise be tried for; escape a worse punishment by accepting a lesser one (1920s + *Police & underworld*)

cop a tude See HAVE AN ATTITUDE

cop-heat n Police activity: *When there’s cop-heat here, the prostitutes go there [1970s + ; Heat in this sense is attested from 1931]*

copilot n An amphetamine taken in order to stay awake (1960s + *Truckers*)

cop (or buy) it v phr To die, esp to be killed in battle or otherwise;
BUY THE FARM: *He had a feeling he wouldn’t cop it that day/ The guy who buys it does it off camera (WWI British forces)*

cop-killer n A bullet capable of penetrating bulletproof vests: *the apple-green bullets they call cop-killers (1980s +)*

cop onto v phr To come to understand or become aware of: *cop onto that idea*

cop-out *n* An evasion; an excuse for inaction: *Arguing about standards is a “cop-out” (1960s+ Counterculture)*

cop out *v phr* **1** To be arrested (1940s+ *Underworld*) **2** To confess; plead guilty; COP A PLEA: *I copped out (1940s+)* **3** To avoid trouble and responsibility; evade an issue or problem; disengage oneself: *When his friends really needed help he copped out (1960s+ Counterculture)*

copped *adj* Arrested: *copped for stealing a baseball card*

copper¹ *n* **1** A police officer (1846+) **2** An informer; STOOL PIGEON (1897+ *Underworld*) **3** Time taken off a prison sentence for good behavior or because one has informed on colleagues (1908+ *Underworld*)

copper² *v* To bet against a card, roll of the dice, person, etc [1864+ Gambling; fr the use of a special metal chip, often a *copper cent*, by a gambler to indicate a bet with the bank in faro]

copper-bottomed *adj* Genuine; authentic: *a copper-bottomed scoundrel* [1890+ ; fr the covering of a ship’s *bottom* with *copper* plates to frustrate the shipworm]

cop shop *n phr* A police station (1940s+ *Australian*)

cop to something *v phr* To confess to; plead guilty to: *He cops to bimbo massages, but insists he didn’t go “coital”/ This gave students an opportunity to cop to secretly held feelings* [1990s+ ; a shortening of *cop out*]

copy *n* A subject for an article in a newspaper, magazine, etc: *She*

knew that Miss Gould was good “copy” (1880s +) **v** To send a copy of a message to someone other than the immediate addressee: *Copy Tina and tell her the mag is fast turning to compost (1980s +)*

copycat modifier: *a copycat inventor/ copycat crime* **n** **1** An imitator; mimic • May be forty or fifty years older (1890s +) **2** A copycat crime or criminal: *Could be a copycat. Guy wants to do his wife in, covers it up by making it look like Red Rose/ I knew enough to bet the farm that this was no coincidence or copycat (1960s +)* **v:** *Sally traps her there, and copycats the first murder, gore and all (1930s +)*

copycat crime **n** **phr** A crime committed in imitation of another crime, esp one that is sensational and highly publicized: *CopyCat Crimes of the Heart*

copy the mail **v** **phr** To listen to radio traffic; monitor (1970s + *Citizens band*)

cop Zs (or **some Zs**) **v** **phr** (Variations: *bag* or *catch* or *cut* or **get** or **pile up** or **stack** may replace **cop**) To take a nap; sleep; SNOOZE: *got to peck a little, and cop me some Z’s/ sits around all day cutting Zs (1950s + Black)*

core **See** HARD-CORE, SOFT-CORE

core dump **v** **phr** **1** To empty out the central memory of a computer **2** To explain oneself fully; say one’s piece, esp in the mode of complaint: *One of the semiconductor makers here went to see her manager the other day. Later she told a friend that she had “core dumped” on the boss (1980s + Computers)*

Corine **n** Cocaine (1970s + *Narcotics*)

cork *See* BLOW one's TOP, POP one's CORK

corked *adj* Drunk (1896 +)

corker *n* A person or thing that is remarkable, wonderful, superior, etc; HUMDINGER, PISS-CUTTER: *What a corker, this guy* [1882 +; fr earlier sense "something that definitively settles a matter," perhaps fr *caulk*]

corking *adj* Excellent; wonderful: *a corking party* *adv* Extremely; very: *to have a corking good time* (1891 +)

cork out *v phr* To behave very strangely; FREAK OUT: *"Hey, he/ she's corking out."* (acting really weird) (1990s +)

corksacking *adj* Disgusting; depraved; COCKSUCKING • Euphemistic form of *cocksucking*; others, probably attested only in dirty jokes, are *cokesacking* and *socktucking*: *You effing corksacking limey effer*

corn *n* 1 Corn whiskey; MOONSHINE (1820 +) 2 Music, poetry, sentiment, etc, that is maudlin and naively affirmative of old-fashioned values; banal and emotionally overwrought material; SCHMALTZ (1930 + *Jazz musicians*) [second sense probably from the notion of *cornfed* as indicating rural simplicity and naivete]

cornball *adj*: *Where did you get those cornball notions?* *n* A person who admires or produces markedly sentimental material and utters relatively simpleminded moral convictions: *Eisenhower on no account can be called a cornball* (1940s +)

corndog *n* An eccentric and socially inept person; DWEEB, GEEK (1980s + *Students*)

corned *adj* Drunk (1785 +) *See* HALF-CORNED

corner *See* COFFIN CORNER, HOT CORNER

cornfed *adj* 1 Plump and sturdy; rural or as if rural: *a cornfed beauty* (1787 +) 2 Naive and sentimental; CORNY (1920s +)

◀**cornhole**▶ *n* The anus; also, a poke in the anus: *itch in the cornhole*
v To do anal intercourse; BUGGER, BUNGHOLE: *The Germans would get castrated when they cornholed him/ Bartley had cornholed the Irish maid in full view of wife and child* (1930s +)

corny *adj* Overly sentimental; banal; devoted to or expressing old-fashioned moral convictions; CORNBALL [1930 + Jazz musicians; the writer Mari Sandoz (1896-1966) suggested as possible origin the corn-seed catalogs sent to Midwestern farmers before and after 1900, which were larded with tired old jokes; the jokes were called *corn jokes* and *corny*]

corral (kə RAL) *v* To find; gather: *to corral votes* [1850s + ; fr Spanish]

corset *n* A bulletproof vest; FLAK JACKET (1920s + *Police & underworld*)

cosh *n* A bludgeon; blackjack 1: *as these samurai cosh, ignite, bludgeon and blow away a host of contemptible nincompoops* (1860s + *British*)

cosmic *adj* Powerfully wonderful; excellent: *pay-perview is cosmic*

cotics *n* Narcotics (*Narcotics*)

cottage cheese thighs *n phr* Fat thighs; THUNDER THIGHS: *In Los Angeles, cottage cheese thighs are nothing to snicker about* (1990s +)

cottage industry *n phr* **1** Productive work done at home using computers or computer terminals **2** A local, esp a rural, concern or enthusiasm: *great supporter of the contras, an occupation that appears to have been an Arkansas cottage industry* [1920s + ; based on the name given to the system of having piecework done at home, rather than in factories, at the beginning of the Industrial Revolution]

cotton *See* IN TALL COTTON, SHIT IN HIGH COTTON

cotton mouth *n phr* Dryness of the mouth caused by a hangover, use of marijuana or drugs, fear, etc (1970 +)

cotton-picking or **cotton-pickin'** *adj* Despicable; wretched; DAMNED: *They're out of their cotton-picking minds/ I don't think it's anybody's cotton-pickin' business what you're doing* [1950s + ; fr the inferior status of the field hand or poor farmer in southern US society]

cotton to v phr Approve of; like; appreciate; fancy: *"That's a thing I didn't cotton to anyhow," said Miss Fuschia Leach, who had found her talent did not lie that way* [1605 + ; perhaps fr Welsh *cytuno*, "agree, consent"]

◁**cou**▷ *See* COOZ

couch *See* CASTING COUCH

couch case *n phr* An emotionally disturbed person [1960s + ; fr the psychoanalyst's stereotypical use of the *couch* for a reclining patient]

couch commander *n phr* A television remote control (1990s +)

Teenagers)

couch doctor *n phr* A psychoanalyst; SHRINK (1950s +)

couch it *v phr* To be banished to another place for sleeping by a bedmate or roommate: *He was snoring so badly, I told him to couch it*

couch potato or **sofa spud** *n phr* A habitual loungeur, esp a person who spends much time watching television: *They're not couch potatoes. They're mobile, they go out/ the period that Anglophile couch potatoes find most fascinating (entry form 1970s +, variant 1990s +)*

couch surfing *n* Sleeping on the couch or extra bed of an acquaintance when traveling or when between permanent lodging places, esp to save money: *I'm interviewing in Chicago, so I'm couch surfing it at my sister's/ She threw him out, so he is couch surfing at Shane's*

cough syrup *n phr* Bribe or blackmail money paid to silence someone (1925 + *Underworld*)

cough up *v phr* **1** To pay or give something, esp with some reluctance: *Coughing it up: Dunleavy was not happy that the Bucks committed 26 turnovers (1894 +)* **2** To tell or relate, esp under interrogation • Modern use, which may not truly represent a continuity with the medieval occurrence, begins in the 1890s (1393 +)

coulda-been *modifier* Suggesting, often lamenting, what might have been: *other coulda-been sad-sack tales (1990s +)*

could be *sentence* It is possible • Often a reply to a speculative

question: *Is he still alive? Could be/ Could be they don't like us out there (1930s +)* **See** EASY AS PIE

could eat a horse v phr To be extremely hungry (1936 +)

could murder v phr To want to cause harm: *could murder him for ordering that (1935 +)*

could not (or couldn't) care less v phr One simply does not care; one is sublimely indifferent • In a curious development, the original British negative form has been changed to affirmative by many US speakers, without change of meaning; such contradiction is more common in slang than in standard speech: *I couldn't care less if you like me or not/ I could care less if you like me or not*

could use v phr To want or need something: *could use a Valium (1956 +)*

count See DOWN FOR THE COUNT, NO-COUNT

counted, be See STAND UP AND BE COUNTED

counter See COMMA-COUNTER, BEAN-COUNTER

count for spit, not See NOT COUNT FOR SPIT

country adj Quite competent; reliable: *He's a pretty good country ball player; gets his pitches over the plate* • The phrase is meant as moderate yet distinct praise of a person who might not be as spectacular as a big-city performer **See** ANOTHER COUNTRY HEARD FROM

country club modifier Characteristic of the wealthy: *Tax cheating is a country-club crime, like insider trading* [1890s +; The date is based on the earliest potential use, that is, on the first occurrence of such

primarily golfing clubs of generally exclusive membership]

country cousin *n phr* A distant though related person or thing: *This was country cousin to a myth that floated around St. Louis earlier, about a major utility that ordered six thousand body bags with its name imprinted on them* [1770+; The date refers to the sense “an unsophisticated rustic relative”]

country-fried *adj* Rural; unsophisticated; countrified; shit-kickin’: *Atwater, a Southerner, a country-fried Sammy Click who learns the error of his ways* (1990s+)

country mile, a *modifier*: *Dennis Conner’s countrymile victory in the first America’s Cup race* *n phr* A very long distance: *She made it home first by a country mile* (1940s+) **See** BEAT someone or something BY A COUNTRY MILE

county mounty *n phr* A police officer, esp one patrolling the highway; a sheriff, deputy sheriff, state police officer, etc [Citizens band; second element fr *Mounty* or *Mountie*, “member of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police”]

coupe **See** DEUCE

couple something **short of**, a *modifier* Stupid; mentally deficient • A very flexible and productive formula for gently expressing an adverse judgment: *The manager is a couple cans short of a six-pack/ He’s a couple bricks short of a load/ She’s a couple sandwiches short of a picnic/ They were all a couple dogies short of a corral* (1980s+)

courage **See** DUTCH COURAGE

courier *n* A small-time drug dealer or drug runner: *the courier does not get much money*

course *See* CRIB COURSE, GUT COURSE, PAR FOR THE COURSE, PIPE COURSE, SNAP COURSE

court *See* the BALL IS IN someone's COURT, FULL COURT PRESS, HOME-COURT ADVANTAGE, KANGAROO COURT

courtin *n* A rigorous initiation ceremony into a girls' gang: *At her courtin, a girl is christened with the nickname by which she will be known (1990s + Street gang)*

court-out *n* Severe physical punishment for a gang member deemed disloyal: *She can face a "court-out," in which there is no time limit to the beating (1990s + Street gang)*

cousin *n* 1 Friend; person • An amiable form of address: *How you doin', cousin? (1430 +)* 2 A dupe; MARK, PIGEON (1552 + *Underworld*)
See KISSING COUSIN, COUSIN

◁**couz** or **couzie** or **couzy**▷ *See* COOZ

cover *n* 1 A popular song recorded by artists other than those who made it famous: *third album, like the first two, contains many covers of recent chart-busters (1970s +)* 2 An identity, usu an elaborate falsification, assumed by a secret agent for concealment: *To improve his cover he "resigned" from the agency (1940s + Espionage)* v 1 To report on regularly; monitor the news at: *Who's covering the White House now? (1893 + Newspaper)* 2 (also cover up) To protect someone with one's testimony: *I'll cover for you if you're caught (1940s +)* 3 To substitute for someone; replace someone temporarily and protectively: *Bini was the designated cover for*

Placido Domingo in La Gioconda (1960s +) 4 To attend to, esp temporarily: *Will you cover the switchboard while I'm at the dentist? (1970 +)* 5 To travel: *I covered two miles in one minute (1818 +)* 6 To include; account for: *That about covers what happened (1793 +)* 7 To aim at with a firearm: *Freeze, I got you covered (1687 +)* 8: *They did best covering Springsteen and Stones hits* **See** BLOW someone's COVER

cover all bases *v phr* To guard against or supervise all contingencies: *The baking is done on the premises, and Ms Scherber covers all the bases (1940s + Baseball)*

◁**cover one's ass**▷ (or **tail**) (also **CYA**) *modifier*: *writing long cover-your-ass memos* *v phr* To provide or arrange for exculpation; devise excuses and alibis: *Some call it "risk management," others "covering your ass"/ The FBI may have to let you be destroyed to cover its own ass/ CYA, you know, that old French expression that means making sure that when historians write about it all it won't be seen as happening on your shift*

covered wagon *n phr* An aircraft carrier (WWII Navy)

cover girl *modifier*: *It doesn't seem fair that their cover-girl looks should obscure the vast athletic skills displayed between the lines* *n phr* A model or celebrity whose likeness appears on the cover of a magazine; a beautiful and glamorous young woman (1915 +)

cover story *n phr* 1 The biography and plausible account devised for a secret agent for concealment; COVER (1940s + *Espionage*) 2 An alibi; a false narrative explanation: *We agree on the cover story, that you haven't seen me for three weeks (1940s +)*

cover the waterfront *v phr* To be a complete account of something; be the whole story: *Lake covers premarital agreements, no-fault divorce, even a will. That covers the waterfront* [1930s+; fr the title of a 1932 book by Max Miller, a journalist, exposing crime and corruption on the *waterfront*]

cover-up *n* Anything designed to conceal or obfuscate the truth by replacement: *Sending the Navy south instead of north was an obvious cover-up* (1935+)

cow *n* 1 Milk (1900+) 2 A woman: *The silly cow believed everything she heard* (1696+) <3> A young woman (1930s+ *Underworld*) *See* ARMORED COW, CANNED COW, CASH COW, SEA COW

cowabunga *interj* A surfer's exclamation of delight and commitment at the beginning of a ride, often used as a generalized cry of delight: *It was the real Andy Griffith, too: cowabunga* (1950s+ *Surfers*) *n* Energetic popular plaudits: *make their most open bid yet for commercial cowabunga* (1980s+) [apparently coined by Eddie Kean, writer of the television *Howdy Doody Show*, as a distress call for one of the characters]

cowboy *n* 1 A reckless driver or pilot: *City Subway Mishaps Attributed To Speeding "Cowboy" Motormen/ a pilot with a history of recklessness and a reputation as a "cowboy"* (1920s+) 2 The king of a suit of playing cards (1940s+ *Gambling*) 3 A violent gun-brandishing criminal: *apparently the same cowboy, a young punk with a Fu Manchu mustache, waving a nickel-plated pistol* (1920s+ *Underworld*) *v* To murder recklessly and openly: *even if we had to cowboy them (which) means that we were to kill them any place we found them even*

if it was in the middle of Broadway (1920s + Underworld) See

DRUGSTORE COWBOY

cowboy (or Navajo) Cadillac *n phr* A pickup truck; Wausau Wagon (1970s +)

cow chip *n phr* COWPAT, MEADOW MUFFIN: *Blue chips into cow chips. Investor loses money (1840 +)*

cow college (or tech) *n phr* A college rurally located and of humble distinction, esp an agricultural college: *Every instructor in every cow college is trying to get to be an assistant professor (1900 + College students)*

cow out *v phr* To lose control (1990s + *Students*)

cowpat or cow pie *n* or *n phr* A disk of cattle dung; MEADOW MUFFIN: *the meadow muffin, better known as the cow pie (1940s +)*

cowpats *interj* An exclamation of scorn, disbelief, vexation, etc; BULLSHIT: *Cowpats! He's just trying to make my life miserable (1990s +)*

cowplop or cowflop or cowflap *n* 1 Cattle dung: *He is dumb as cowflop and hopeless at foot shufflin' and finger snappin', but he tries hard* 2 Nonsense; pretentious talk; BULLSHIT: *I don't believe that cowflap/ Urban Cowplop (1900 +)*

cowpuncher or cowpoke *n* A cowboy [first form 1870s +, second 1880s +; fr the use of metal-tipped prods to drive cattle into railroad cars]

coyote *n* A person who smuggles illegal immigrants across the Mexican-US border: *the "coyotes," the smugglers who bribe or*

otherwise contrive to get their charges past border authorities (1920s +)

coyote ugly *adj phr* Extremely ugly or nasty; PISSUGLY, ugly as catshit: *I had a coyote ugly date (1980s + Students)*

cozy up *v phr* To become very friendly; court: *I find myself, too, on about the fifth trip to the hardware store, cozying up to the proprietor (1930s +)*

crab *n 1*: *He's an awful crab, never gives her a moment's peace 2* A resident of Annapolis, Maryland (1920s +) *v 1* To complain, esp to do so regularly; nag; BITCH: *Crab, crab, crab, that was all she ever did/ So us crabbing about our zero-life factors isn't up for debate, really (1812 +) 2* To spoil; ruin: *He's trying to crab the deal (1890s +)*

crabs *n* An infestation of crab lice in the pubic area: *Her friends slobbered, ripped off girls' dresses at parties, had crabs (1840 +)*

crack *n 1* A try; attempt; SHOT: *It looks impossible, but I'll take a crack at it (1836 +) 2* A brief, funny, pungent, and often malicious remark; WISECRACK: *One more crack like that and I'm going to sock you (1725 +)*

◀**3**▶ The vulva; CUNT (*unknown date, but very old*) ◀**4**▶ The deep crease between the buttocks (*unknown date, but very old*) **5** (also

crack cocaine) Cocaine freebase, a very pure crystalline cocaine intended for smoking rather than inhalation; COKE: *Crack's low price and quick payoff make it especially alluring to teenagers (1985 +*

Narcotics) v 1 To open a safe or vault by force (1830s +) **2** To go uninvited to a party; CRASH (1950s +) **3** To gain admittance to some desired category or milieu: *He finally cracked the bestseller list (1950s +)*

4 To solve; reveal the secret of: *They never cracked the*

case (1930s +) **5** (also **crack up**) To suffer an emotional or mental collapse; go into hysteria, depression, etc: *After six months of that it's a wonder she didn't crack (1880s +)* **6** To break down and give information, or to confess, after intense interrogation: *Bugsy cracked and spilled everything (1850 +)* **7** To speak; talk; make remarks: *Listen, Ben, quit cracking dumb (1315 +)* [all senses are ultimately echoic; narcotics sense fr the sound of breaking crystals or the cracking sound the crystals make when smoked] **See** FALL

BETWEEN THE CRACKS, GIVE **something** A SHOT, HAVE A CRACK AT **something**, WISECRACK

crack a book (or the books) v phr To study • Nearly always in the negative: *He tried to pass the course without cracking a book/ The exam's coming up and I better crack some books (1920s + Students)*

◀**crack a fart**▶ **v phr** To flatulate; express gas anally; LAY A FART: *What's that smell? Did someone crack a fart? (1980s + Students)*

crack a smile v phr To smile; start to smile: *I even wiggled my ears, but she wouldn't crack a smile (1840 +)*

crackbrained adj Crazy; eccentric; wild; CRACKPOT (1634 +)

crackdown n A particular instance or severity of punishment, law enforcement, etc: *The Mayor again vowed a crackdown on the porn shops (1930s +)*

crack down v phr To enforce the law or rules more vigorously; CLAMP DOWN: *Cops will crack down on drunk drivers (1930s +)*

cracked adj Crazy; eccentric: *You're cracked if you think I'll stay now (1692 +)* **See** GET ONE'S NUTS

cracked up or **cracked up to be** *modifier* Said; praised • Most often in the negative: *This beer ain't all it's cracked up to be* [1836 +; fr 1300s sense of *crack*, “boast, brag”]

◀**cracker**▶ *n* A Southern rustic or poor white; more particularly, a Georgian; REDNECK [1766 +; The dated sense refers to “a lawless set of rascals on the frontiers of Virginia, Maryland, the Carolinas, and Georgia” who were great *crackers*, “boasters”; these would be nearly the original frontier “tall talkers” of the Davy Crockett ilk]
See JAWBREAKER, SAFECRACKER

cracker-barrel *adj* 1 Unsophisticated; basic: *a cracker-barrel philosophy* 2 Intimate; gossipy: *a cracker-barrel discussion of family* [1877 +; fr the archetypical image of rural discussants sitting on or around the *cracker barrel* in the general store]

cracker factory *n phr* A mental hospital; looney bin, NUTHOUSE [1970s +; because insane people are *cracked*, or in British slang *crackers*]

crackerjack or **crackajack** *modifier*: *He estimates that a crackerjack examiner working under optimum conditions would find 10 to 15 percent of his cases to be inconclusive/ I'm a crackerjack story teller *n* A person or thing that is remarkable, wonderful, superior, etc: *Signorelli is a crackerjack* [late 1880s +; origin uncertain; perhaps a fanciful extension of *cracker* in the mid-19th-century British sense “something approaching perfection,” which is also reflected in terms like *crack shot*, *crack troops*, etc, and based on an echoic expression of speed; hence also *cracking*; the term is reinforced in the US by late 19th-century trademark *Cracker Jack* for a popcorn*

and peanut confection]

Cracker Jack prize *n phr* Something of very little value: *The Whitney show is full of works that bring to mind gigantic gift boxes containing plastic Cracker Jack prizes* [late 1800s +; fr the fact that each box of Cracker Jacks™ contains a little gift among the glazed popcorn]

crackers *adj* Crazy; CRACKED • Chiefly British use: *Also he was plain crackers* [1928 +; formed with the British suffix *-ers*, like *bonkers*, *preggers*, etc]

crackhead *n* A user of cocaine freebase (1980s + *Narcotics*)

crackheaded *adj* Crazy; CRACKED, CRACKERS, NUTS (1796 +)

crackhouse or **crackshack** *n* A place where crack cocaine is sold or smoked (1985 +)

cracking *adj* Excellent; first-rate: *a cracking meal* *adv* Very: *a cracking good meal* *n*: *Ragging, bagging, snapping, and cracking, these are all word games teens use as a way of competing with one another* (1990s + *Teenagers*) (1830 +) **See** GET CRACKING

crack one's jaw *v phr* To brag (1930s + *Black*)

crack of dawn *n phr* First light; the start of sunrise (1923 +)

crack off *v phr* To make nasty or boastful remarks (1970s +)

crack on someone *v phr* To insult someone; DIS, DUMP ON, TRASH (1990s + *Black*)

crackpot *adj*: *my colleague's crackpot notions* *n* A crazy idiot; an addled fool; eccentric: *He's a crackpot about flying saucers* (1883 +)

cracks *See* FALL BETWEEN THE CRACKS

crack the whip *v phr* To command peremptorily and fiercely; intimidate: *He has made great industrial corporations jump when he cracks the whip* [1940s +; fr the use of a whip to control animals, esp in the circus]

crackup *n* **1** A collision, crash, etc: *a bad car crackup/ airline crackup* (1926 +) **2** A mental or emotional breakdown: *Have you read Fitzgerald's The Crackup?* (1930s +) **3** A very funny person or thing: *His Cagney sketch is a crackup* (1960s +)

crack up *v phr* **1** To collide; crash: *The trucks cracked up head-on* (1920s +) **2** (also **crack**) To suffer an emotional or mental breakdown; go into hysteria, depression, etc: *Jimmy felt that he was cracking up* (1930s +) **3** To have a fit of uncontrollable laughter: *He cracked up over everything Homer said* (1940s +)

crack someone up *v phr* To make someone laugh uncontrollably: *neighbor that cracks me up*

cradle *See* ROB THE CRADLE

cradle-robber or **cradle-snatcher** *n* **1** A person who prefers relatively younger sex or courtship partners **2** A recruiter or sports scout who solicits very young persons (1926 +) *See* ROB THE CRADLE

cram *modifier*: *a cram session/ cram book* *n* A very diligent student; GRIND (1900s +) *v* To study intensively for an upcoming examination (1803 + *British students*)

cram it *See* STICK IT

cramp someone's **style v phr** To be a hindrance or distraction: *Your blank stare cramps my style* [1917 +; Charles Lamb had written "cramps the flow of the style" as early as 1819]

crank modifier **1** Bogus; false: *crank letters/ crank phone calls **2** Pertaining to methamphetamine: *It's connected to a crank factory, and the case goes to New Jersey, so the FBI is all over it* **n** **1** An eccentric person, esp one who is irrationally fixated; NUT, FREAK: *That crank wants a yogurt shampoo/ All kinds of cranks took credit for the murder (1881 +)* **2** A crabby person **3** Methamphetamine, a stimulant; SPEED: *Ain't no calories in crank (1960s + Narcotics)* [perhaps fr the *crank* of a barrel organ, by which one can play the same tune over and over again; applied by Donn Piatt to the publisher Horace Greeley]*

cranked adj **1** Excited and eager; keen for action; CHARGED UP, CRANKED UP, PUMPED UP: *I was cranked. I was geared* **2** Angry; PISSED OFF: *He opened up the casket and, man, was he cranked about that! (1980s +)*

cranked up adj phr **1** CRANKED (1950s +) **2** Intoxicated by narcotics such as cocaine, esp by methamphetamine: *Was he cranked up when he did it? (mid-1980s +)*

cranking adj Excellent; wonderful; first-rate; COOL, RAD, TITS: *That party last night was so cranking (1980s + Students)*

crank on someone **v phr** To vent one's anger on; HASSLE: *She must have needed someone to crank on, and I was elected (1980s +)*

crank something out v phr To produce or make something, esp with mechanical precision and regularity: *with the kind of junk the studios*

are cranking out (1950s +)

crank someone or something **up** *v phr* **1** To get someone or something started; initiate action: *The people around Reagan talk about “We’ll crank him up on this”/ Let’s crank up the dog project tomorrow (1960s +)* **2** To make excited, eager, keenly ready for action, etc: *You better crank the quarterback up if you want this team to score (1950s +)*

cranky *adj* Very irritable; touchy: *The baby was cranky all day (1821 +)*

crap *interj* An exclamation of disbelief, disgust, disappointment, rejection, etc; FUCK, SHIT: *Oh, crap, I broke it again (1930s +)* **n** **1** Feces; excrement; SHIT: *The bad news is, I look like crap (1898 +)* **2** Nonsense; pretentious talk; bold and deceitful absurdities; BULLSHIT: *I’m not interested in stories about the past or any crap of that kind (1898 +)* **3** Offensive and contemptuous treatment; overt disrespect: *But I don’t take crap from anybody (1910 +)* **4** Anything of shoddy quality; pretentious and meretricious trash: *Her new show is pious crap (1920s +)* **v** **1** To defecate; SHIT: *Where’s the bathroom? I have to crap (1846 +)* **2** To lie, exaggerate; try to deceive: *You’re crapping me (1930 +)* [by extension fr Middle English *crap*, “chaff, siftings of grain, residue”] **See** ALL THAT KIND OF CRAP, FULL OF SHIT, SHOOT THE BULL

crap around *v phr* To waste time foolishly; lack seriousness; FUCK AROUND, MESS AROUND: *Quit crapping around and get to work (1930s +)*

crape-hanger *n* A habitually morose person; pessimist; KILLJOY, PARTY-POOPER, WET BLANKET [1920 +; fr the earlier funereal practice of hanging

swaths of *rape* as a sign of mourning]

crap game *See* FLOATING CRAP GAME

craphouse *n* Outhouse; privy

crap list *See* SHIT LIST

crapoid *adj* Disgusting; nasty; wretched; CRAPPY: *Clover said they were crapoid for thinking that* [1970s + ; fr *crap* plus the suffix *-oid*, which became increasingly popular from the 1960s]

crapola *modifier*: *the latest trends in crapola entertainment *n* Lies and exaggeration; BULLSHIT: *odious even by the usual standards of feminist crapola/ grinding out the old heartfelt crapola* (1950s +) [fr *crap* plus suffix *-ola*]*

crap out *v phr* **1 To lose; fail** (1930s +) **2 COP OUT** (1950s +) **3 To succumb to exhaustion**; CRASH, SACK OUT: *Then come back up here and crap out in that polofield-size bed* (1940s +) [fr the failure of a crapshooter to make the winning point, and to roll 2, 3, or 7 instead]

crapped (out) *adj* Finished; dead: *dogs crapped out from barking*

crapper *n* **1** A toilet: *We'd just like to know if the governor of the state is aware of that damned thing in the crapper* (1920s +) **2** A person who regularly lies and exaggerates; a boaster and self-advertiser: *I call your great guru a mean little crapper* (1940s +) **3** Something disgusting, nasty, or shoddy: *Oh, Mondays are a crapper* (1970s +) [fr *crap*]

crappy *adj* **1** Of inferior quality; shoddy: *the crappiest shoes I ever had*

2 Very unpleasant; nasty: *Don't you feel crappy? (1846 +)*

crapshoot *n* A risky gamble; something very chancy: *But who knows? It's such a crap shoot that nobody can really call it/ Such reforms would subject students to a crapshoot (1970s +)*

crash *n* **1** The empty feeling, depression, etc, felt when a euphoric intoxication ends; LETDOWN: *The "crash" from coke is grim (1960s + Narcotics)* **2** A collapse of a securities market **v** **1** To break into a building; enter by force: *Hoover's men crashed Doc's apartment (1920s +)* **2** To rob a place, esp by breaking in; CRACK (1920s +) **3** To gain admittance to some desired category or milieu: *In LA she tried to crash TV (1922 +)* **4** (also **crash the gate**) To go to a party or other event uninvited or without tickets (1922 +) **5** To sleep or live at a place for a day or so, usu without invitation: *I heard about this place and hoped I could crash here for a day or two (1960s + Counterculture)* **6** To go to sleep (1960s + Counterculture) **7** To lose consciousness from narcotics or alcohol (1960s + Students) **8** To fail suddenly: *The spacecraft's No 1 computer "crashed" or shut down/ computers that can alert a mainframe owner to an impending computer "crash" (1970s + Computer)* **9** To lose a significant portion of value in a short time, as with securities

crash and burn *v phr* **1** (also **crash in flames**) To fail entirely; BLOW IT: *You'd think his presidency had already crashed in flames* **v** **2** To collapse from exhaustion; POOP OUT: *I was just about to crash and burn (1970s +)*

crash-and-dash *See* SMASH-AND-GRAB

crash cart *n phr* A hospital cart with drugs, defibrillator, etc, summoned in cases of cardiac arrest: *Get the crash cart. We've got a code blue in 516A* [1970s+ Medical; probably based on *crash wagon*, an airport ambulance or emergency vehicle, so called from the 1930s]

crashed *adj* Drunk (1970s+)

crasher *n* A person who attends a party or event uninvited: *ruined by crashers*

crash pad *n phr* A place to sleep or live for a day or so, esp for young people traveling about more or less aimlessly and with little money: *discouraging intinerant filmmakers, homeless poets, and hangers-on of all kinds from using the room as a crash pad* (1960s+ *Counterculture*)

crash program (or project) *n phr* An intense and extraordinary effort to a specific end: *Getting the refugees housed needed a crash program* [1940s+; fr the urgency of a submarine's *crash-dive* ordered in extreme danger; *crash-dive* dates from about 1918]

crash with someone *v phr* <1> To do the sex act with someone; sleep with someone; BOFF, BONK, BOP: *You crashed with my sister* (1990s+) 2 To sleep at someone else's home: *crashed with my sister for a while*

crate *n* 1 A car, bus, airplane, etc, esp an old rickety one • Seems to have been used for airplanes before cars; this may be because early airplanes were literally wooden and cloth *crates*: A "crate" is a "junker" with one surge left (1920+) 2 A jail (1920s+ *Hoboes*) *v* To

arrest and jail: *We crate Major and they'll go. But they won't leave him there (1990s +)*

◁**crater-face** or **pizza face** or **zit-face**▷ **n** A person with an ugly face, esp due to acne: *crater-faces along the wall*

crawfish **v** To renege; retreat; BACK our: *He started to crawfish when he realized who the competition was (1842 +)*

crawl **n** **1** A dance; HOP (1920s +) **2** Text that scrolls up the television screen, esp explaining what happened to the characters of a “based on fact” docudrama: *And a crawl going up the screen saying she's pleaded no contest/ The use of crawl to finish a quasi-historical story (1960s +)* **v** ◁**1**▷ To do the sex act with; mount • Actually used by the 1890s to mean “mount and manage a horse”: *I finally crawled Mary Jane Cummings last night (1940s +)* **2** To reprimand severely; CHEW OUT: “To crawl” meant what Second World War troops meant by “chew out” (WWI Army) **See** PUB CRAWL

crawl (or come) out of the woodwork **v phr** To appear, materialize, interfere, etc, as or like something very loathsome: *A lot of them are weirdos who just crawled out of the woodwork/ Any time there's a juicy scandal a lot of creeps come out of the woodwork [1960s + ; fr the notion that worms, spiders, maggoty creatures, rats, etc, dwell in hidden places]*

crawl with **adj phr** To be well provided with: *The place was suddenly crawling with cops (1576 +)*

crazy **adj** Excellent; splendid; COOL: *If you like a guy or gal, they're cool. If they are real fat, real crazy, naturally they're real cool (1940s +)*

Jazz musicians) **n** An insane or eccentric person; LOONY: *We're going to prevent the right-wing crazies from bombing and destroying (1867 +)* **See** LIKE CRAZY, STIR CRAZY

-crazy combining word Inordinately devoted to or manic over what is indicated: *boy-crazy/ kill-crazy/ speed-crazy*

crazy about (or over or for) adj phr Very enthusiastic about; infatuated with; NUTS ABOUT: *I'm crazy about Ronnie (1904 +)*

crazy as a loon (or a coot or a bedbug) adj phr Insane; NUTTY: *If you think that, you're crazy as a loon* [first form 1845 +, third 1832 +; fr the *loon's* or *coot's* cry, like an insane laugh, and the *bedbug's* frantic rushing about when exposed]

crazy bone n A point on the elbow where the ulnar nerve passes near the surface, resulting in a sharp tingling sensation when the nerve is knocked

crazy like a fox adj phr Very bright and canny (1908 +)

crazy quilt n phr Something confused and patternless; a hodgepodge
• Originally a bed quilt made of odd bits and pieces of cloth: *The Crazy Quilt of American Politics/ More bizarre turns in the last decade, relations among Iran, Iraq, and the US form a crazy quilt (1880s +)*

creak v To show signs of wear; be near collapse: *indications that their marriages are creaking (1930s +)*

cream n A white person; PADDY: *He was a "cream" in a car full of home boys and bloods from the black projects (1980s + Black)* **v** 1 To cheat or deprive someone of something, esp by silky glibness: *I got*

creamed out of the hotel spot in Ohio/ a smoothie who wolfed on a friend and creamed his lady (1920s +) **2** To do very well against; overcome; CLOBBER: *You didn't stop by just to tell me how you creamed the Irish (1929 +)* <**3**> To be sexually aroused, esp so as to secrete sexual fluids, either semen or lubricants • *Cream* has meant “semen” since at least the middle 1800s: *He thinks we're gettin' all agitated over here creamin' in our drawers/ It made me cream in my panties, isn't that fun? (1940s +)* **See** ICE CREAM, ICE CREAM HABIT

CREAM *n* Money [1990s + Black teenagers; fr cash rules everything around me]

creamed *modifier* Utterly defeated; outscored by a great amount: *creamed UConn in the Big East tournament*

<**cream** one's jeans (or silkies)> **v phr** To become sexually excited; exude sexual fluids: *any idea how them ladies cream their silkies watching a muscular and handsome guy (1940s +)* **See** CREAM

cream puff *n phr* **1** A weakling; SISSY, WIMP: *Opponents might get the idea Lemon is a cream puff (1930s +)* **2** Something for sale, esp a used car in splendid condition and a tremendous bargain: *before you believe, much less see, any of the “creampuffs” in the classifieds (1940s + Salespersons)*

creampuff hitter *n phr* A weak hitter (1950s + Baseball)

creased *adj* Exhausted: *totally creased from this work*

creative accounting *n phr* Fraudulent or dubious bookkeeping; falsification of financial records in imaginative ways: *secret takeover deals, creative accounting just this side of Internal Revenue Service*

rules/ through some very creative accounting the corporations were both depriving governments of all sorts of taxes (1970s +)

cred *n* Credibility: *you've got no cred with me*

creek *See* UP SHIT CREEK

creep or **creepo** *n* A disgusting and obnoxious person; CRUD, JERK, NERD •

An isolated 1886 use seems to refer specifically to a cringing sycophant rather than a generally repulsive person: *The man is nothing but a creep/ poets loyal to Blake and Whitman, the "holy creeps"/ How to spend our money on making some creepo more creative in the growing world of weirdness* [first form 1930s + students, second 1950s +; origin uncertain; perhaps fr one who makes one's flesh *creep*; perhaps generalized fr one who cringes and curries favor]

-creep *combining word* A gradual increase in the thing named: *My cost-of-living allowance put me into bracket-creep on my income tax/ In Somalia we saw mission-creep (1980s +)*

creeper *n* **1** The lowest gear on a truck (1930s + *Truckers*) **2** A performer who moves closer and closer to the microphone (1940s + *Radio studio*) **3** A sneak thief: *He knew they couldn't be boosters or creepers, not flashing their bread the way these two were doing (1930s + Underworld)*

creepers *n* SNEAKERS (1900 + *Underworld*)

Creepers *n* or *interj* Christ • A euphemistic form: *Creepers, but that was a nasty moment (1940s +)* *See* JEEPERS CREEPERS

creepette *n* A female creep: *Surrounded by creeps and creepettes*
(1990s +)

creeping crud *n phr* Any disease, esp an unnamed and prevalent flulike disorder or an unexplained and nasty rash [WWII armed forces; a reduplicating expansion of *crud*]

creep-joint *n* A gambling meet that moves about to avoid arrest;
FLOATING CRAP GAME (1920s + *Underworld*)

creep someone out *v phr* To frighten and disgust someone: *flirt alert: My teacher's creeping me out* (1990s +)

creeps, the *n phr* **1** Sensations of fear and loathing, such that one's flesh seems to fornicate; revulsion; THE WILLIES: *The willies or the creeps. Call it what you like* (1864 +) **2** Delirium tremens: *He was not in with the creeps but with a broken leg* (1940s +)

creepy *adj* **1** Frightening; scary; HAIRY: *a creepy show about necrophiles* (1831 +) **2** Loathsome; disgusting: *a creepy little chap with an enormous bow tie* (1880s +)

creepy-crawly *adj* Loathsome; repellent; CREEPY: *The trio plunges into the creepy-crawly high life of Acapulco* (1880s +) *n* A nasty creature, esp the caterpillar, snake, or centipede sort: *the lair, maybe, of creepy-crawlies or a ghost* (1920s +)

cremains *n* The remains of a cremated body (1990s +)

cretin maggot *n phr* A despicable, disgusting person; DICKWAD, SCUMBAG
(1990s + *Teenagers*)

cretinoid modifier: *El Presidente, and others too cretinoid to mention* *n*

A cretin; idiot; SPASTIC [1970s+ College students; In the standard sense “resembling a cretin” attested from 1874]

cretinous *adj* Wrong; inoperative; wretchedly designed; BLETCHEROUS (1980s+ Computer)

crib *n* **1** A translation or a set of answers used to cheat on an examination (1827+ Students) **2** A place where thieves and hoodlums congregate; cheap saloon: *a sleazy crib on Second Ave* (1857+ Underworld) **3** A nightclub; DIVE: *I am singing for coffee and cakes at a crib on Cottage Grove Avenue* (1930s+) **4** Home (1960s+ Teenagers) *v* **1**: *He cribbed on the econ exam and got caught* (1778+) **2** To steal (1748+)

crib course *n phr* An easy college course; GUT COURSE: *Even at Stanford or Johns Hopkins the student in desperate need of a crib course can be sure to find one* [1970s+ College students; fr student senses of *crib*]

cricket *See* NOT CRICKET

Crikey *n* or *interj* Christ: *Crikey but it was a rum go* (1838+ British)

crill *n*: *The traffic gets worse in the spring and peaks by summer. The youths come to sell “crills,” or hits of crack wrapped in plastic, for \$15 to \$20* (1990s+)

crime *See* COPYCAT CRIME

crime, a *n phr* A misfortune; a shame: *It would be a crime if they elected that guy* (1895+ College students)

Criminy or **Crimus** (KRI mə nee, KRĪ mäs) *n* or *interj* Christ • A euphemistic form: *Criminy, I’ve been hoodwinked/ Crimus but it’s*

cold (1700+)

crimp *n* A restriction; obstacle: *He kept putting crimps into my plan v: I'll crimp him good with this nasty new rule* (1896+)

crip *n* 1 A cripple; GIMP: “Phony crips” as the fraudulent cripples call each other (1918+ *Hoboes & underworld*) 2 (also **crip course**) An easy course; CRIB COURSE, GUT COURSE, SNAP (1920s+ *College students*)

Cripes or **Cripus** *n* or *interj* Christ • A euphemistic form: *Cripes, what a rotten deal* (1910+)

crippin' *n* Forming and joining the sort of teenage drug-criminal street gangs typified by the Los Angeles Crips and Bloods; GANGBANGING: *Moe has been credited with bringing “crippin’” to Little Rock in 1987* [1980s+ *Street gangs; fr the gang name Crips*]

Crisco *n* An obese person; FATTY [1930s+; fr *Crisco*, trademark for a kind of shortening sold in cans, hence “fat in the can”]

crispy *adj* Suffering the morning-after effects of alcohol; HUNG OVER (1980s+ *Students*)

crispy critter *n phr* A person, car, etc, that has been very severely burned: *Some of the soldiers wandering the graveyard joked a bit. “Crispy critters,” said one, looking at the incinerated* *n phr* A person out of it from taking drugs or smoking marijuana: *no crispy-critters at the breakfast table, please* [1960s+ *Army; fr Crispy Critters, trademark of a breakfast cereal resembling little toasted animals*]

critter *n* An animal or person; CUSS, CUSTOMER: *That dog is a nasty critter/ Jane's a friendly old critter* [1815+; fr *creature*]

croak *n* A mixture of crack cocaine and cocaine: *A new wave of narcotics with names such as “croak” and “parachute” is hitting the nation’s streets (1980s + Narcotics)* **v** 1 To die: *I had the horse trained, then he up and croaked on me (1812 +)* 2 To kill; murder: *He croaked a screw at Dannemora (1848 +)*

croaker *n* A physician: *Don’t say “croaker,” say “doctor” (1859 +)*

croak *n* 1 A disliked person, esp an old person: *a lot of old croaks with baggy eyes (1876 +)* 2 A hypochondriac and whining patient (1950s + *Medical*) 3 A bargelike cargo ship made of cement (WWII Navy) 4 **CROCK OF SHIT**: *Spook the sponsors. What a crock/ Bonnie Loo giggles, “That’s a crock”* 5 Something, esp a program, that functions, but in an ugly or awkward manner (1980s + *Computer*) **v** 1 To hit; **CLOBBER, CLOCK**: *I crocked the orderly with a bedspring (1918 +)* 2 To ruin; wreck; kill; **QUEER**: *Calling the pitch lies, as you might imagine, crocked the job (1918 +)*

croaked *adj* Drunk (1927 +)

crockery *n* 1 The teeth (1900s +) 2 A pitcher’s arm that becomes lame and ineffective; Glass Arm (1950s + *Baseball*)

◁**croak of shit**▷ *n phr* Nonsense; lies and exaggerations; mendacious cant; **BULLSHIT**: *characterized reports of TJ Club activity in Weinstein’s campaign as a “croak of shit”/ Asked about Burns’s contention, he replied, “That’s a croak of shit” (1940s +)*

cromulent *adj* Appearing legitimate but actually being spurious: *These citations are indeed cromulent* [a word used by the schoolteacher, Miss Hoover, in an episode of *The Simpsons*, in

which she defended one made-up word by making up another]

cronk *adj* Drunk [1850 +; fr German *krank*, “ill”]

crook *n* A habitual or professional criminal; a consistently dishonest person: *The chief said, “I’m not a crook” (1870s +)* **v** To steal: *He crooked my socks (1940s +)*

crooked (KRŪŌ kəd) *adj* Dishonest; fraudulent; criminal [1870s +; Attested from 1225 in the larger sense “immoral, perverse, not orthodox”]

crooked arm *n phr* A left-handed pitcher; SOUTHPAW (1940s + *Baseball*)

crooker *See* PINKY-CROOKER

crook the elbow *See* BEND THE ELBOW

croon **v** **1** To sing in a relaxed and mellow style: *Rudy Vallee crooned his way to immortality* **2** To sing [1460 +; fr Scots dialect; related to Dutch *kreunen*, “groan, whimper”]

cropper *See* COME A CROPPER

cross someone **v** **1** To act contrary to someone’s wishes; attempt to thwart someone; contradict: *You must not cross me on this (1589 +)* **2** DOUBLE CROSS (1823 +) [both senses fr the distinction between “straight, square,” and *cross*; *cross* meant “illegal practices” by 1812] *See* NAIL someone TO THE CROSS

cross-dresser *n* A transvestite: *I’m constantly getting calls from cross-dressers who think I could use their talents (1960s +)*

crossed wires or **lines** *n* A misunderstanding: *crossing of the political*

wires (1930 +)

cross-eyed *See* LOOK AT someone CROSS-EYED

cross my heart or cross my heart and hope to die *sentence* I am telling the truth; I swear this is the truth: *I love you, baby. Cross my heart* (1908 +)

crossover modifier 1: *a series of absurd moments straight outta crossover hell* **2** Bridging some gap of medium, “lifestyle,” etc: *They created a lesbian comedy that is likely to be a crossover hit* (1990s +)
n A shift from one musical style to another or a deliberate mixture of disparate styles (1970s + *Musicians*)

cross someone's palm *See* GREASE someone's PALM

crossroader **n** A person who cheats at casino games, esp at slot machines: *one of the world's greatest crossroaders, or slot-machine cheats* (1950s + *Police*)

cross the aisle **v phr** To change one's affiliations, loyalties, politics, etc: *GM asked me to cross the aisle* [1980s + ; fr the aisle that separates Republicans and Democrats in both houses of Congress]

cross-up **n 1** An error, esp one caused by misunderstanding: *nobody's fault, just a cross-up* **2** DOUBLE CROSS (1940s +)

cross someone up **v phr** To confuse or deceive someone: *He had to cross the blockers up* (1940s +)

crotchcutter **n** A woman's bathing suit with leg openings that reach above the hips and even the waist: “Crotchcutters,” *the Village Voice* called the suits (1990s +)

crotch job *n phr* A book, television show, etc, of vulgar sensationalism: *The latter is a Fox crotch job* “Roseanne: An Unauthorized Biography” (1990s +)

crotch worker *n phr* A shoplifter who conceals loot under her dress (1970s + *Police*)

crow *n* **1** The eagle on naval insignia (*WWI Navy*) **2** A naval petty officer or captain who wears the eagle insignia (*WWI Navy*) **3** Chicken (*WWII armed forces*) *v* To boast in exultation; flatter oneself: *That poem’s nothing to crow about* (1522 +) **See** JANE CROW, JIM CROW

crowbait *n* An old, mean, or ugly horse (1857 +)

crowd *n* **1** A group, faction, clique, etc: *The Hip Sing and On Leong crowds* (1840 +) **2** An audience: *To watch Dick Enberg work the crowd* (1863 +) **See** GO ALONG WITH THE CROWD

crowd someone *v* To press or importune someone; encroach on someone’s territory or safety: *Don’t crowd me now, just let me handle it* (1839 +)

crowd someone **out** *v phr* To push or force someone by pressure as of a crowd: *I think he’s trying to crowd me out of the board membership* (1652 +)

crowd-surf *v* To be passed along overhead by the people at a “moshing” session: *The mosh pit started going full speed, complete with crowd-surfing* (1990s +)

crow-hop *n* A little forward jump made by an outfielder to increase the distance of a long throw: *Mike Knight shouted to him to use a*

crow-hop (1980s + *Baseball*)

crown v To hit someone, esp on the head; BEAN, CONK: *If she finds out she'll crown me* (1746 +)

crown jewels n The male genitals: *stay away from the crown jewels*

crucial adj Excellent: *crucial new music video* (1987 +)

crud or **crut modifier**: *It's in your ballpark, since you love the crud*

detail n 1 Any venereal disease (1920s + *Army*) 2 (also the **crud**)

Any disease, esp one featuring a rash or obvious skin eruption; any

unnamed disease: *I probably picked up the crud that's going around*

(1930s + *College students*) 3 A dirty and slovenly person; DIRTBALL: *I*

used to be a smelly crud (1930s +) 4 Anything loathsome or

markedly inferior: *His new show's a piece of crud* (1930s +) [fr

Middle English, "coagulated milk or other substance, curd," of

unknown origin] **See** CREEPING CRUD

cruddy adj 1 Nasty; loathsome; repellent: *a bar band playing cover*

tunes in a cruddy dive 2 Somewhat ill and indisposed; under par;

BLAH: *I'm not exactly sick, I just feel cruddy* (1940s +)

cruise v 1 To drive slowly and watchfully in the streets, walk about

vigilantly in bars and parties, etc, looking for a sex partner •

Streetwalkers were called *cruisers* by about 1900: *He started cruising*

the singles bars (1903 +) 2 To make a sexual approach: *I dated girls*

but at the same time was still cruising guys/ But what happens if, after

cruising chicks you find yourself with a more cerebral companion?

(1940s +) 3 To be smoothly going about one's business: *He was still*

"cruising nice and mellow" from an acid trip two nights before

(1960s +) **See** LETS BOOGIE, SHAKEDOWN CRUISE

cruise control, on *adj* or *adv phr* Behaving or seeming to behave smoothly without conscious effort; On Automatic: *In the 8th inning Clemens is on cruise control. Pitching with a 4-0 lead makes him all the more effective* [1980s + ; fr *Cruise Control*, a trademark device for setting the speed of a car so that it does not vary and one does not need to touch the controls]

cruise patrol *n phr* A strolling about, usu looking for girls [1980s + ; possibly influenced by *cruise control*]

cruising for a bruising *v phr* Looking for trouble; courting violence, esp while riding about in a car [1951 + Teenagers; perhaps fr or influenced by black English *cruising*, “strolling, parading,” attested by 1942]

crumb or **crum** *n* **1** A louse or bedbug (1863 +) **2** A blanket roll or pack; BINDLE (1910 + *Hoboes*) **3** A dirty, slovenly person; CRUD, DIRTBALL (1918 +) **4** A loathsome, contemptible person; CREEP (1918 +) [fr the resemblance of a louse to a *crumb*]

crumb-bun or **crumbbum** or **crum-bun** or **crumbum** *n* A contemptible person; BUM, CRUMB: *Unlike the other critic crumb-buns, he has a soul* [based on earlier *crumbbum*, “lice-ridden bum”]

crumbs *n* A very little, esp of money; a pittance; CHUMP CHANGE, COFFEE AND CAKES, PEANUTS: *Hell no. I won't work for crumbs—I want bread* (1856 + , but current 1950s +)

crumb (or crum) up *v phr* **1** To spoil; confuse; LOUSE UP, MESS UP: *He tried too hard and crumbed up the whole thing* **2** To clean clothing

thoroughly, esp to delouse (*WWI Army*)

crummy or **crumby** *adj* **1** Infested with body lice; lousy (1850s+) **2** Loathsome; disgusting; LOUSY: *I'd be dead of the dirty monotony around this crummy neighborhood (1850s+)* **3** Of inferior quality; shoddy; CHEAP: *This crumby razor doesn't work/ Where'd you get that crummy camera? (1850s+)*

crunch modifier: PARKS: *It's Crunch Time in the Havens* **n** **1** A crisis; a desperate climax; SQUEEZE: *Then came the political conventions that summer, and more crunches/ A "crunch" is characterized by a skyrocketing of interest rates and a choking off of the availability of credit/ The "crunch" between press and Government is inevitable in American affairs (1930s+)* **2** A kind of exercise for the stomach, in which one pulls the head off the floor while lying on one's back: *Actress Julianne Phillips keeps her stomach flat by doing 6,000 "crunches" a week (1990s+)* **v** **1** To process, usu in a wearisome way ((1980s+ *Computer*) **2** To study intensely; PULL AN ALL-NIGHTER (1980s+ *Students*)

cruncher *See* NUMBER CRUNCHER

crunching *See* NUMBER-CRUNCHING, NUT-CRUNCHING

crunch numbers *v phr* To do arithmetic or mathematics; calculate: *But if the general reader is up to crunching some numbers, Sportsbiz could be a pleasing ticket to understanding the money in sports (1980s+ Computer)*

crunchy (also **crunchy granola, granola**) *adj* Having a healthy diet and way of living; natural; earthy: *She's a crunchy granola girl/ drew*

directly on their college days at Connecticut's slightly crunchy (as in granola) Wesleyan University (1980s + Students) **n** A person who is disagreeably intent on environmental matters, personal bodily simplicity, walking in the forest, etc • The term altered to pejorative as the student ethos altered and “political correctness” became repellent: *crunchy granola: a person who is emotionally or temperamentally still living in the 1960s/ Hippie parents, you know. Rill crunchy (1990s + Students)* [fr the 1876 trademark of a “cooked, granulated wheat”; *crunchy*, candylike modern versions of the cereal were much prized by some elements of the 1960s counterculture]

crunk or **krunk** **modifier** **1** Out of control; crazy and excited: *crunk during Spring Weekend* **2** Drunk **3** Hip and cool: *crunk CD*

crush **n** **1** A passing infatuation: *That's a crush, Manny is love (1895 +)* **2** A thick crowd; heavily crowded place (1806 +) **v** To humiliate someone; reduce someone to helpless dismay: *Her snub crushed me (1610 +)* **See** HAVE A CRUSH ON someone, ORANGE CRUSH

crushed **adj** Ugly; BUCKLED, PISSUGLY (1990s + Teenagers)

crust **n** Bold audacity; gall; CHUTZPA: *You've got a hell of a crust assuming I'll go down there (1890s +)* **See** the UPPER CRUST

crusty **adj** Gruff; surly; ill-tempered; FEISTY: *Crusty George Meany. The downturned lips, the jowls, the half-closed lids, all were dour (1834 +)*

crut **See** CRUD

crutch **n** **1** A container for a hypodermic needle (1960 + Narcotics) **2** ROACH CLIP (1960s + Narcotics)

crybaby modifier: *The Georgetown basketball team has continued its crybaby act* **n** A person given to weeping or lamenting at the least adversity, esp from self-pity (1852+)

cry in one's beer v phr To indulge in a session of lamentation or weeping; feel keenly sorry for oneself: *You can't make something like this make you cry in your beer* (1940s+)

crying See FOR CRYING OUT LOUD

crying jag n phr A fit of uncontrollable weeping, often accompanying drunkenness: *Florence got regular crying jags, and the men sought to cheer and comfort her* (1904+)

crying shame, a n phr A great misfortune; a very distressing thing; DIRTY SHAME: *That's a crying shame. I'll have to go see him* (1881+)

crystal or crystal meth n Narcotics in powdered form, esp amphetamines; SPEED (1960s+ *Narcotics*)

crystalhead n 1 A person addicted to amphetamines; SPEEDFREAK (1960s+ *Narcotics*) **2** A follower of New Age beliefs; a New Ager (1980s+) [second sense because such persons prize crystals for various putative powers]

cry uncle v phr To admit defeat and give up: *don't cry uncle after one round* (1918+)

C-section n A Caesarean section: *I took three weeks off for a C-section/ Although doctors have long advised against repeated C-sections, the high rate has continued* (1980s+)

C-sex n Computer sex; sexual talk, provocation, etc, on a computer

network (1990s +)

C-Span-head *n* A devotee of the cable-television channel *C-Span*, a channel showing political events, conferences, and discussions (1990s +)

◁**ct** or **CT**▷ *n* COCK-TEASER

CTD *adj* Nearly dead [1980s + Medical; fr *circling the drain*, that is, about to go down]

cub¹ *modifier*: *a cub reporter/ cub professor* *n* 1 A novice reporter (1890s + Newspaper office) 2 Any novice or apprentice (1840 +) [fr *cub*, “the young of certain animals”]

cub² or **cubby** *n* A room or dwelling; PAD: *Let’s go to my cub* [first form 1546 +, second 1860s +; origin uncertain; related to Low German of the same meaning; the 1500s form refers to an animal’s stall or shed; these senses are preserved more often in black English than in standard English]

cube *n* 1 (also **cubesville**) A very conformistic and conventional person; SQUARE (1950s +) 2 A portion of LSD, hashish, or morphine: *He wanted a couple cubes, two cubes I had* (1950s + Narcotics)

cubed out *adj phr* Filled to capacity (1980s + Military)

cubehead *n* A frequent user of LSD [1950s + Narcotics; fr sugar *cube*, into which LSD can be soaked before taking]

cubes, the *n phr* Dice; a pair of dice: *He chose to stake his hopes on one throw of the cubes* [The use is very, very old: the word *cube* derives from the Greek word meaning “a die for gambling”]

cuckoo or **coo-coo** *adj* Crazy; very eccentric; NUTTY: *Where do you get these cuckoo ideas? (1918 +)* **n** A crazy or eccentric person (1581 +) [perhaps because of the bird's monotonous, silly-sounding call]

cuddle-bunny **n** An attractive young woman, esp one who is generous with sexual favors (1940s + *Teenagers*)

cuddle chemical **n phr**: *Oxytocin, the 'cuddle chemical,' seems to control a woman's pleasure during orgasm, childbirth, cuddling and nursing her baby (1990s +)*

cuddle (or cozy) up to someone **v phr** To become friendly or cozy with someone: *Now we have the Senator cuddling up to his former opposition (mid-1700s +)*

cueball **n** A man or boy with a bald, shaven, or close-clipped head (*WWII armed forces & students*)

cuff **v** **1** To borrow money from someone, usu in an urgent way **2** To charge something, esp on an expense account: *No man feels he is getting ahead until he can cuff a few tabs on the firm* **3** To put handcuffs on someone: *Cuff him and book him, Flanagan (1693 +)* [1920s +; first two senses fr the notion of keeping track of debts by notations on the cuff of one's shirt] **See** OFF THE CUFF, ON THE CUFF, PUT THE CUFF ON SOMEONE

cuffo or **cufferoo** *adj* Free of charge; nonpaying; on credit: *not a spending party, strictly cufferoo/ before you caught your cuffo flight (1930s +)*

◁**cuff one's meat**▷ **v phr** To masturbate: *He'd still be cuffing his meat in Spain (1970s +)*

cuffs *n* Handcuffs (1663+)

Cuisinart modifier: *written in Cuisinart prose, language-by-committee: wooden and self-parodic n* Anything that obliterates distinctions and creates homogeneity: *Europeans chafe at depositing their identities into the EC Cuisinart to be homogenized into bland Euro-mush* [1980s+; fr the trademark of a well-known food slicer and blender]

culture vulture *n phr* An enthusiastic devotee of the arts and of intellectual pursuits, esp a pretentious one: *Culture vultures to the contrary, there is more integrity to the guy* (1940+)

◁**cum**▷ *See* COME

cume (KYUM) *n* The cumulative academic average of a student: *He didn't care about flunking, and she would say "And what about your cume?"* (1960s+ College students)

◀**cunt**▶ *n* **1** The vulva (1325+) **2** Sexual favors and indulgence; ASS, FUCKING: *But some of their daughters were giving away more cunt than Dixie was selling* (1670s+) **3** A woman: *Why didn't he spin off this stupid cunt* (1920s+) **4** A fellow male one dislikes, esp a homosexual: *And this one is from Max, the cunt* (1920s+)

◀**cunthead** or **cunthead**▶ *n* A despicable person; BASTARD: *you cunthead, you wretched fart* (first form 1940s+, second 1960s+)

◀**cunt-hair**▶ *n* A very small amount or distance; minute amount; SMIDGEN, TAD: *knows when it's off center, even when it's only a cunt hair off* (1920s+)

◀**cunt-lapper**▶ *n* A person who does cunnilingus; MUFF-DIVER (1920s +)

◀**cunt-lapping**▶ *n* Cunnilingus: *induced Maurice White to advocate cunt-lapping (1916 +)*

◀**cunt-struck**▶ *n* Dominated by a woman; HENPECKED, PUSSY-WHIPPED (1893 +)

cupcake modifier Weak; soft; WIMPISH: *On cupcake opponents: It doesn't matter who you play. When you cross those black lines you should come out and play hard (1990s +)* **n 1** An eccentric person; NUTBALL: *regarding puppeteers as kind of weird cupcakes who play with dolls/ the publishing cupcake who nailed you on the couch and then fired you (1970s +)* **2** An attractive young woman; CHICK: *Flossie was a saucy blonde cupcake then/ In her don't-think-I'm-just-another-cupcake suit, Geraldine A. Ferraro gave a pep talk (1930s +)*

cup of coffee n phr A very short visit or tenure with a team or in a major league: *After his years with the Tigers, the outfielder had a cup of coffee with the Yankees in 1950 and the Giants in 1952/ I just wanted a cup of coffee, I just wanted my foot in the door (1900s + Baseball)*

cup (or dish) of tea, one's n phr One's special taste, predilection, etc; THING: *Harlem is his forte and his dish of tea (1920s + British)*

cuppa n a cup of: *cuppa joe (1934 +)*

cups See IN one's CUPS

curbstone v To pretend to sell a car for a private person while actually selling it for a dealer (1990s + *Car dealers*)

curdle *v* To offend; disgust: “*It curdles me*” = “*I loathe it*” (1940s+)

cure *See* TAKE THE CURE

curl someone’s **hair** (or **toes**) *v phr* To shock or appall • A somewhat earlier sense is “to injure; batter”: *The prices here will curl your hair* [1940s+; fr a supposed reaction to intense fear]

curlies *See* HAVE SOMEONE BY THE SHORT HAIRS

currency *See* SOFT MONEY

curse, the *n phr* A woman’s menstrual period; menstruation: *Is it any wonder that menstruation is commonly called “the curse”* (1920s+, and probably earlier)

curtain *See* BAMBOO CURTAIN

curtains *n* Death; disaster; the bitter end: *It looked like curtains for Ezra then and there* [late 1800s+; fr the final *curtain* of a show; or perhaps fr the crape *curtains* formerly hung by undertakers at the dead person’s door]

curvaceous *adj* Having a generously formed female body; BUILT LIKE A BRICK SHITHOUSE, STACKED (1935+)

curve ball *n phr* Something tricky and unexpected; a sly maneuver: *Barring another last-minute curve ball from Lorenzo, Ueberroth is expected to win the battle for Eastern Airlines* (1940s+)

cush (KOO^hSH) *n* Money; cash: *They’ve put up their good cush to send me on tour* [late 1900s+; probably fr *cash*]

cushion *n* 1 One of the bases in baseball; BAG (1940s+) 2 Anything,

esp money, kept as a safeguard against hard times: *He kept one bank account just as a cushion (1950s +)* **See** the KEYSTONE, WHOOPEE CUSHION

cushy (KŪSH ee) **adj** **1** Easy; easeful; supplying comfort and pleasure: *I landed a cushy post, a soft sinecure at the foundation* **2** Fancy; luxurious; HIGH-FALUTIN, POSH: *I may not know a lot of cushy words [1915+ British; perhaps fr Hindi *khush*, “pleasure,” or Romany *kushto*, “good,” or perhaps fr a shortening of *cushiony*]*

cuspy adj Neat and clean; elegant; efficiently designed [1980s+ Computer; fr *commonly used system program*, a program designed for wide use and typically with a useful simplicity]

cuss n A man; fellow; GUY • Most use since the 1860s [1775+; a shortening of *customer*; or perhaps “one who curses”]

customer n A person; COOKIE • The word has a tinge of disapproval: *a tough customer/ She’s a shrewd customer [1580s+; perhaps an expansion of *cuss*]*

cut adj **1:** *cut whiskey/ heavily cut cocaine* **2:** *a brutally cut film/ a cut version* **3** Muscular: *cut abs* **4** Circumcised: *not cut and neither is he* **n** **1:** *Anybody with more than four cuts flunks* **2** A share or portion, esp of criminal or gambling profits (1900s+) **3:** *How much of a cut did you make?* **4:** *Welles had surrendered the right of final cut in his contract* **5:** *What a nasty cut she gave me* **6:** *That wasn’t a snub, it was a cut* **7:** *I made the cut!* **8** A turn; time; CRACK, SHOT: *Have a cut at it yourself (1940s+)* **9** Swing at a baseball: *What a thunderous cut that was!* **10** A phonograph record or side, or a separate band on a record: *Osmond will perform cuts from “Donny Osmond” (1930s+)*

11 An opinion or interpretation; viewpoint; SLANT, TAKE: *I got a different cut from an American general (1990s +)* **v 1** To absent oneself from without permission or legitimate excuse: *She cut choir practice twice/ to cut class (1794 + British university)* **2**: *They cut the million eight ways* **3** To dilute something, esp whiskey or narcotics: *They cut the pure stuff before they sell it on the street (1920s +)* **4** To shorten a movie, book, manuscript, etc (1865 +) **5** To edit a film or other script (1913 +) **6** To recur to a scene shown before • The dated form is *cut back*: *Cut back to Jazz at Lincoln Center (1913 + Movies)* **7** To injure someone with an insult or sarcasm: *That crack really cut me (1582 +)* **8** To ignore someone pointedly, esp an acquaintance: *Next time I saw him I cut him (1634 +)* **9** To remove someone from a team, cast, group, etc • The date reflects cowboy use for removing some cattle from a herd: *I'll be happy if Coach doesn't cut me (1880s +)* **10** (also **cut it, cut it out**) To stop doing something; desist • Usu an irritated command: *Cut the crap, Martinez (1859 +)* **11** To leave; depart: *Let's cut. We ain't no more than just time, providing we step lively (1632 +)* **12** To speed; BARREL: *and "cut" about the streets like Tom Thumb's coach (1855 +)* **13** To swing at the ball (1940s + *Baseball*) **14** To outdo someone; best; surpass: *Lydia Lunch, who I feel cuts Yoko on every possible level (1880s +)* **15** To do something well; GROOVE (*Black 1940s + fr jazz musicians*) **16** To make a phonograph record, CD, or tape recording; record: *He cut a couple of demos yesterday (1937 +)*

cut, the See MAKE THE CUT

cut a (kut AY) See CUT ASS

cut above *modifier* Of a superior status: *thinks she's a cut above the other neighbors* (1800s +)

cut someone a break *v phr* To give someone special favor: *He petitioned Judge Michael Wallace to cut me a break* (1970s +)

cut (or crack) a deal *v phr* To make or conclude an arrangement; transact an agreement: *Doesn't it make more sense to cut a deal with the Soviets?/ The city has done its entrepreneurial turn by cutting a deal with the Republicans in which it must approve all souvenirs* (1970s +)

◁**cut a fart**▷ *See* LAY A FART

cut a figure *v phr* To be important; be imposing; make an impression: *I cut quite a figure in this town, but nowhere else* (1759 +)

cut and dried (or dry) *adj phr* Regular, predictable, and uninteresting; pro forma (1710 +)

cut-and-paste *modifier* Crude; improvised; haphazard; SLAPDASH: *a slapdash, cut-and-paste feel*

cut and run *v phr* To leave; depart, esp hastily: *If you hear a whistle, cut and run at once* [1704 +; fr the *cutting* of the anchor cable in the swift departure of a ship]

◁**cut someone a new asshole**▷ *v phr* To rebuke someone harshly; reprimand severely; REAM (1970s +)

◁**cut ass (or a)**▷ *v phr* To leave; depart; HAUL ASS, SHAG ASS (1950s +)

cutback *n* A reduction or decrease: *no cutback in prices* (1940s +)

cut back v phr To reduce; decrease: *They'll cut back the interest rate* (1940s +)

cut bait v phr To cease some activity; stop; discontinue: *Westway Trial: Lawyers Cut Bait* (1970s +) **See** FISH OR CUT BAIT

cut corners v phr To be lazy and take a shortcut; to find an easier and usually cheaper way of doing something: *Don't cut corners or you will not get another contract*

cut someone or something down to size v phr To counter and neutralize; deflate: *A few words from the judge cut him down to size* (1930s +)

cute adj 1 Shrewd; sly; tricky (1730s +) 2 Disrespectfully frivolous; SMART-ASS: *Don't be cute with me, you slimy pimp* (1950s +)

cute as a bug's ear (or as a button) adj phr Very attractive; pretty; DISHY (first form 1920s +, second 1940s +)

cutes, the n phr 1 Arch and simpering behavior; kittenish ways: *Lina began flapping her dress to give herself air. Then she got the cutes and asked if that was allowed/ Some of the musical background, like the narration, also suffers from the cutes* 2 The tendency or habit of constant joking; tasteless frivolity: *born with an incurable case of the cutes* (1940s +)

cutesey or cutesie adj Designedly attractive in a pert way; overtly charming: *and the children cutesy freaks/ Dutch doors, partly ivy-covered, and mostly cutesy n: The author oversimplifies everything and gets carried away with his own cutesies* (1970s +)

cutesy-poo or **cutesy-pie** *adj* Designedly arch and simpering to a nauseating degree: *saying anything narsty about so cutesy-poo an endeavor/ McWilliams writes in a cloying cutesy-pie style*

cutie or **cutey** or **cuty** *n* **1** A person or thing that is charming, attractive, clever, etc: *I'm no beauty, but am counted a cutie (1917+)* **2** A person who is shrewd, deceptive, and wily: *Watching a cutey spar with an ordinary dull fighter (1920s+)*

cutie-pie *n* A very attractive person, esp a doll-like woman: *my new cutie pies (1940s+)*

cut-in *n* The right to share something: *We've each got a cut-in on the profits (1931+)*

cut in *v phr* **1** To intrude into a conversation or discussion; barge in (1819+) **2** To take someone's partner away while dancing (1896+)

cut someone in *v phr* To award someone a share, esp of winnings, loot, etc: *They cut me in for 25 percent of the take (1930s+)*

cut it *v phr* To achieve or finish something; succeed; HACK IT: *They've been warned that a string group won't cut it with jazz fans/ But I think that you probably could cut it (1960+ Jazz musicians)*

cut it up *v phr* To analyze and discuss something; take a close look: *Come on, guys, cut it up (1950s+)*

cut something loose *v phr* To give something up; free oneself from something: *I want to save some bread so I can cut the hustling thing loose altogether (1970s+ Black)*

cut one's losses v phr To make the best compromise in a losing situation; salvage or extricate at least something: *You'd better sell right now and cut your losses*

cut no ice (or smoke) v phr To have no influence or effect; make no difference: *His Nobel Prize don't cut no ice with me/ but that doesn't cut any smoke with the Gov (1895 +)*

cut someone off v phr To drive abruptly in front of someone in traffic: *He says she cut him off at the toll booth, so he shot her (1970s +)*

cut oneself off at the knees v phr To disable oneself; SHOOT oneself IN THE FOOT: *I don't want to cut myself off at the knees by giving figures (1970s +)*

cut someone off at the knees v phr To deflate or reduce someone, esp surprisingly; TAKE someone DOWN A PEG: *the nebbish with a disarming wit that could cut you off at the knees (1970s +)*

cut-offs n Pants, usu blue jeans, cut off above the knees and left to unravel (1970s +)

cut (or turn) off someone's water v phr To subdue someone; deal decisively and damagingly with someone: *I just smiled sweetly and turned off his water (1950s +)*

cut of one's jib, the n phr One's general character and appearance (1790s + *fr nautical*)

cut-out n A person, business, etc, used to conceal the identity or purpose of a secret operation; COVER: *The firm operated as a cut-out,*

or front, for the FBI's purchase/ He can serve as your cut-out (1960s + Espionage)

cut out v phr **1** To leave; depart, esp hastily: *So you think you're cutting out? You're not leaving until I leave with you (1797 +)* **2** To stop doing something; desist: *If you cut out the booze maybe it'll work (1900 +)*

cut one's own throat v phr To ruin oneself; to cause harm to oneself; SHOOT oneself IN THE FOOT: *If you try to get him that way you'll cut your own throat (1583 +)*

cut someone's papers (or orders) v phr To prepare and distribute official papers such as warrants, writs, assignment orders, etc: *They're still cutting her papers [1970s + Police & Army; probably fr the cutting, perforation by typing, of a duplicating-machine stencil]*

cuts n Well-defined muscles, esp of the upper body: *cuts on that guy*

cut someone some slack v phr To stop pressuring or importuning someone; let someone be; GIVE someone A BREAK: *Clinton should lie low for a while, and the rest of us should cut him some slack/ I probably cut him more slack than I have with other guys (1980s +)*

cutter See CAKE-CUTTER, COOKIE-CUTTER, DAISY-CUTTER, FOG-CUTTER, PISS-CUTTER, RUG-CUTTER

cut the cheese See CHEESE

cut (or cut up) the melon (or the pie) v phr To divide and share out receipts, profits, loot, etc (1930s +)

cut the mustard v phr To succeed; be qualified; CUT IT • Very often in the negative: *Those groups have special vested interests. And that's*

not gonna cut the mustard [1907 + ; probably fr *cut*, “achieve,” and *the mustard* in the earlier slang sense of “the genuine thing, best thing,” perhaps based on the fact that *mustard* is hot, keen, and sharp, all of which mean “excellent”]

cut the (or a) rug *v phr* To dance, esp in jitterbug style (1930s + *Swing talk*)

cutthroat *adj* Very harsh and barbarous: *a cutthroat game/ cut throat competition* (1567 +)

cutthroat defense *n phr* A courtroom defense in which two counsels work against each other: *The two defense counsels were working in opposition to each other—a cutthroat defense, as it is known* (1990s +)

cut throats *v phr* To lower corporate costs by reducing the number of employees; downsize: *new philosophy: cutting throats is the best way of cutting costs* (1990s +)

cut to the chase *v phr* (also **go straight to dessert**) To go to the essential matter; focus on what is most important: *It grows late, and we must cut to the chase, but further attention to the Blue Jays here is not out of place/ Want to write irresistible love letters? As you write, cut to the chase, broach the erotic. Share astonishingly intimate secrets/ Let’s go straight to dessert, Marco* (1990s +)

cut two ways *See* WORK BOTH WAYS

cut-up *adj* Upset; hurt; distressed: *She was pretty cut up about not getting a paper* (1844 +) **n 1** A prankster; practical joker; antic rogue: *Uncle is a cut-up, owner of all kinds of gimmicks* (1880s +) **2** An energetic and entertaining person: *He was a great cut-up. He*

could dance a bit, sing better than average, and had a sense of comedy (1880s +)

cut up v phr **1** To behave frivolously; be rowdyish; HORSE AROUND (1837 +) **2** To divide profits, loot, etc (1930s + *Underworld*) **3** To speak ill of; analyze maliciously; insult: *Or they can collectively “cut up” the girls they see around (1759 +)*

cuty See CUTIE

cut Zs See COP ZS

cuz n Cousin

◁**cuzzy**▷ **See** COOZ

CYA See COVER one's ASS

cyber - combining word Having to do with computers and computer operations: *cybergroup, cybermuffin, cyberphobe, cybersex* [late 1980s +; fr Greek *kyber*, “rudder”; used by the mathematician Norbert Wiener in 1948 about his work on automatic control]

cyberporn or **compu-smut n** Pornography on computer networks: *Last week it approved a ban on cyberporn (1990s +)*

cyberpunk n **1** A kind of science fiction, mode of discourse, set of attitudes, etc, that combines scientific interests, esp computers, with the punk ethos: *The book was pieced together from cybernetics and punk. Within this odd pairing lurks the essence of cyberpunk/ Cyberpunk caters to the wish-fulfillment requirements of male teenagers (mid-1980s +)* **2** A person who admires computers, esp one who uses them recreationally (*late 1980s +*)

cyberslut *n* A wanton woman dressed in futuristic garb: *Betsey Johnson's vinyl-clad cyberslut (1990s +)*

cyberspace *n* The putative or apparent "space," be it mental, electronic, or "virtual," in which computer phenomena, operations, and experiences take place; in particular, the universe of computer networks [mid-1980s +; seemingly coined by the science-fiction writer William Gibson and used in his 1986 book *Count Zero*]

cyberthief *n* A computer hacker who breaks the laws against entry into private databases, telephone networks, etc: *A Most-Wanted Cyberthief Is Caught in His Own Web (1990s +)*

cycle, the *See* HIT FOR THE CYCLE

czar *n* A person appointed or elected to have great authority over a certain sport or other area; the commissioner of a sport or government department: *baseball czar/ czar of boxing/ drug czar* [1890s +; fr the title of the Russian emperors; used as the nickname of T B Reed (d. 1902), authoritarian Speaker of the House of Representatives]

czarina *n* A female czar: *The AIDS czar or czarina will probably work out of the White House (1990s +)*

D

D *n* A dollar **See** BIG D, TAKE A D, THREE D

DA (pronounced as separate letters) *n* **1** District Attorney (1920s +) **2**
A ducktail haircut (1951 +)

daaa **See** TAH-DAH

dab **See** SMACK

dab hand *n phr* An expert; a skilled person; an adept: *He is reportedly a dab hand at setting lofty prices* [1828 + British; fr late 1600s **dab**, “an expert,” of unknown origin]

dad *n* **1** An old man • Used as a disrespectful term of address toward older men. The similar term *pop* is not similarly disrespectful:
Okay, dad, outta the way and you won't get hurt (1950s +) **2** God • Used euphemistically as an element in various old-fashioned mild oaths like *dad-blamed* (1670s + **See** HO-DAD)

dad-blamed or **dad-blasted** *adj* (also **dag-blamed** or **dag-blasted**)
Wretched; accursed; DARN: *Git outta my dad-blamed way* (1840s +)

dad (or **dag**) **burn** *interj* An exclamation of surprise, irritation, frustration, etc • A euphemism for *goddamn*: *Well, dad burn it, come on* (1829 +)

daddy *n* **1** A male lover, esp one who keeps a younger mistress; SUGAR DADDY (1920s + *Black*) **2** The most respected man in a field; cynosure; dean: *Gary Cooper, the daddy of all cowboys (1901 +)* **See** DISNEYLAND DADDY, HO-DAD

Daddy-o or **daddy-o** *n* **1** Man; old guy; GUY • Used in addressing men, sometimes older men, respectfully and amiably **2** An older male patron, esp of a young woman; SUGAR DADDY: *like a young beauty swept out of a small Nebraska town by some Hollywood Daddy-O (1940s + Bop talk)*

daddy track *n phr* An arrangement of work, working hours, etc, made by men who wish to spend more than the ordinary time with their children: *the Daddy Track, about devoted dads voluntarily choosing to temper their career ambitions (1990s +)*

daffy *adj* Crazy; NUTS: *He tries to convince her that she is not daffy [1884 +; fr British dialect daff, “fool, simpleton”; daffish is attested fr the 15th century]* **See** STIR-CRAZY

dag-blamed or **dag-blasted** **See** DAD-BLAMED

dag burn **See** DAD BURN

dagged *adj* Drunk

dagger **See** BULLDYKE

daggone **See** DOGGONE

dagnab **See** DOGGONE

◀**dago** or **Dago**▶ *adj* Italian *n* **1** An Italian or person of Italian descent • First used chiefly of Hispanics; noted as “chiefly Italians”

by 1900: *Hey, Fiorello, you're a dago* **2** The Italian language **3** A person of Hispanic birth or descent [1823 +; fr *Diego*, "James," used in the 17th century to mean "Spaniard"]

dah *See* TAH-DAH

daily dozen *n* A set of calisthenic exercises done daily; also, a set of routine duties or tasks

daily grind *n* The routine of everyday life: *ready for the daily grind*

daisies *See* PUSH UP DAISIES

daisies, the *n phr* The outfield (1940s + *Baseball*)

daisy *n* **1** A person or thing that is remarkable, wonderful, superior, etc; DILLY, DOOZIE, HONEY: *My new car's a daisy* (1757 +) <2> A male homosexual; PANSY (1940 +)

daisy chain *n phr* Sexual acts shared or partly shared by more than two people at the same time in the same place; group sex (1941 +)
v phr To connect; link; chain: *Up to 8 EXP-16's may be daisy-chained together for a total of 128 differential inputs* (1990s +)

daisy-cutter *n* **1** (also **daisy-clipper**) A grounder or very low line drive (1866 + *Baseball*) **2** A very low tennis shot (1897 + *Tennis*) **3** A horse that trots with its hooves near the ground (1791 +) **4** An antipersonnel bomb or mine that ejects shrapnel close to the ground (*WWII Army*)

dally *See* DILLY-DALLY

damage, the *n phr* The price; cost; esp a bill at a restaurant or bar (1755 +)

damaged *adj* Drunk (1851 +)

◁**damaged (or used) goods**▷ *n phr* A woman who is not a virgin:
Once they find out I have kids, they think of me as used goods
(1910 +)

◁**dame**▷ *n* A WOMAN; BROAD, DOLL (1900 +)

damn *adj* (also **damned**) Cursed; accursed; wretched: *What do I do with this damned thing?* *adv*: *You seem damn stupid all of a sudden*
interj (also **damn it**) An exclamation of disappointment, irritation, frustration, etc: *Damn, it's gone!* *v* To execrate; condemn; curse:
Damn this dictionary! (1770s +) *See* HOT DAMN

damn, a *n phr* Nothing; very little; A FUCK, A RATS ASS, A SHIT: *Oh, we don't give a damn for the whole state of Michigan; we're from O-hi-o*
(1760 +) *See* NOT GIVE A DAMN

damned *See* I'LL BE DAMNED

damned if you do and damned if you don't *adj phr* Condemned, whatever decision one makes: *Investigating is delicate: Companies feel they're damned if they do, damned if they don't* (1970s +)

damned (or damn) sight *modifier* Very much: *a damn sight saner than other people* (1928 +)

damn right *adj* and *adv phr* (also **damn skippy**, damn straight, **damn tootin'**) Certain; certainly; sure as shit: *Damn right I was mad, who wouldn't be?/ You're damn skippy. Let's go for the best record in the league/ Damn straight we used cowboy logic, if that's what you want to call it* (entry form 1940s +, probably much earlier)

See YOU'RE DAMN TOOTIN'

damn well *modifier* Certainly; definitely: *you know damn well I have to work (1941 +)*

damper *n* **1** A person or thing that depresses, takes the edge off joy, chills one's enthusiasm, etc: *The news was a damper on our hopes (1748 +)* **2** A cash register or till; cash drawer (1848 +) **3** A bank or money depository; treasury: *dropping bonds into the damper which are then sold to the public* **See** PUT A DAMPER ON

damp rag *n phr* A disappointment; a blighted hope: *That was a little bit of a damp rag (1940s +)*

damp squib *n* Something anticlimactic; something that fails to come to a conclusion; a fiasco: *his attempt at painting the house is something of a damp squib (1845 +)*

Dan **See** DAPPER DAN

dance *n* A fight between rival gangs; RUMBLE: *The kids have plenty of time for pushing a dance (1940s + Street gang)* **See** GET THE LAST DANCE, GO INTO **one's** DANCE, SONG AND DANCE, TAP DANCE

dance around *v phr* To improvise, tergiversate, etc, in order to avoid a question or issue; TAP DANCE: *Larson dances around the real issue of gun control/ There's always an owner willing to cave in or dance around (1970s +)*

dance card *n phr* A putative list of priorities, engagements, etc: *Kissinger's dance card that week included a party for Margaret Thatcher/ Suddenly, the Iraqi leader had maneuvered himself to the top*

of Mr. Clinton's dance card (1980s +)

dance off v phr To die, esp by legal execution: *If you don't dance off up in Quentin (1930s +)*

dance on air (or on nothing) v phr To die by hanging (*first form 1870s +, second 1800 +*)

dancer n A boxer who spends most of his time and energy nimbly evading the opponent (*1940s + Prizefight*) **See** GANDY DANCER, GO-GO GIRL

dander See GET ONE'S DANDER UP

dandy adj: *a dandy idea adv: He does it dandy/ We get on just dandy n*
A person or thing that is remarkable, wonderful, superior, etc •
Attested from 1784 in the form *the dandy: You should get one, it's a dandy (1880s +, very popular 1900 +)* **See** HOTSIE-TOTSIE, JIM-DANDY

dang adj (also **danged**) Wretched; nasty; accursed **adv** Absolutely; extremely: *You looked dang silly/ "Purchase what the customer intends to buy?" "Dang right"* **interj** (also **dang it**) An exclamation of disappointment, irritation, frustration, etc: *Dang, we missed the Welk show [1840 +; a euphemism for damn, which is regarded by some as taboo]*

dang, a See NOT GIVE A DAMN

danged adj Wretched; accursed; DAMN: *It can tell you almost anything, but the danged thing doesn't speak in English (1870s +)* **See** I'LL BE DAMNED

dap adj 1 Stylish; well-dressed; dapper (*1950 + Black*) 2 Aware; up-to-date; HEP: *You want somebody to know a man is sharp, is au reet,*

you say he's dap (1950+ *Black*) **n** A white person; PADDY (1930s+ *Students*)

dapper (or **fancy**) **Dan n phr** An ostentatiously well-groomed man, usu one not inured to hard work: *the fancy Dans, dressed fit to kill* (1940s+)

dark adj Closed; not in operation: *Monday is a "dark" day at Heinz Hall* (1916+ *Theater*) **See** IN THE DARK

dark horse modifier: a dark-horse candidate/ dark-horse odds n phr A person or team, esp in sports or politics, that seems very unlikely to win but might nevertheless do so (1842+ *fr horse racing*)

◀**dark meat**▶ **n phr** 1 A black person, esp a woman, regarded solely as a sex partner 2 A black person's body and genitals [1920s+; fr the distinction between the *white meat* and *dark meat* of a roasted fowl, attested from the 1850s]

dark-thirty See OH-DARK-THIRTY

◀**darky**▶ **n** A black person (1775+)

darn or dern or durn adj (also **darned** or **darnfool** or **derned** or **durned**) Wretched; nasty; silly: *sentimental songs, darnfool ditties, revival hymns adv: She was darn excited interj* (also **darn it** or **dern it** or **durn it**) An exclamation of disappointment, irritation, frustration, etc: *Darn, I've dropped my glockenspiel!* [1780s+; euphemism for *damn*, which is regarded by some as taboo; probably based on earlier *darnation*, "damnation," attested by 1798]

-darn- infix Used for emphasis: *absodarnlutely* (1918+)

darned *See* I'LL BE DAMNED

darning needles *See* RAIN CATS AND DOGS

darn tootin' *See* YOU'RE DAMN TOOTIN'

darter *See* BLUE DARTER, JOE-DARTER

dash *n* The dashboard of a car or other vehicle: *I keep a gun under the dash* (1867+) *See* SLAPDASH

dash it or **dash it all** *v phr* DAMN, DARN • Chiefly British use: *Dash it, old fellow, we're dished!* (1800+)

dat or **DAT** (pronounced as separate letters) *n* A tank-crew member [1970s+ Army; fr *dumbass tanker*]

date *n* **1** An engagement or rendezvous, esp with a member of the other sex (1885+) **2** A man or woman with whom one has an engagement or rendezvous: *He's her date for tonight* (1925+) *v*: *How many girls have you dated this week?* (1902+) *See* BLIND DATE, CHEAP DATE, HEAVY DATE

date someone up *v phr* To schedule a social engagement or rendezvous with someone

dawg *n* **1** A dog • A colloquial or dialectal pronunciation: *That dawg won't hunt* (1898+) **2** A close male friend: *you dawg*

dawn patrol *n phr* **1** The act of getting up very early in the morning, to get a head start on the day **2** Golfers or surfers who head out early to beat others to the course or waves [fr early days of military aviation, when flights were undertaken at dawn to

reconnoiter enemy positions]

day *See* HAVE A FIELD DAY, MAKE MY DAY, NINETY-DAY WONDER, NOT GIVE **someone** THE TIME OF DAY, RED-LETTER DAY

day-glo *adj* Blatantly gaudy; cheaply flashy: *smoldering pageant turns totally day-glo/ plenty of sequins and day-glo fur/ day-glo glamor* [1950s +; fr the trademark of a brand of paint that makes things glow under a black light and produces lurid, psychedelic color effects]

day late and a dollar (or dime) short, a *adj phr* Inadequate; overdue and lacking; too little too late: *Yankee traders will be a day late and a dollar short: Visa cards are already welcome in Saigon/ Clinton's attempt to explain Whitewater is several days late and a dollar short/ "Dante Jones is a day late and a dime short," Butkus said when the linebacker failed to cover Sterling Sharpe (1990s +)*

daylight *n* A clear and open space between two things, horses, players, boats, etc: *Daylight began to open between the two leaders/ He went into the line, but couldn't find any daylight (1820 +)* *v* To work at a second job during the day: *who is daylighting in an ad agency as a producer of commercials (1970s +)* [verb sense based on *moonlight*] *See* PUT DAYLIGHT BETWEEN

daylight robbery *n phr* An exorbitant price: *cost of that salad was daylight robbery*

day one *n phr* The first day; the very beginning of something: *You weren't happy doing this from day one*

dazed *adj* 1 Confused: *dazed and confused really is redundant* 2

Intoxicated

dazzle *See* RAZZLE-DAZZLE

dazzle someone **with footwork** *v phr* To impress someone with facile virtuosity: *Hailey's 10th novel is a literary example of an old boxing adage: If you don't have the power, dazzle them with footwork (1980s +)*

dead *adj* **1** Very tired; BEAT, POOPED (1813 +) **2** Not operating; not startable: *Damn battery's dead (1902 +)* **3** Ruined; destroyed; FINISHED, KAPUT: *As far as another chance goes, I'm dead/ The ERA's dead again (1400 +)* **4** Dull; tedious and uninteresting: *another dead sermon (1000 +)* **5** Lacking brilliance and overtones; flat; dull: *The trumpets sounded dead (1530 +)* **6** Absolute; assured: *It's a dead certainty he'll run again (1589 +)* *adv* Extremely; very much: *I'm dead broke/ dead set against it (1589 +)* *n* A letter or package that can neither be delivered nor returned • *Dead letter* in this sense is attested from 1703 (1950s + *Post office*) [the sense "absolute, assured, certain" probably developed fr expressions like Middle English *ded oppressed*, "completely overcome," 16th-century *dead drunk*, and others suggesting the inertness of death; when inertness suggested fixedness, unchangingness, certainty, etc, the term took on these present senses] *See* DROP DEAD, KNOCK someone DEAD, NOT BE CAUGHT DEAD, STONE DEAD, STOP someone or something DEAD IN someone's or something's TRACKS

dead air *n phr* A sudden and undesirable silence (1950s + *Broadcasting*)

dead as a dodo (or **doornail**) *adj phr* Absolutely lifeless; entirely

hopeless: *The Philadelphia Bulletin is dead, dead as a doornail (first form 1904+, second 1350+)*

◁**deadass**▷ **adj**: *There are so many deadass people out there, boring each other to death* **adv** Completely; totally: *You're deadass wrong when you say I got nothing to go on* **n** A stupid, boring person; an absolute dullard: *Get some action going among these deadasses in the loony bin (1950s+)* **See** GET OFF one'S ASS

deadbeat **n** A person who habitually begs or gets money from others, does not pay his or her debts, etc; MOOCHER, SCHNORRER: *a chance to demand immediate payment if the clerk looks like a deadbeat* **v** To sponge, loaf, etc: *Living off interest is not exactly deadbeating* [1863+; fr *dead*, “complete, completely” and *beat*, “sponger”]

dead beat **adj phr** Completely exhausted: *My poor ass is draggin' and I'm dead beat (1821+)*

deadbeat dad (or daddy) **n phr** A man who is delinquent in paying child support awards: *The champion deadbeat dad of all owes over \$500,000 (1990s+)*

dead broke **adj phr** Totally without money; destitute (1842+)

dead cat **n phr** A lion, tiger, etc, that does not perform but is only exhibited (1930s+ *Circus*)

dead-cat bounce **n phr** A tiny rise or recovery after a decline: *Economists are arguing fiercely over whether it is a solid long-term recovery or just a dead-cat bounce* [Stock market 1990s+; fr a Wall Street saying that even a dead cat will bounce a little if you drop it from a high building]

dead center *n phr* A point at which nothing is happening: *Let's try to get this negotiation off dead center (1920s +)*

dead cert or **dead cinch**, a *n phr* A certainty; a foregone conclusion; SURE THING: *Given Mamet's Shavian morality, it was a dead cert that one of his heroes would wind up in Hell/ Just why a dead cinch should be the securest of any, I confess I do not know (first form fr horse racing 1889 +, second fr cowboys 1893 +)*

dead drunk *adj phr* Very drunk; stinko (1602 +)

dead duck (or **pigeon**) *n phr* A person or thing that is ruined; a GONER, gone goose: *Just one more little push and she was a dead duck/ Unless somebody would start this mob to the sugar bowl, I was a dead pigeon (1844 +)*

dead-fish *modifier* Limp; lifeless; unresponsive: *This yacht gives no sensory return. It's like getting a dead-fish handshake (1980s +)*

dead from the neck up *adj phr* Stupid; dull; KLUTZY (1920s +)

dead giveaway *n phr* An unmistakable and definitive clue: *His blushing was a dead giveaway (1882 +)*

deadhead *modifier*: *a deadhead cab/ deadhead freight train* **n** **1** A nonpaying spectator at a game, show, etc; FREELoader (1841 +) **2** A nonpaying passenger (1869 + *Railroad*) **3** A train, bus, tractor truck, etc, carrying no passengers or freight, usu returning from a paying trip (1911 +) **4** A stupid person; an incompetent; KLUTZ (1950s +) **5** An extremely boring person (1940s +) **v**: *I'll deadhead your hack back to the garage*

Deadhead *n* A devotee of the rock-and-roll group the Grateful Dead:
Tipper Gore, Deadhead and wife of Vice President Al Gore (1970s+)

dead heat *n phr* A tied race, contest, etc: *The election ended in a dead heat* [1796+ Horse racing; fr *dead*, “absolute, total, thorough,” related to the finality of death, and *heat*, “a single course of a race,” related either to a single firing or heating of a mass of metal, or to the heating of the body in running, or to both]

dead horse *See* BEAT A DEAD HORSE, FLOG A DEAD HORSE

dead hour *n phr* A college period during which one has no class: *By dead hour I didn't mean Professor Chapman's class, only that I had no class at all at 9 (1920+ College students)*

dead in the water *adj phr* Unable to move; stalled; defunct: *Right now, the economy is dead in the water, with 10.8 percent unemployment/ Once I saw you, you were dead in the water* [fr the image of a disabled ship, unable to proceed]

dead issue *n phr* A question or topic that really does not matter any more: *his drinking's a dead issue*

dead letter *n phr* A matter no longer of concern or currency; a bygone issue (1663+)

deadly *adj* 1 Boring; extremely tedious; dull as death itself: *I came prepared for a long and deadly meeting (1300+)* 2 Excellent; admirable; COOL (1940s+ *Swing talk*) *adv* Extremely: *She is deadly serious about it (1300+)*

dead man's hand *n phr* A hand containing a pair of aces and a pair

of eights [late 1800s + Poker; fr the tradition that Wild Bill Hickock held such a hand when Jack McCall shot him in 1876]

dead meat *n phr* A corpse: *We don't believe in geography, teacher. Say one more word and you're dead meat/ But tell that to Toddy and you're dead meat (1860s +)*

dead-on *adj* Exactly right; dead nut: *One reason for the dead-on quality is the way the experiences of the Buchmans parallel the lives of its creators (1889 + Marksmen)*

dead on arrival or **DOA** *adj phr* Invalid and rejected: *The President's budget was dead on arrival even before it got to Congress (1980s +)*

dead one *n phr* A dull, ineffective person; DULL TOOL (1904 +)

deadpan *adj*: *my wife's New York ironies or her deadpan humor/ This is known as the deadpan system of prevarication *n* **1** An expressionless face; POKER FACE **2** A person with an expressionless face: *Buster Keaton and Fred Allen were classic deadpans* *v*: *With kids packing his audiences, he deadpanned "I promise to lower the voting age to 6" (1930s +)**

dead pigeon *See* DEAD DUCK

dead president *n phr* Any US banknote [1950s + ; fr the fact that banknotes show portraits of US presidents]

dead ringer *n phr* An exact duplicate, esp a person who is the double of another: *He was such a dead ringer for my ex-boss [1891 + ; fr dead, "precise, exact," and ring in, "substitute, esp fraudulently," an early 19th-century slang term for gambling]*

dead sexy *adj phr* Very attractive; SEXY (1990s+ *Students*)

dead soldier (or marine) *n phr* **1** An empty or emptied bottle, esp a liquor bottle • *Dead man* in the same sense is attested from 1738 (1933+) **2** Food or plates of food only partially eaten: *on the way to the kitchen with the dead soldiers, or leftovers* (1920+)

deadsville *adj* Dull; boring: *the young people who always felt that cruises were deadsville* (1970s+)

dead (or bang) to rights *adv phr* With no possibility of escape or evasion; in flagrante delicto; red-handed: *was caught “dead to rights” and now languishes in the city Bastille* (1859+)

dead to the world *adj phr* **1** Fast asleep (1899+) **2** Drunk, esp stuporous from drink (1926+)

dead wagon *n phr* A hearse; vehicle for carrying dead bodies: *calling the dead wagon for a nice ride downtown to the morgue* (1894+)

dead white European male or **DWEM** *n phr* A type of person viewed as unjustly dominant in literature and culture, and hence archetypally despised by feminists, multiculturalists, etc: *The scientific method, largely produced by those hated demons, dead white European males/ challenged the established canon, which too often focused on DWEM’s (Dead White European Males)* (1990+)

deadwood *n* **1** Unproductive persons; lazy and useless staff **2** Anything useless, esp something useless that must be kept [1887+; fr the fact that *dead* or *rotten* wood does not produce much heat when burned]

deal *n* **1** A usu secret arrangement between politicians, rulers, business executives, etc: *He made a deal with the Republicans to suppress the charges (1860s +)* **2** Situation; thing in hand or at issue; affair: *Hey, what's the deal here? My car's gone/ The deal is that I'm tired of this sorry farce (1940 + Students)* **v** **1** To make arrangements, tradeoffs, sales, etc; WHEEL AND DEAL: *Sophie did all the dealing there (1500s +)* **2** To sell narcotics; be a peddler (1920s + *Narcotics*) **3** To pitch a baseball • In the game of hurling, *deal*, “throw the ball,” is attested by 1602: *The big lefthander deals a smoker (1970s + Baseball)* **See** BIG DEAL, GOOD DEAL, MAKE A BIG PRODUCTION, NO BIG DEAL, NOT MAKE DEALS, RAW DEAL, SWEETHEART DEAL

deal someone a **poor deck** **v phr** To treat someone cruelly and unjustly: *Take a thirty-year-old nurse who's bitter and thinks she's been dealt a poor deck (1970s +)*

dealer *n* **1** A person who makes a living from gambling, whether or not an actual dealer-out of cards • *Dealer*, “player who distributes the cards,” is attested from 1600: *A bookmaker, who is known as a dealer in refined usage (1950s + Gambling)* **2** A person involved actively and aggressively in a range of negotiations, trades, purchases, etc; WHEELER-DEALER (1950s +) **3** A person who sells narcotics; peddler; CONNECTION, PUSHER: *The “dealer” (not “pusher”) is the man who sells all this (1920s + Narcotics)* **See** JUICE DEALER

deal someone **in** **v phr** To make someone a participant; let someone share: *He heard we were going and said deal him in (1940s +)*

dealing **See** DOUBLE-DEALING

deal with **v phr** **1** To handle or cope with someone or something that

is a problem: *Deal with it* **2** To kill someone: *Tony dealt with him*

deaner *See* DEEMER

deano *n* A month [Underworld; perhaps fr *deaner*, *deemer*, etc, because a month is about as much of a year as a dime is of a dollar]

dearie *n* Dear person; cherished one • A somewhat vulgar term of address used chiefly by women: *If you wore it you can't return it, dearie* (1888 +)

Dear John modifier: Dear-John letter *n phr* A letter or other means of informing a fiancé, spouse, boyfriend, etc, that one is breaking off the relationship (*fr WWII armed forces*)

death *See* the KISS OF DEATH, LOOK LIKE DEATH WARMED OVER, SUDDEN DEATH

death on something or someone *adj phr* Very effective against something or someone; fatal to something or someone • Another nearly contemporary sense was “fond of; addicted to”: *The Senator is death on any suggestions of compromise* (1839 +)

death row *n phr* The part of a prison housing convicts condemned to death; dancehall (1940s +)

death warmed over *See* LOOK LIKE DEATH WARMED OVER

deb *n* **1** A debutante (1920 +) **2** A member of a girl's street gang: *The Assassins were organized with subgangs of “debs”* (1940s + *Street gang*)

◁**de-ball**▷ *See* DE-NUT

debunk *n* To clear away lies, exaggerations, vanities, etc: *The author neither glorifies nor debunks* [1923+ ; coined by W W Woodward in a book published in 1923]

decaf *n* Decaffeinated coffee; UNLEADED COFFEE (1980s+)

decaffeinated *adj* Inauthentic; enfeebled • Decaffeinization of coffee dates from the 1920s: *Dress like Hemingway, but confine yourself to drinking Lite: This decaffeinated style is horrible* (1990s+)

Decatur *See* EIGHTER FROM DECATUR

deceivers *See* FALSIES

decent *adj* Good, often very good: *makes a decent living*

deck *n* **1** The roof of a railroad car (1853+) **2** A package of narcotics; portion of a drug, esp three grains of heroin; BAG: *a deck of nose candy for sale* (1922+ *Narcotics*) **3** A package of cigarettes (1940s+) **4** A skateboard (1990s+ *Skateboarders*) **v** To knock someone down, esp with the fist; FLOOR: *Remember that guy I decked in the restaurant?* (1940s+) *See* COLD DECK, DEAL someone A POOR DECK, HIT THE DECK, ON DECK, WET DECK

decker *See* JOKER

decks a wash *adj phr* Drunk (1940s+)

decode *v* Explain: *Hans, will you please decode that?* (1950s+)

decompress *v* To be relieved of stress; regain equilibrium; relax; LAY BACK, unwind: *Hell'be whisked away to some undisclosed place where he can decompress* [1970+ ; fr the gradual lowering of atmospheric pressure as one returns from a deep underwater dive]

decruit *v* To discharge from a job; terminate employment; CAN, FIRE:
and when you're decruited, you're fired (1990s +)

deduck (DEE duck) *n* A deduction, esp from one's taxable income:
more deducks or we're dead ducks (1950s +)

deek *n* A detective; DICK (1920s +)

deely bopper or **deely bobber** or **beely bopper** *n phr* A small hat
equipped with bobbing wire antennas like those of an insect or
some extraterrestrial creature: *a decor of remaindered Deely Bobbers
and airsick bags (1975 +)*

deemer or **dimmer** or **deener** *n* **1** A dime **2** A niggardly tip **3** A
person who gives an insufficient tip; CHEAPSKATE **4** Ten [1910 + ; fr
dime, perhaps influenced by *deaner*, earlier British tramps' term for
"shilling"]

deep *adj* **1** Copious, esp well supplied with good athletes: *They may
not be very deep on the bench, but they're smart/ Fudgie's set was deep,
and fifty people showed up (1980s +)* **2** Intense; profound: *deep
reading of philosophy books* *See* KNEE DEEP

deep doo-doo (or **foo-f oo**) *n phr* Serious trouble; DEEP SHIT: *Deep Doo-
Doo or Shallow?/ You're in a bigger paradigm, and if you break that
you're in deep foo-foo (1980s +)*

deep end *See* GO OFF THE DEEP END, JUMP OFF THE DEEP END

deep freeze *See* IN COLD STORAGE

deepie or **depthie** *n* A three-dimensional movie: *The deepies released
so far have been gimmick pictures (1950s +)*

deep pocket modifier: *No matter what fathers (deep-pocket lads) and schoolteachers (wardens) may think of current slang, to teenagers it is real George all the way* **n phr** Wealth; available riches and financial security: *He felt more comfortable with the deepest pocket available/ a deep pocket, that of an insurance company (1951 +)*

deep pockets n phr Sources of much money; rich persons: *Why should she waste time with a turd-kicker like him when there are so many other applicants with deep pockets/ greater news-gathering assets than CNN and deeper pockets to offset losses*

◁**deep shit**▷ (or **trouble**) **n phr** Very serious trouble: *If they do that there'll be deep shit/ He was in deep shit with Big Lou (1972 +)*

deep six n phr A grave (1920s + *Underworld*) **v phr** To discard; jettison; throw overboard: *One White House disposal crew even unblushingly planned to deep six a file in the Potomac/ If any publication is deep-sixed, it will almost certainly be "The Car Book" (1940s + *Nautical*) [probably fr the combined notions of a grave as six feet deep and a fathom as six feet in depth] **See** GIVE something*
THE DEEP SIX

deep-think modifier: *do some deep-think social criticism* **n** Profound intellectuality • Used ironically: *a good example of university deep-think* [1963 +; probably based on *goodthink*, *crimethink*, and other terms coined by George Orwell in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*]

deep throat n phr An important source of secret information: *The real "deep throat" of the rumors was someone believed to be peripherally connected with Sony or Columbia* [1974 +; fr the name of a popular 1973 pornographic film, where the reference was to

fellatio, applied to the prime source of secret information in the Watergate affair, where the reference was to copiousness of speech]

deep water *See* IN DEEP WATER

def or **deaf** *adj* Excellent; wonderful; COOL, RAD: *She is really def/ He's got a def girlfriend* [1983+ Black; origin uncertain; perhaps fr black English (Jamaican) pronunciation of *death*, where the semantics would resemble those of *killer, murder*, etc; certainly interpreted by many as a shortening of *definite*]

defense *See* NICKEL DEFENSE

defi or **defy** *n* Defiance; notice of act of defiance • Use has not been continuous since the first attestation in 1580: *on a signboard, a defi to the On Leongs* [late 1880s+; apparently fr French *défi*]

defuse *v* To ease or eliminate the danger of something menacing • Extension of the 1940s use “to remove the fuse from an unexploded bomb”: *We might not stop it, but we might defuse it* (1950s+)

degree *See* THIRD DEGREE

déja vu all over again (DAY ZHAH VOO) *n phr* The repetition of an old story; a recurrence: *Listening to Bob Dole carp about the Democrats is déjà vu all over again* [1970s+; fr the French name for paramnesia or proamnesia, said to have been used by the baseball player and manager Yogi Berra in this reduplicated form; Mr Berra is a favorite putative source of such solecisms]

deke or **deke out** **v** To trick, esp by decoying; FAKE someone OUT:

My friend, you deked me. You're not supposed to do that/ deked out all the troopers [1950s+ Canadian hockey; fr decoy]

delay **See** GAPER'S BLOCK

delaying **n** To eliminate one layer of management in the effort to reduce costs: *Delaying, the smart-bomb version of cutback (1990s+)*

Delhi belly **n phr** Diarrhea (1944+)

deli or **delly** or **dellie** (DELL ee) **modifier**: *deli food/ treat from the deli counter* **n** 1 A delicatessen: *a nice smelly deli* 2 Delicatessen food: *Feel like deli for lunch? (1950s+)*

delight **See** BOILERMAKER'S DELIGHT

delish (dee LISH) **adj** Delicious

deliver or **deliver the goods** **v** or **v phr** To perform successfully, esp after promising; COME THROUGH: *It's a very tough assignment, but he thinks he can deliver/ He talks big, but can he deliver the goods? (1909+)*

Dem or **Demo** **adj**: *the Dem boss/ Demo congressmen* **n** A Democrat (*first form 1840+ , second 1793+)*

dementoid **adj**: *that was a totally dementoid movie* **n** A crazy person; CUCKOO, NUT, nutcake (1980s+ Teenagers)

demi-rep **n** A woman of somewhat shady reputation (1750+)

demo (DEH moh) **modifier**: *Let's try the demo disk* **n** 1 A record or tape made to demonstrate the abilities of musicians, the quality of

a song, etc: *Mark's got a good demo to pitch the new song with* (1950s+) 2 A computer disk or tape cassette made to demonstrate the abilities of a particular program: *I tried out their software demo before I bought their package* (1980s+) 3 A demonstration of protest or other conviction, esp by a large crowd with banners, etc: *a no-nukes demo* (1936+)

demolition derby *n phr* A scene or event of utter destruction and confusion: *Spectacular demolition derbies taking place in Russia, China, Cuba and Eastern Europe* [1950s+; fr a chaotic entertainment where drivers crash their old cars into each other until only one, the winner, is still running]

Denmark *See* GO TO DENMARK

den mother *n phr* The head and sometimes provider or supporter of a group of male homosexuals, often an older man: *They had a sort of den mother. A middle-aged writer type who had given up the straight life* [1970s+ Homosexuals; sardonic adoption of the term fr *den mother*, the adult leader of a group of Cub Scouts]

◁**de-nut** or **de-ball**▷ *v* To castrate (1940s+)

Denver boot *See* BOOT

depthie *See* DEEPIE

derail *v* To throw off the proper course; wreck: *He managed to derail the proposal just before Christmas* [1950s+; The source term, "To leave or cause a car or engine to leave the railroad tracks," was adopted fr French by 1850]

Derbyville *n* Louisville, Kentucky (1950s +)

dern *See* DARN

derned *See* DARN

derrick *n* A shoplifter (1908 + *Underworld*) *v* To remove a player from a game: *Shotton derricked him in favor of Cookie Lavagetto (1943 + Baseball)* [fr the notion of lifting on a *derrick*; the contrivance commemorates a Tyburn hangman of that name, who practiced about 1600]

designated something *n phr* A person formally appointed to a certain function • The date indicates the first use in American League baseball of the *designated hitter*: *‘Let us be your Designated Driver’ campaign, to keep drunk drivers off the road/ Dornan, the Bush campaign’s designated viper/ Dinkins was being treated this spring as a designated loser/ his minority whip and designated spitball thrower, Rep David Bonior of Michigan (1973 +)*

designer modifier Of high quality; bearing a famous label: *Ah, designer ennui (1960s +)* *n* A counterfeiter (1940s + *Underworld*)

designer drug *n phr* A synthesized narcotic, often of much higher potency than those produced from plants: *These new “designer drugs” or “super narcotics” are triply dangerous/ Out here urine testing has spawned the “designer” drug game (1980s +)*

desk jockey *n phr* An office worker: *Let some desk jockey in the home office envy you (1950s +)*

desperado *n* A person who gambles or borrows more than he can

pay, and is certain to default, or who gambles with money he cannot afford to lose • Such money is called *desperate* or *scared* [1950s + Gambling; fr earlier *desperado*, “outlaw, fugitive,” literally “desperate man,” fr Spanish]

detox (DEE tahx) **v** To free someone of a narcotics addiction; detoxify: *I jumped in and out of opium habits but eventually detoxed for good/ We can detox a heroin addict in three weeks (Narcotics)*

deuce **n** **1** A two of playing cards (1680 +) **2** Two dollars • Formerly, and still in Canada, a two-dollar bill (1920 +) **3** A two-year prison sentence: *did a deuce together at Joliet (1950s + Prison)* **4** A quitter; coward; petty thief (1940s + *Street gang*) **5** (also **deuce coupe**) A powerful or handsome specially prepared two-door car, esp a 1932 Ford (1940s + *Hot rodders*) **6** A table for two in a restaurant: *deuce in the corner* [hot-rod sense probably fr the *two* or *deuce* of 1932]

See ACE-DEUCE, FORTY-DEUCE

deuce, the **n phr** **1** the HELL (1776 +) **2** Forty-second Street in New York City, mecca for many teenage runaways; FORTY-DEUCE: *in the peep shows and urinals and bars of the Deuce (1970s + Teenagers)*

deuce and a half **n phr** A two-and-a-half-ton truck (*WWII Army*)

deuce of clubs **n phr** Both fists (1950s + *Reformatory*)

deucer **n** Two dollars; a two-dollar bill (1950s +)

deuce spot **n phr** **1** The second act in a vaudeville show (*Theater*) **2** Second place in a contest (1940s +)

deuces wild **n phr** A team’s situation with two men out, two strikes

on the batter, and two men on base [1980s+ Baseball; fr the dealer's call in poker that all *deuces* may be valued as any other card]

Devil See RED

devil, the See the HELL

devil-may-care *adj* Reckless; cavalier: *a devil-may-care insouciance* (1790s+)

devil of a time, a or the *n phr* A very difficult or annoying situation: *devil of a time untying those shoelaces* (mid-1700s+)

devil's bedposts, the *n phr* The four of clubs (1930s+ *Cardplayers*)

dew *n* Marijuana (1960s+ *Narcotics*) **See** MOUNTAIN DEW

dexie or **dexy** *n* A tablet of Dexedrine, trademark of a brand of amphetamine: *You can take dexies, but you can get hooked on them* (1950s+ *Students*)

dexter *n* A despised person who is a zealous student, computer user, etc; CHIPHEAD, PROPELLER HEAD: *A dexter, that's your basic nerd, dork, or pud* (1980s+ *Teenagers*)

DI (pronounced as separate letters) *n* A drill instructor; noncommissioned officer in charge of recruits (1913+ *Marine Corps*)

dialed in *adj* Concentrating; focused; zoned in: *It's hard to believe how fully she's dialed in* (1990s+)

dial something **out** *v phr* To put firmly out of one's mind; ignore

designedly: *All I had to do was concentrate on driving. I had a real excuse to dial it all out (1980s +)*

diamond in the rough *n phr* A person of exceptional qualities or potential but lacking refinement or polish; a wonderful and surprising specimen: *looked like a nerd, but rather was a diamond in the rough*

diamond lane *n phr* A highway lane designated for “high-occupancy” cars, esp for carpool cars: *The code in most states is that a carpooling vehicle can use the usually much faster diamond lane* [1990s +; because the lane is designated by *diamond*-shaped signs on the pavement]

diamonds *n* **1** (also **black diamonds**) Coal: *throwing diamonds in the firebox* (1849 +) **2** The testicles; FAMILY JEWELS [the second sense reflects the idea “precious stones”]

diarrhea of the mouth *See* VERBAL DIARRHEA

dib *n* **1** A share, esp a share of money: *I ought to collect the kid’s dib, too* (1829 +) **2** A dollar: *fifty sweet dibs* (1930s +) [probably fr *divvy*]

dibs *n* **1** Money: *How did you make your dibs?* (1807 +) **2** (also **dibs on**) A claim; a preemptive declaration: *It’s mine, I said dibs first/ Dibs on the front seat* [perhaps fr *dibstones*, a children’s game played with small bones or other counters]

dice *v* To jockey for position in a race: *I had no really sharp feeling about dicing with Parnelli* [1950s + Car racing; fr the notion of taking risks] *See* LOAD THE DICE, NO DICE

dicey *adj* Risky; perilous: *African investment is dicey/Updike indulged in many dicey curlicues/ the dicey art of writing a farce (1940s + British)*

dick¹ or **deek** *n* **1** A detective **2** Any police officer; BULL [1908 + ; fr a shortening and altering of *detective*]

◁**dick**²▷ *n* **1** The penis: *Now why don't you pull the weight down with your dick (1880s + British armed forces)* **2** A despised person; PRICK: *You dick! (1960s +)* **3** Nothing; SQUAT, ZILCH, ZIPPO: *So far we got dick/ Look, I didn't have any money, the Feds wouldn't do dick, nobody was helping out (1950s +)* **v** **1** To do the sex act with; SCREW: *If he went and dicked your twelve-year-old sister he wouldn't tell you all about it/ He was dicking everything that wiggled (1940s +)* **2** (also **dick around**) To potter or meddle; play; MESS, SCREW AROUND: *That's federal merchandise you're dicking with, right, marshal?/ still in the kitchen, dicking around with the sushi (1940s +)* [perhaps fr the nickname *Dick*, an instance of the widespread use of affectionate names for the genitals; perhaps fr earlier British *derrick*, "penis"; perhaps fr a dialect survival of Middle English *dighthen*, "do the sex act with," in a locution like "he dight her," which would be pronounced "he dicked her"] **See** CLIPPED DICK, DOES A WOODEN HORSE HAVE A HICKORY DICK, DONKEY DICK, LIMP-DICK, STEP ON IT

Dick **See** BIG DICK, EVERY TOM, DICK, AND HARRY

◁**dick-brained**▷ *adj* Stupid; crazy; NUTTY: *coke-snorting super freaks, dick-brained Bob Marley tribute, and jive ooh-la-la (1980s +)*

dickens *n* The devil; a devilish person: *felt like the dickens/ let the dickens out on Halloween*

◁**dickhead**▷ *n* A despised person; BASTARD, PRICK: *Why would I possibly want to check out a dickhead like you?/ Drum the dickhead right out of the Republican party (1960s +)*

Dickless Tracy *n* A female police officer [1963 + ; punningly from *dick* “penis” and the name of Dick Tracy, US comic-strip detective introduced in 1931 by Chester Gould]

◁**dicklicker** or **dickey-licker**▷ *n* A person who does fellatio, most often a male homosexual; COCKSUCKER (1940s +)

◁**dickoid**▷ *n* A despised person; DICK², PRICK: *Dickoids like Martin who snap like Wolverines on speed when they can't have a window seat (1990s +)*

dick someone over (or around) *v phr* To victimize and maltreat someone, sexually or otherwise; fuck someone over (1980s + *Students*)

dicty or **dickty** or **dictee** *adj* **1** Stylish; wealthy; CLASSY: *“Dicty” is high-class* **2** Haughty; snobbish; imperious: *These dickty jigs around here tries to smile* *n* A snob; aristocrat: *I don't want to be a dicty* [1926 + Black; origin unknown]

◁**dickwad** or **dickweed**▷ *n* A despised person; ASSHOLE, JERK, PRICK: *All right, you dickweeds, we gotta talk (1980s +)*

diddle *v* **1** (also **diddle around**) To waste time; idle; loaf (1825 +) **2** To cheat; swindle; victimize; SCAM (1806 +) **3** To alter illicitly or illegally; COOK, DOCTOR: *But I thought Tommy must have diddled the phone records (1980s +)* ◁**4**▷ To do the sex act with or to; SCREW: *Diddle your sister? Circle jerk? (1879 +)* ◁**5**▷ (also **diddle oneself**)

To masturbate (1950+) <6> To insert a finger into a woman's vulva; FINGERFUCK (1960+) 7 To correct or adjust a program in various small ways; TWEAK: *I diddled the text editor to ring the bell before it deletes all your files (1980s + computer)* [cheating sense said to be fr Jeremy Diddler, a character in the 1803 novel *Raising the Wind*, by James Kenney]

diddle something out of someone *v phr* To get something from someone by deceptive means: *diddled twenty out of her for errands*

diddler *n* A child molester; SHORT EYES (1980s + *Prison*)

diddle with *v phr* 1 To handle casually, idly, or nervously; play with: *Stop diddling with the silverware* 2 (also **diddle around with**) To interfere with; have to do with; FOOL AROUND WITH: *Don't diddle with that button, it controls the power for the whole building (1940s+)*

diddly or **diddley** (Variations: **do** or **eye** or **damn** or **poo** or **poop** or **shit** or **squat** or **squirt** or **whoop** may be added) *adj* Trivial; insignificant: *Tennis was a diddly sport back then/ If you had a choice between IBM or a diddly-squirt upstart* *n* Nothing at all; very little; ZILCH: *Rock critics don't mean diddley/ I don't know a diddly damn about theater/ And Hannibal, he didn't do diddly-squat/ They take this very seriously. It isn't just "diddley-eye" to them (1960s+)* **See** NOT GIVE A DAMN, NOT KNOW BEANS

diddlybop *n*: *They had a nice diddlybop at Gino's after work* *v* 1 To waste time; idle 2 To do something pleasant and exciting (1960s + *Students*)

diddy bag **See** DITTY BAG

didie *n* A baby's diaper (1902+)

DIDO (DĪ doh) *modifier*: *The DIDO principle still applies to its contents*
sentence A product can be no better than its constituents; esp, the validity of a computer's output cannot surpass the validity of the input; GIGO [1980s+ Computer; fr the abbreviation of *dreck in, dreck out*, "shit in, shit out"]

did you ever? *sentence* An exclamation of surprise or astonishment, contracted from "did you ever see such a thing?" (1840+)

die *n* To desire very strongly: *She was dying to become Miss Pancake* (1591+) **v 1** To laugh uncontrollably: *When he puts a lampshade on his head you could die* (1596+) **2** To be left on base at the end of an inning (1908 + *Baseball*) **See** CROSS MY HEART

died and gone to heaven **v phr** In paradisiacal euphoria; HAPPY AS A CLAM: *Looking around bug-eyed like she'd died and gone to heaven* (1890+)

die for something **v phr** To have a very strong desire for something: *I'm dying for a drink/ Kids die for Sugar Clops* (1709+)

die on someone **v phr** To die or cease to function, to the disadvantage of the speaker: *Damn motor died on me halfway up* (1907+)

die on one's feet **v phr** To become absolutely exhausted; carry on although one can hardly move (1940s+)

◁**diesel dyke**▷ *n phr* An aggressive, masculine lesbian; **BULLDYKE**: *The women regarded themselves either as hutches (alternatively diesel*

dykes and truck drivers) or femmes/ a man fighting with a diesel-dyke over a girl they both wanted

die standing up v phr To fail in a show or performance; BOMB
(1920s + *Show business*)

die with one's boots on v phr To die while still active and vital
(1873 +)

diff or dif n Difference: *What's the diff?* (mid-1800s +)

difference *See* the SAME DIFFERENCE

dfifference, the n phr A clear advantage; something that gives an advantage, esp a gun (1903 +) *See* CARRY THE DIFFERENCE

different animal (or breed of cat) n phr A different thing or person;
SOMETHING ELSE AGAIN: *This is a different animal/ In the pros you're dealing with a different breed of cat than when you're in the college scene*
(1970s +)

different strokes for different folks n phr A comment on the inevitable and tolerable variety of people and their ways: *Different strokes for different folks, I remarked/ Different strokes for different folks, he chirped mentally* (1970s + *Black*)

dig n 1 A derogatory, irritating, or contemptuous comment: *It wasn't quite an insult, more a dig* (1840 +) **2** An archaeological excavation (1896 +) **v 1** To interrogate or inquire vigorously: *She won't tell you, no matter how hard you dig* (1940s +) **2** To understand; comprehend: *Nobody ain't pimping on me. You dig me?* (1930s + *Black*) **3** To like; admire; prefer: *Do you dig gazpacho and macho?*

(1930s + Black) 4 DIG UP 5 To hear or see in performance;
CATCH: *dug a heavy sermon at Smoky Mary's last week (1930s + Black)* [the cool senses, originally black, are probably related to the early 19th-century sense, "study hard, strive to understand"] **See**
TAKE A DIG AT someone

dig at v phr To derogate; harass verbally; PUT DOWN: *Why are you always digging at me about my mustache? (mid-1800s +)*

dig dirt v phr gossip (1920s +)

digerati n Persons who use and enjoy computers; computer-literate people; CHIPHEADS: *Unix computers connect to the Well, a convivial gathering spot for San Francisco's digerati/ Wired offers in-depth reporting, fiction and profiles of the digerati [1990s +; fr digital plus literati]*

digger n 1 An Australian or New Zealander (*WWI Australian and New Zealand*) **2** GOLD-DIGGER: *She was just a plain digger (1920 +)* **3** A pickpocket (1930s +) **4** A person who buys tickets to be sold at prices higher than is legally permitted; SCALPER: *They use diggers, dozens of guys who stand in lines and buy the maximum (1970s +)*

diggety or diggity See HOT DIGGETY

digging See EASY DIGGING

dig in v phr To begin to eat: *It's on the table, so dig in (1912 +)*

dig oneself into a hole v phr To weaken or undermine one's own position, esp by a dogged defense; SHOOT oneself IN THE FOOT: *Every time the fool opens his mouth he digs himself deeper into a hole (1970s +)*

digits *n* A telephone number: *Did you get her digits*

dig out *v phr* To leave; depart; CUR OUR, SPLIT: *Supposing we dig out*
(1855 +)

digs¹ or **diggings** *n* Lodgings; quarters: *Your digs, or mine?* (1890s +)

digs² *interj* A exclamation of approval and affirmation; GREAT (1990s
+ *Students*)

dig someone or something **the most** *v phr* To like or prefer; have the
closest affinity: *Adam and I dig each other the most* (1950s +)

dig up *v phr* To find or discover, esp after effort: *She dug up a shirt
and we went out/ What sort of evidence have they dug up?*
(1860 +)

dike *See* DYKE

dikey *See* DYKEY

dildo or **dildoe** *n* **1** An artificial substitute for an erect penis
(1593 +) **2** (also **dill** by 1950s) A stupid and despicable person;
JERK, PRICK: *Yeah, I know that dildo. What's your problem with him?*
(1638 +) [fr Italian *diletto*, in the particular sense "a women's
delight"]

diller *See* CHILLER-DILLER, KILLER, THRILLER-DILLER

dillhole *n* A person lacking intelligence; DUMBASS; also, a person
lacking soul and thereby having no compassion or people skills: *Get
away from me you dillhole!/ Her old boss was a true dillhole* [fr TV
series *Beavis and Butthead* as a euphemism for *dickhole*]

dillion modifier: *I'd walk a dillion miles* **n** A very large sum; JILLION, ZILLION (1950s +)

dilly or **dill** **n** A person or thing that is remarkable, wonderful, superior, etc; BEAUT, LULU: *The last one is a dilly if you don't have an appointment* (1935 +)

dilly-dally **v** To idle; dither in an aimless or pointless fashion: *Folks who dilly-dally with dessert* (1741 +)

dim **adj** Stupid; uncomprehending: *Anybody who pays to watch these teams has to be considered just a bit dim* (1892 +)

dimbo **n** A stupid person; DIM BULB: *That dimbo probably couldn't find her way home from her own backyard* [1980s + Students; perhaps a blend of *dim* and *bimbo*]

dim bulb **n phr** A stupid person; DIMWIT: *a peculiar combination of dim bulb and bump-on-a-log/ Heroes meant to be swankily sexy tend to come off as tightlipped dim bulbs* (1920s +)

dime **n 1** A ten-year prison sentence (1960s + *Underworld*) **2** A thousand dollars, esp as a bet (1960s + *Gambling*) **v** (also **drop a dime**) To inform on someone; SING, SQUEAL: *Frankie would have been okay if somebody hadn't dimed on him* (1960s + *Underworld & prison*) [verb sense from the *dime* dropped into the pay telephone for the call to the police] **See** FIVE-AND- TEN, GET OFF THE DIME, NICKEL AND DIME, ON SOMEONE'S DIME, STOP ON A DIME, A THIN DIME, TURN ON A DIME

dime a dozen, a **adj** Very common; very cheap; in surplus: *Copycats are a dime a dozen* (1920s +)

dime bag or **dime** **n phr** or **n** Ten dollars' worth of a narcotic (1960s

+ *Narcotics*)

dime dropper *n phr* An informer; FINK: *Somebody that talks, turns state's evidence on you, a dime dropper (1960s + Underworld & prison)*

dime-note *n* A ten-dollar bill; TEN-SPOT (1940s +)

dime store *n phr* FIVE-AND-TEN (1920s +)

dime up *v phr* To offer a dime for a meal, then try to get the dime back as well as the meal (1920s + *Hoboes*)

dimmer *n* (also **dimbo**, **dimmo**) A dime; DEEMER: *Neither of us can make a thin dimmer (1910 +)*

dim view *See* TAKE A DIM VIEW OF someone or something

dimwit *n* A stupid person; BOOB: *She's the worst dimwit on campus (1917 +)*

din-din *n* Dinner: *kisses, candlelight, din-din, liqueurs (1900 +)*

dine (or lunch) out on *v phr* To receive hospitality on the basis of one's particular knowledge or experience: *She dined out all year on that little adventure in the mountains/Hitchens visited wartime Sarajevo once, two years ago. Ever since, he has been lunching out on the emotional and political insight he supposedly garnered (1923 +)*

dinero (dee NAIR oh) *n* Money: *That's gonna set you back mucho dinero [1856 +; fr Spanish]*

ding modifier Homeless: *in the ding camp at San Jose* **n 1** A blow; a buffet: *We get a ding a day from the Chinese (1825 +)* **2:** *She got six*

yeahs and five dings **3** A letter rejecting one's application for a job or interview: *most disappointed in the dings that come on postcards (1930+ College students)* **4** A dent: *Not a nick. Not a ding. Nary a scratch (1960s+)* **v 1** To go on the road as a hobo; BUM: *When you go bumming, you go dinging (1950s + Hoboes)* **2** To beg; BUM, PANHANDLE (1950s + Hoboes) **3** To vote against a candidate for membership; blackball • An 1812 sense was "to drop someone's acquaintance totally" (1930+ College students) **4** To administer a reprimand or an adverse appraisal: *If we dinged people, very seldom did they get jobs (1970+ Army)* **See** RING-A-DING-DING, RING-DANG-DO, RING-DING

ding-a-ling¹ adj: to maintain the dingaling Holly Goheavily manner of life/ It's the ding-a-ling capital of the universe (1930s+) **n** An eccentric person; NUT, SCREWBALL: *The impression left by all this is that Wolman and Kuharich must be a couple of ding-a-lings/great for teeny-boppers and cute little ding-a-lings (1930s+)* [fr the notion that such a person hears bells ringing in the head]

ding-a-ling² n The penis; COCK, DOODLE [1980s+; probably fr *dingus*]

dingbat n 1 An unspecified or unspecifiable object; something one does not know the name of or does not wish to name; DINGUS, GADGET: *I don't think any wire and glass dingbat is going to "oontz" out cheek-to-cheek dancing (1905+)* **2** A stupid person, esp a vague and inane simpleton; DIMWIT: *All in the Family was reexported to the BBC complete with "Polack pinko meatheads," "dingbats," and "spades" (1915+)* **3** Any of various typographic symbols used as decorations, separators, emphasizees, trademark and union-done indicators, etc (1930s+ *Print shop*) [first sense fr German or Dutch]

dinges, “thing”; second sense fr Australian *have the dingbats, be dingbats*, “be crazy”]

ding-dong *adj* Vigorous and spirited; KNOCKDOWN-DRAG-OUT • Used adverbially, “with a will,” by 1672: *A ding-dong battle is in prospect* (1870+) **n** 1 An eccentric person; DING-A-LING¹, NUT (1920s+) <2
▷ The penis; DONG: *couldn't find his own ding-dong if you told him to look between his legs/ Forget his ding-dong. Think of it as a technically superior game* (1940s+)

ding-donger *n* An energetic and aggressive hobo (1940s + *Hoboes*)

ding *modifier*: *He was in an 11-game dinger drought* **n** 1 HUMDINGER:
That was a dinger, chaplain (1809+) 2 A home run: *five hacks, five dingers/ The Brewers go into the afternoon with one dinger in more than two weeks* (1970s + *Baseball*) [fr an early (by 1500) sense of *ding*, “to surpass, excel”]

dinghead *n* A stupid person: *Shut it, dinghead*

dingleberry *n* A despised person; JERK, NERD • Re-Revived by 1980s students: *Tell that dingleberry I'm not here* [1920s+; originally one of several similar derogatory terms ending in *-berry*, for example, *huckleberry*, attested by 1835; in later use probably influenced by *dingleberry*, “a fragment of feces clinging near the anus”]

dingo *n* A hobo; tramp: *One dingo got a dollar* [1920s+ *Hoboes*; related to the hobo sense of *ding* and probably ultimately to the 17th-century British slang *dingboy*, “rogue, sharper”]

ding-swizzled *See* I'LL BE DAMNED

dingus *n* 1 Any unspecified or unspecifiable object; something one does not know the name of or does not wish to name; GADGET, GIZMO: *What's that dingus in the corner?* (1876 +) <2> The penis (1940s +) [fr Dutch *dinges*, of the same meaning, essentially “thing”]

dingy *adj* Goofy; loony: *a dingy move*

dink¹ *n* 1 A tiny cap worn by freshmen; BEANIE • *Dinky cap* is attested from 1893 (1920 + *College students*) <2> The penis (1880s +) 3 A despised person; DORK, JERK, PRICK: *Nor, he insists, does he believe that any witless dink could learn to play like Ringo Starr within a week* (1960s +) 4 Very little; nothing; DICK², ZILCH: *He knows dink about weapons* (1950s +) *v* To make small exasperating movements, tennis shots, etc • First example may reflect 1920s *dinky*, “a trolley car having a short route”: *after finding that the campaign was dinking along like a Toonerville trolley/ They're not letting the combination dink them into submission anymore/ He dinked the kid to death with lefthanded backspin junk* (1939 + *Tennis*) [fr *dinky*]

<dink²> *n* A Vietnamese; GOOK, SLOPE [Vietnam War armed forces; related to Australian *Dink*, “a Chinese,” perhaps fr *dinge* or fr *Chink*]

dink³ *n* A yacht's tender; dinghy [1900 +; probably fr *dinghy*]

dink⁴ *n* One of a childless couple, both of whom are employed: *a friend referred to two young professionals as “a couple of dinks”* [1986 +; acronym fr *double income no kids*]

dink⁵ *See* RINKY-DINK

dinkum *adj* FAIR DINKUM

dinky *adj* **1** Small; undersized • The earliest sense meant “small, neat, trim,” and is related to later college use *dink*, “a dude”: *a dinky foreign car/ dinky little town* **2** Inadequate; substandard: *What a dinky joint!* (1788 +)

dinner *See* SHOOT ONE’S COOKIES

dino¹ *modifier*: *In film, the dino craze looks to remain healthy for awhile* *n* A dinosaur: *a dino who wants to be a detective* (1990s +)

dip¹ *n* A pickpocket: *Since he seemed to remind me of a dip I’d helped bust years before* (1850 + *Underworld*) *v*: *Frankie dipped two men on the 37 bus* [fr *dipping* one’s hand into a pocket]

dip² *adj* *DIPPY* (1917 +) *n* **1** A stupid person; simpleton; *DIPSHIT*: *That goddamned dip’s worse than the Cowboys* (1920s +) **2** An eccentric person; *NUT*: *My grandmother was a woefully crazy lady, a bit of a dip* (1920s +) **3** A slovenly, untidy person; *DIRTBAG* (1960s + *Teenagers*)

dip³ *n* Diphtheria (1940s +)

dip⁴ *n* *DIPSO* (1940s +)

dip⁵ *v* *To chew tobacco or take snuff* (1848 +)

dip⁶ *See* DOUBLE-DIP, I’LL BE DAMNED, SKINNY-DIP

diphead *n* A stupid person; *DIP*², *DIPSHIT*: *That means “the Democrats are dip heads,” Phil* (1973 + *Students*)

dipped or <dipped in shit> *See* I’LL BE DAMNED

dippo *n* A stupid person; *DIP*², *DIPSHIT* (1970s +)

dippy *adj* Crazy; foolish; whimsically silly; *KOOKY*: *so strange and dippy*

as to have come from the brain of Tolkien/ Depardieu at his dippiest [1900 + ; origin unknown; perhaps fr *dip*, “head,” in the expression *off one’s dip*, “crazy”; perhaps fr *dipsomaniac*; perhaps fr Romany *divio*, “mad, madman”]

◁**dipshit**▷ or **dipstick modifier**: *The dipshit broads took their lives in their own hands/ Listen, you toadying dipshit scumbag* **n** A stupid, obnoxious person; **JERK**: *You dipshit dog/ The other guy is the dipshit/ We’re broke, dipstick* [1960s + ; *dipshit* is an emphatic form of *dip*²; *dipstick* may be a euphemism or may reflect putative *dipstick*, “penis”]

dipso **n** A drunkard; dipsomaniac; **LUSH**: *Madeline Kahn is his dipso wife, Gilda Radner his ditsy daughter/ But dipsos don’t count years; you take it day by day* (1880 +)

dipsy **adj** **1** Drunken; bibulous; alcoholic; **DIPSO**: *Beryl Reid’s appearance as a dipsy researcher* **2** Foolish; silly; **DITZY**: *Kelly, her dipsy counterpart at NBC* **n** **DIPSY-DOODLE** (1950s +)

dipsy-do **n** A curve ball that dips sharply; a downcurve: *[Babe Ruth] had good stuff, a good fast ball, a fine curve, a dipsy-do that made you think a little* (1940s + *Baseball*)

dipsy-doodle **n** **1** Fraud; deception; chicanery: *I opened the front door, leaving the key in the lock. I wasn’t going to work any dipsy-doodle in this place/ This dipsy-doodle allowed the Democratic candidate to preach a different sermon in every church* **2** A deceiver; swindler; **CON MAN**: *He’s a marriage counselor, this dipsy-doodle* **3** **DIPSY-DO** (*Sports*) **4** A fight with predetermined outcome; a fixed fight (*Prizefight*) **5** A

dance featuring dipping motions **v 1:** *That smooth chap might just have dipsy-doodled us* **2** To weave among players on the ice: *Kurri dipsy-doodled down center ice to the net (Hockey)* [1940s + ; most senses seem to have evolved fr the baseball *dipsy-do*, the semantic common thread being deception]

dipwad n A despised person; JERK (1970s + *students*)

◁**dip one's wick**▷ **v phr** To insert one's penis; do the sex act; SCREW:
You dipped your wick just like the rest of them (late 1800s +)

dirt n 1 Obscenity; pornography: *All you see in the movies these days is dirt* (late 1500s +) **2** Gossip; intimate or scandalous intelligence; SCOOP: *What's the dirt about your neighbors?* (1920s +) **3** A despicable person; scum; filth: *He's dirt, no better* (1300 +) **See** DIG DIRT, DISH THE DIRT, DO SOMEONE DIRT, EAT DIRT, HIT THE DIRT, PAY DIRT, TAKE SHIT

◁**dirtbag or dirtball**▷ **n 1** A garbage collector (*WWII armed forces*) **2** A despicable person; filthy lout; CRUD, SCUMBAG: *Those people in the store must have thought I was some kind of dirt bag/ Why don't you throw this dirtbag in jail, deputy?/ He ended up being chased down the hall by a dirtball with a knife* (1970s +) **3** A dirty, smelly patient brought into the emergency room off the street (1990s + *Medical*)

dirt bike n SCRAMBLER (1960s + *Motorcyclists*)

dirt cheap adj phr Very cheap: *dirt-cheap prices* **adv phr:** *buy it dirt cheap* (1830s +)

dirt me sentence Lower me to the ground (1990s + *Rock climbers*)

dirt track n phr The anus; a-hole, GAZOO, WAZOO: *Is your dirt track hanging hemorrhoids?* [1960s + ; a pun on the early 1900s phrase for

a racetrack with a dirt surface; hobo slang *dirt road* was semantically similar]

dirty adj 1 Corrupt; dishonest; shady • Often used of corrupt police officers: *If I was dirty, I would take what that Cadillac cost/ Maybe he's not dirty on Nijinsky, but he's dirty on something (1670+)* **2** Lewd; obscene; BLUE, RAUNCHY: *This dictionary dotes on dirty words/ Eschew dirty thoughts (1599+)* **3** Sexually insinuating in sound and intonation; CATHOUSE, BARRELHOUSE: *dirty blues (1920s+ Jazz musicians)* **4** Personally malicious or snide; nasty: *a dirty crack (1920s+)* **5** Addicted to narcotics (1960s + *Narcotics*) **6** Having narcotics in one's possession: *Cops did a bodyshake and he was real dirty (1960s + Narcotics)* **7** Well supplied with money; FILTHY RICH: *Paddy was dirty with fifteen thousand or so (1919+)* **8** Leaving much radioactive contamination or waste: *dirty bombs (1950s+)* **adv 1:** *They fight dirty/ play dirty* **2:** *He talks dirty* **See** DO THE DIRTY ON SOMEONE, DOWN AND DIRTY, QUICK-AND-DIRTY

dirty crack n phr A rude remark: *a dirty crack about his balding*

dirty deal n phr An unfair result: *dirty deal from the professor*

dirty dog n A nasty, sneaky person: *You're the dirty dog that snuffed my brother*

dirty laundry (or linen or wash) n phr Personal or family matters; intimate details: *I won't hang out our dirty linen in front of this bunch (1860s+)* **See** WASH one's DIRTY LINEN

dirty little secret n phr 1 Something shameful that must be concealed; an embarrassing fact: *Power has been a dirty little secret*

among modern economists **2** Anything held secret personally or communally because it is patently shameful; a skeleton in the closet: *Everybody wiH know the dirty little secret of American journalism/ Class Act: America's Last Dirty Little Secret* [phrase propagated by D H Lawrence, esp in his long essay "Pornography and Obscenity"]

dirty mind *n phr* A head full of sexual, malicious, and other reprehensible thoughts, fantasies, and implications (1930s +)

dirty-minded *adj* Inclined toward sexual, odious, or dubious notions (1930s +)

◁**dirty-neck**▷ *n* **1** A laborer or farmer **2** An immigrant (1940s +)

dirty old man *n phr* **1** A lecherous man, esp an elderly one; OLD GOAT (1930s +) **2** A male homosexual whose partner is much younger than himself: *Christopher is 20 years younger than Leo. He asks Leo to be his dirty old man* (1960s + *Homosexuals*)

dirty pool *n phr* Unethical and dubious practice; DIRTY TRICKS: *triggered ugly accusations of dirty pool* (1956 +)

dirty (or low-down dirty) shame, a *n phr* A person or thing that is much to be lamented; a pity; a disgrace: *He did? Ain't that a dirty shame?/ Man, you're a tow-down dirty shame, you're nasty*

dirty tricks *modifier: the Senate Watergate Committee's chief "dirty tricks" investigator* *n phr* Dishonest or underhanded practices, esp in politics; malicious tactics: *make into federal crimes many "dirty tricks" in presidential and congressional elections/ Mr Clarke called the indictment "one of the greatest political dirty tricks of all times"*

dirty work *n phr* Dishonest, unethical, underhanded, or criminal acts; SKULLDUGGERY

dis *v* (also **diss**; **on** may be added) To show disrespect; insult by slighting; CAP ON someone: *The boys on the bus were dissing that girl/ Yet “dissin’,” showing real or apparent disrespect, is cited as the motive in an amazing number of murders/ I’m tired of John dissin’ on her all the time (1980s + Black teenagers)*

disc jockey *n phr* (Variations: **deejay** or **Dee-Jay** or **DJ** or **dj**) A radio performer who plays and comments on phonograph records; also, the person who plays records at a discotheque: *the thunder-voiced DJ (1941 +)*

disco modifier: *show up for a disco party and fashion show* **n 1** A discotheque, a kind of nightclub where patrons dance to recorded music, sometimes with synchronized psychedelic and strobe lighting: *There’s not much jazzing around at the disco (1964 +)* **2** (also **disco music**) A musical style based on black soul music and marked by a strong rhythmic bass guitar (1970s +) **v**: *We discoed the night away*

discombobulate or **discomboberate** **v 1** To disturb; upset; BUG **2** To perplex; puzzle: *The fancy words discombobulated me (1830s +)*

discombobulated *adj* Disturbed; upset; weird: *In this discombobulated society, it is far easier to get a piano shipped out to sea and lowered into the water beside the drowning man (1830s +)*

discombobulation *n* The condition of being discombobulated: *the Skinner course responsible for their emotional discombobulation*

(1830s +)

disconnect *n* A disagreement; an unbridgeable disparity (as from a failure of understanding): *Disconnect. It means a breakdown in communication (1990s +)*

disease *See* FOOT-IN-MOUTH DISEASE

dish *n* **1** A particularly attractive woman: *This was going to be my favorite dish/ I love this book and I think its 80-year-old author is a dish (1920s +)* **2** A person or thing that one especially likes; what exactly meets one's taste; one's CUP OF TEA: *Now, there is a book that is just my dish (1900 +)* **3** The home plate of the baseball diamond (1907 + *Baseball*) **v** **1** Gossip; an item of gossip; to disparage; denigrate; DIS: *The President-elect played on the beach while his snobby neighbors dished/ We have no reason to do an anti-CBS film. There's no dishin' going on here (1940s +)* **2** To cheat; thwart: *I'm afraid that blackguard has dished us again (1798 +)* **3** To gossip; have an intimate chat; DISH THE DIRT: *She sat and dished with the girls/ Now I feel free to dish about First Hair (1920s +)* **4** (also **dish out**) To give; purvey: *He took everything we gave and dished it right back (1641 +)* **5** To pass the ball: *A goateed Magic in butt-tight shorts twists, whirls and dishes through his career as maestro of five NBA championships (1970s + Basketball)*

dish it out *v phr* To administer punishment, injury, or abuse: *Jenny, you can dish it out, but you can't take it (1930 +)*

dish of tea, one's *See* one's CUP OF TEA

dish out (or up) *v phr* **1** To distribute; issue: *The brand of drool they*

dished out/ What line are they dishing up today? **2** To inflict; give:
They dished her out a horrid trouncing (1652+)

dishrag *See* LIMP DISHRAG

dish the dirt *modifier*: *The first lady told her dish-the-dirt guests she called them together “to announce my candidacy”* **v phr** To enjoy a cozy chat about personalities: *So, dish the dirt. What was Hillary like in high school? (1920s+)*

dishwater *n* Weak and scarcely drinkable soup, coffee, etc (1719+)

See DULL AS DISHWATER

dishy *adj* Very attractive • Chiefly British use; the dated sense is “excellent, first rate; sharp, snaky, trim and slim, smooth”: *exactly what it is to be a dishy girl bored stiff/ We certainly don’t live in one of the dishier neighborhoods/ With a new job at a ritzy club and the attentions of two dishy men (1940s+)*

Disneyland daddy *n phr* A divorced or separated father who sees his children rarely; Zoo Daddy (*mid-1980s+*)

dispatcher *n* A dishonest pair of dice (1798+ *Gambling*)

disposable (or throwaway) worker *n phr* A temporary or flexibly assigned employee: *Some labor economists call them disposable or throwaway workers (1990s+)*

dispose of *v phr* To kill someone: *disposed of the informer*

dissolve *n* The gradual blending of one scene into the next in motion pictures or television; also, a device that causes this effect (1912+)
v: *Dissolve to a closeup of the house* [The use of the term in Victorian

magic lantern shows is attested in 1845]

ditch *v* **1** To dispose of; get rid of; CHUCK: *We'll ditch this Greek and blow (1900+)* **2** To land an aircraft on the water in an emergency (1940s+) **3** To play truant; fail to go to school or to a class (1920s+)

Ditch *See* the BIG DITCH

dittohead *n* A person who totally agrees with a proffered system of belief, esp with the uncomplex notions of the talk-show host Rush Limbaugh: *They are happy to be known as dittoheads, from the shorthand that callers use to signify 100% agreement/ Dittoheads: people who are in perfect agreement on an issue, an idea, or a belief system (1990s+)*

ditty (or diddy) bag *n phr* A small bag for one's personal belongings, usu exclusive of clothing [1850s+ Nautical; origin uncertain; perhaps short for *commodity*, fr the earlier British naval term *commodity box*, which became *ditty box*]

ditz *n* A silly and inane person; a frivolous ninny: *a brainy ditz involved with a vulnerable hunk/ little more than a likable, spoiled ditz who allows herself to ruled by chemicals (middle-1970s+)*

ditzo *n* A person who is out of touch with reality; LUNCHBOX (1980s + *Students*)

ditzy or **ditsy** *adj* Vapid and frivolous; silly; AIRHEADED: *Charles Ruggles's ditsy bimbo/ Is there something in the air that makes Washington wives ditsy?* [mid-1970s+; perhaps a blending of *dizzy* and *dotty*]

diva *n* A male transvestite; esp, a homosexual cross-dresser; DRAG QUEEN: *Salt-N-Pepa's divas are checking out designer creations* [1990s +; fr Italian, “goddess, lady love,” used by the 1880s to designate a distinguished woman singer]

dive *n* 1 A vulgar and disreputable haunt, such as a cheap bar, nightclub, lodging house, or dancehall; CRIB: *the girl who danced in a dive in New Orleans* (1871 +) 2 SPEAKEASY (1920s +) 3 A knockdown or knockout, esp a false prearranged knockout: *A dive is a phantom knockout* (1940s + *Prizefight*) *v*: *They fixed it so that he'd dive in the fourth* [origin of first sense uncertain; perhaps fr the notion that one could *dive* into a disreputable cellar haunt (called a *diving bell* in an 1883 glossary) and lose oneself among lowlifes and criminals; perhaps a shortening of *divan*, “a smoking and gaming room,” a usage popular in London in the mid-and late 19th century; the places were so called because they were furnished with *divans*, “lounges,” the name ultimately fr Turkish] **See** NOSE DIVE, TAKE A DIVE

diver **See** MUFF-DIVER

divot (DIV ət) *n* A toupee; RUG [1950s +; fr the Scottish word, “a piece of turf or sod, esp one cut out by a golf club,” of unknown origin]

divvy *n* 1 A share of profits or spoils 2 A dividend *v* (also **divvy out** or **divvy up**) To divide; apportion; Piece Up: *The governor and the Paris crook divvy the swag/ We would pass our hats and divvy up* (1872 +)

Dixie modifier: *a Dixie drawl* *n* The southern United States [1980s +;

origin obscure; perhaps because the region is south of the Mason-Dixon line] **See** NOT JUST WHISTLING DIXIE

Dixieland *adj*: *Dixieland trumpet* **n** **1** The southern United States; DIXIE (1850s +) **2** The style of jazz played by the street bands in New Orleans, marked by a simple two-beat rhythm, ragged syncopation, improvised ensemble passages, etc (1920 +)

dizzball **n** An inane person; a ninny; DITZ: *Victoria Jackson, the ex-dizzball from Saturday Night Live* (1990s +)

dizzy *adj* Silly; foolish; inane; DITZY • Found as a noun meaning “foolish man” by 1825; now mostly used of women, and esp, since the 1870s, of blondes: *some dizzy broad* (1501 +)

DK **v** To claim that one does not know someone or something: *plunges the younger Sheen into trouble on a D-K (in which the buyer reneges by insisting that he “doesn’t know”* (1980s +)

DMT **n** Dimethyltryptamine, a hallucinogen like LSD but with shorter effects (1960s + *Narcotics*)

DMZ **n** An area now peaceful but recently and perhaps soon again the scene of violence: *They had long since passed Ninety-sixth Street, the infamous DMZ/ Traversing Brooklyn’s DMZ to go to a steak house* [1980s +; fr the region between North and South Korea designated the *Demilitarized Zone* when the Korean War ended]

do **n** **1** A party or other gathering; affair; SHINDIG: *a few of the other main do’s/ The Tweed do was held early last December* (1824 +) **2** (also **doo**) A haircut or styling: *Your hair, your doo/ Yuppie bikers favor short fashionboy dos or neat ponytails* (1960s + *Black*) **3**

Excrement; feces: *I stepped in doggy-do* • A children's term, perhaps first used in *dog-do* or *doggy-do* (1920s +) **4** Something one should do or must do • Always in the phrase *dos and don'ts*: *Being friendly is a do, but being possessive is a don't* **v 1** To cheat; swindle: *He is hated by all the beggars above him, and they do him every chance they get* (1641 +) **2** To eat or drink; partake of • The dated sense has to do mainly with drinks; the revived sense is usually in the phrase *do lunch*: *That was where I'd be "doing lunch" with Mark Bradley/ The expressions "doing lunch" and "fun" lead the 11th annual list of "banished words" (1853 +) **3** To use or take narcotics: *Hell, half the people doing blow are reacting to the cut/ I'd wonder why and do another line. But I never looked at it as if I were some big drug addict* (1960s + *Narcotics*) **4** To serve a prison sentence: *He did six years up at San Quentin* (1860s +) **5** To visit; make the rounds of: *Shall we do Provence this summer?* (1888 +) **6** To kill; do to death; SCRAG OFF, RUB OUT: *The guy she's having cocktails with is the one who done her?/ I'm the guy doing these colored girls* (1350 +) **7** To do the sex with or to; BOFF, FUCK: *Heidi Does Hollywood* (1913 +) **See** DO someone DIRT, DO-GOODER, DO IT ALL, DO one's NUMBER, DOODAD, DO someone our OF, DO-RAG, DO one's STUFF, DO TIME, DO UP, DO something UP BROWN, WHOOP-DE-DO*

DOA (pronounced as separate letters) **adj** Dead on arrival **n**: *Don't risk being a DOA by driving drunk*

do a deal (or **make a deal**) **v phr** To complete a negotiation or mutual arrangement; **DEAL**: *He had not thought about what kind of deal he wanted to do* (1913 +)

do (or **take**) **a fade** **v phr** To sneak away or leave quietly: *do a fade*

from the wedding reception

do a job on someone v phr 1 To injure; treat roughly: *Those motherf..in 'scorpions really do a job on you 2* DO A NUMBER ON **3** To destroy: *The pup did a job on the rug (1960s +)*

Doakes See JOE BLOW

do (or run) a number on v phr 1 To take advantage of, esp by deception; mistreat; SCREW: *You people ran a number on us. Whenever we brought it up, you walked away/ get even with Leonard for doing that number on her 2* To affect adversely, esp as to morale and self-esteem: *He really did a number on her when he told her the boss didn't like her report 3* To beat; trounce; CLOBBER: *He tells me to work this guy over, do a number on him/ Duke Does Number on Michigan (1970s +)*

do a slow burn v phr To become very angry gradually: *And I do a real slow burn [1930s + ; identified with the film actor Edgar Kennedy]*

do a snow job on v phr To deceive or utterly confuse someone: *they did a snow job on the college applicants*

do away with v phr To kill: *did away with his heiress wife*

do bad things v phr To commit crimes of violence • An arch, childish way of euphemizing and emphasizing such atrocities: *You may have noticed there are some nuts out there who do bad things to people who deliver abortions (1990s +)*

do one's business v phr To defecate or urinate; ease oneself: *It's*

about time I let Roscoe out to do his business (1645 +)

doc¹ n 1 A physician; doctor (1850s +) **2** Man; fellow; GUY • Used in address to strangers: *What's up, doc? (1940s +)*

doc² n A movie or television documentary: *as many as 65 feature-length docs qualified for consideration (1990s +)*

dock v To reduce one's pay for some infraction: *I'm docking you six bucks for being sassy [1822 +; fr dock, "to cut off part of the tail," fr a Middle English word meaning "docked tail"]*

doctor n A person who drugs racehorses to improve their performance (1940s + *Horse racing*) **v 1** To alter or tamper with something dishonestly; COOK: *We doctored the receipts/He doctored the booze (1774 +)* **2** To repair; mend: *Somebody's got to doctor this furnace (1828 +)* **See** COUCH DOCTOR, PLAY-DOCTOR, SPIN DOCTOR, ZIT DOCTOR

Dr Feelgood n phr 1 A physician who prescribes amphetamines, vitamins, hormones, etc, to induce euphoria: *No Dr Feelgood was in the White House administering amphetamines* **2** Any person who soothes and pleases by hedonic ministrations: *the Dr Feelgood of American politics [1940s + Black; fr the title of a 1960s song popularized by Aretha Franklin]*

docu or docudrama (DAKH yoo) **n** A documentary film, TV program, play, etc: *Each of the programs is half docu, half drama/ one vidfilm, plus a docu on Theodore Roosevelt (1950s +)*

docu-schlock See INFOTAINMENT

do-dad See DOODAD

do one's **damndest v phr** To do one's best; exert oneself: *He swore he'd do his damndest to find her (1918+)*

dodge n A person's way of making a living, esp if illegal or dubious • Often ironically and deprecatingly used of one's own perfectly ordinary line of work: *We used to run gin, but when prohibition ended we had to give up that dodge/ One of the better practitioners of the dictionary dodge (1842+)*

dodger See ROGER

dodgy adj Dishonest and corrupt: *dodgy accountant (1860s+)*

do someone **dirt v phr** To cause someone trouble or embarrassment, esp by malice and slander; serve someone ill: *Don't repeat that unless you want to do him dirt (1893+)*

dodo n **1** A stupid, inept person; TURKEY (1880s+) **2** A boring person; FOGY: *I'm a respectable old dodo (1880s+)* **3** A student pilot who has not yet made a solo flight (1940s+ *Army Air Corps*) [fr the extinct *dodo* bird, rather sluggish and flightless; oddly enough, the word is fr the Portuguese name *doudo*, "simpleton, fool," given to the bird] **See** DEAD AS A DODO

do doors (or a door) v phr To raid drug sites illegally: "doing doors", illegally raiding drug dens for plunder (1990s+)

doer n A person who commits a crime; PERP: *Police talked about having captured most of the "doers" in the bombing (1990s+)*

◁**does a bear shit in the woods**▷ **sentence** That was a stupid question; isn't the answer very obvious? (1970s+)

◁**does a wooden horse have a hickory dick**▷ *sentence* That was a stupid question; isn't the answer very obvious? DOES A BEAR SHIT IN THE WOODS (1970s +)

◁**does Howdy Doody have wooden balls**▷ *sentence* That was a stupid question; isn't the answer very obvious? DOES A BEAR SHIT IN THE WOODS (1970s +)

do for someone *v phr* To harm or ruin someone; destroy someone (1740 +)

do-funny *See* DOODAD

dog *n* 1 An unappealing or inferior person or thing; DUD, LOSER: *The new show's a total dog* (1930s +) ◁2▷ An unattractive woman: *And she was a dog* (1930s +) 3 An attractive woman; FOX (1960s + *Jazz musicians*) 4 A man; fellow; GUY: *dirty dog/ handsome dog* (1596 +) 5 An untrustworthy man; seducer (1950s + *Black*) 6 A sexually aggressive man: *before the dogs on the ward showed their hand* (1950s + *Black*) 7 A foot: *His left dog pained* (1900s +) 8 HOT DOG (1900 +) 9 A teenager: *girls refer to boys as "dogs," and both refer to sex as a function* (1990s + *Black teenagers*) *v* 1 (also **dog around, dog on**) To pester; taunt; BUG, HASSLE: *You were fully doggin' him about his hair/ My roommate was dogging on me for using up her shampoo/ In the verbal dueling of the speeded-up poetry, he doesn't bite rhymes and he doesn't get dogged or dissed* (1970s + *Army*) 2 To perform well; defeat an adversary: *I dogged him at racquetball, though* (1980s + *Students*) *See* BARKING DOGS, BIRD DOG, CATS AND DOGS, DOG IT, DOG'S-NOSE, DOG TAGS, DOG UP, DOG-WAGON, FUCK THE DOG, THE HAIR OF THE DOG, HOT DIGGETY, HOT DOG, HOUND DOG, IT SHOULDN'T HAPPEN TO A DOG, PUP TENT, PUT ON THE RITZ, RAIN CATS AND DOGS, RED DOG, ROAD DOG, SEE A MAN ABOUT A DOG, SHORT DOG, TOP DOG

dog, the *n phr* Syphilis: *He was so far gone with the dog (1940s + Black)*

Dog, the *See* the HOUND

dog and pony act (or show) *n phr* An elaborately prepared or staged presentation, event, etc, intended to sway or convince: *Bring them in here and do a dog and pony act [1970s + ; by the 1920s dog and pony show was a derisive name for a small circus]* *See* GO INTO one's DANCE

◁**dog-ass or dog-assed**▷ *adj* Wretched; inferior; pitiable: *that dog-assed motel*

dog-doo or dog-do *n* Feces of the canine: *containers for picking up dog-doo*

dog-ear *v* To fold back the corner of a page to mark one's place in a book: *Those of us who still dog-ear and reread her books say "Who cares?" [1886 + ; Found as dog's-ear by 1659]*

dog-eared *adj* **1** Worn, creased, and rumped; shabby; unkempt **2** Old; outworn; hackneyed: *Even a clean reading of a dog-eared tune is deepened [1894 + ; fr the look of a book whose pages have been repeatedly folded at the corners; found in this sense by 1824]*

dog-eat-dog *modifier* Ruthlessly competitive and often cruel: *dog-eat-dog world of New York City (1850s +)*

dogface *modifier*: *a dogface, paddlefoot private* *n* A soldier, esp an infantry private: *Few wanted to be dogfaces (1930s + Army)*

◁**dog fashion (or style)**▷ *adv phr* With one partner in a sex act

entering the other from the rear; BOTTOMS UP (*late 1800s +*)

dogfight *n* **1** An aerial combat among fighter planes (*WWI air forces*)

2 Any confused and riotous brawl; DONNYBROOK (*1880 +*)

◀**dogfuck**▶ *v* To do a sex act with one partner entering the other from the rear: *including how to 69 and dogfuck (1960s +)*

dogger *See* HOT DOGGER

doggie *n* DOGFACE (*1930s +*)

doggo *adj* In hiding; quiet and unobtrusive; low-profile: *Hamilton, lying doggo since killing the Chicago detective/ Even doggo prospects like anthropologists and landscape architects, we learn, are still in demand (1893 + British)* *See* LIE DOGGO

doggone or **daggone** or **dagnab** *adj* (also **doggoned** or **daggoned** or **dagnabbed**) Wretched; nasty; silly: *This doggone thing's busted (1860 +)* *adv*: *They left here doggone fast (1871 +)* *interj* (also **doggone it** or **daggone it** or **dagnab it**) An exclamation of disappointment, irritation, frustration, etc; DANG, DARN: *Doggone it, leave me be! (1851 +)* [probably a euphemism for *God damn*]

doggy bag *n phr* A paper or plastic bag or box given a restaurant customer to take home leftovers (*1964 +*)

doghouse *n* **1** Any small structure resembling in some way a dog's individual kennel: *The boat has a doghouse over the main cabin* **2** The bass viol: *When the bull-fiddler plucks the strings he is slapping the doghouse (1920s + Jazz musicians)* *See* IN THE DOGHOUSE

dogie *n* A motherless calf in a herd; BUM¹ (*1888 + Cowboys*)

dog it v phr **1** PUT ON THE RITZ **2** To avoid or evade work; refuse to exert oneself; *COAST: He had his troubles all year long, dogging it on us and complaining all the time/ The impression comes through clearly that I was dogging it (1905 +)* **3** To leave hastily; flee **4** To live as a parasite; *SPONGE: He was dogging it, mooching his room and board* **5** To behave wantonly or promiscuously (1980s + *Students*) **6 v phr** To make a half-hearted attempt; to fail to do one's best: *lost enthusiasm and dogged it through the rest of the project*

dogmeat n Something or somebody inferior or worthless; *CRAP, SHIT: Your car is a piece of dogmeat/ Columbus was dogmeat after he discovered America [1890s +; The dated form is dog's meat]*

dognaper or dognapper n A stealer of dogs, esp for profitable selling (1940s +)

do-good adj Overtly benign and altruistic: *This "do-good" laundry list draws sneers*

do-gooder n A person whose selfless work may be more pretentiously than actually altruistic; an ostentatiously right-minded citizen: *a professional do-gooder (1927 +*

dog out (or up) v phr To dress fancily; *DOLL UP: He would have been feeling much better if he were dogged out in a new outfit (1930s +)*

dog someone out v phr To chide someone; criticize adversely: *Johnson is not afraid to be critical, and had heard things like "Hey, you dog me out" (1990s +)*

dogs n The feet [1919 +; said to be short for *dog's meat*, "feef" in rhyming slang; also attributed to the writer and cartoonist Tad

Dorgan] **See** BARKING DOGS, CATS AND DOGS, GO TO THE DOGS, RAIN CATS AND DOGS

dogs, the *n phr* The greatest thing; a marvel: *Wouldn't it be the dogs to be paged like that? (1930s +)*

dog's age *n phr* An extremely long time: *haven't seen you in a dog's age (1836 +)*

dogsboddy *n* A menial; lowly pawn • Chiefly British usage: *Oh, I'm the general dogsboddy around here [1922 + ; apparently fr early 1800s naval slang for peas boiled in a cloth sack, although the semantic relation is not obvious]*

dog's breakfast (or dinner) *n phr* A wretched mixture; an unpalatable combination; MESS: *that dog's breakfast of fact and fancy docudrama/The plot is a dog's breakfast of half-baked ideas (first form 1934 +, second 1960s +)*

◁**dogshit**▷ ***n*** Despicable matter; pretentious trash; CRAP, DOGMEAT, SHIT:
None of this fancy-pants bullshit, poodle-top haircuts and flashy clothes. None of that dogshit (1960s +)

dog's life, a *n phr* A wretched existence; a miserable life (1607 +)

dog's-nose *n* A drink of beer or ale mixed with gin or rum (1891 +)

dog style *See* DOG FASHION

dog tags *n phr* Identification tags, esp metal tags worn around the neck by members of the armed forces: *Vets, if you still have your dog tags [WWI armed forces; each soldier had two: one to be taken from his body if he died, the other to be left with it]*

dog tent *See* PUP TENT

dog-tired *adj* Very tired; exhausted; BEAT, POOPED, WASTED [1809+; as tired as a *dog* after a hunt; Bayard Taylor called it “a German phrase” in an 1876 letter]

dog up *See* DOG OUT

dog-wagon *n* **1** A modest or cheap diner, such as might occupy an old railroad car or streetcar, that serves hot dogs (1900+ *College students*) **2** An antiquated truck (1940s+ *Truckers*)

d’oh *interj* An exclamation of frustration or self-reprimanding realization: *I was just about to leave without my keys. D’oh* [fr the catch phrase of the character Homer Simpson on the TV series *The Simpsons*]

do-hickey or **do-hinky** *See* DOODAD, DOOHICKEY

do one’s homework *v phr* To be ready and informed, esp for a meeting, interview, report, etc: *Shana Alexander has done her homework well* (1930s+)

do someone in *v phr* **1** To kill someone: *She did in the old woman, too*
2 To ruin someone; destroy: *why you let your brother do you in the way he did* (1905+)

doing *See* NOTHING DOING, TAKE SOME DOING

doings *n* **1** Happenings: *doings at the student union* **2** Nonspecific items, things one may have temporarily forgotten the name for: *the doings on the kitchen table*

do it *v phr* To do the sex act; FUCK • An arch euphemism very popular for a time in a series of bumper stickers: *Divers do it deeper/*

Professors do it fifty minutes at a time/ let alone comprehend that sexual intercourse is more than two bodies "doing it" (1913+)

do it all v phr **1** To serve a life term in prison (1940s+ *Underworld*)
2 To be versatile; be variously skilled: *Take that shortstop. He'll do it all for you (1960s+)*

do it the hard way v phr To do something in the most difficult and painful manner: *"He did it the hard way," said Johnny Croll* [1920s+; fr *the hard way* in craps, making the points of 4, 6, 8, or 10 with throws of a pair of 2s, 3s, 4s, or 5s]

do it up or do it up brown v phr To do something decisively and well: *Some of us really did it up in grand style (1880+)*

do-jigger *See* DOODAD

doke or dokey or dokie *See* OKEY-DOKE

dokle *See* OKEY-DOKE

dolf n A despised person; DORK, JERK, NERD (1980s+ *Teenagers*)

doll n **1** (also **dolly**) A conventionally pretty and shapely young woman, esp a curly, blue-eyed blonde, whose function is to elevate the status of a male and to inspire general lust; BABE, BABY DOLL, BIMBO: *If a blonde girl doesn't talk we call her a doll/ the subservient dolly without a thought in her head (1860+)* **2** Any woman, esp an attractive one; BABE, CHICK • Considered offensive by many women (1778+) **3** A notably decent, pleasant, generous person; LIVING DOLL: *Isn't he a doll? (1950s+)* **4** An attractive boy or young man (1940s+) **5** (also **dolly**) An amphetamine or barbiturate drug in

pill or capsule form (1960s + *Narcotics*) **See** CHINA DOLL, LIVING DOLL

Doll **See** BARBIE DOLL

dollar **See** BET one's BOTTOM DOLLAR, HOT AS A THREE-DOLLAR PISTOL, PHONY AS A THREE-DOLLAR BILL, TOP DOLLAR

dollars to doughnuts *adv phr* Very probably; almost certainly:

Dollars to doughnuts, there are more people this morning day-dreaming about old lovers than are reading this newspaper [1904 + ; *dollars to buttons* is found in 1884, and *dollars to a doughnut* in 1890; the most common phrase is *It is dollars to doughnuts that*]

dollar to rub against another **See** NOT HAVE ONE DOLLAR TO RUB AGAINST ANOTHER

dollface *n* A person with regularly pretty features of a feminine sort (1940s +)

dollop *n* **1** A lump or glob **2** A portion, esp a small portion of food [1812 + ; origin unknown]

doll up (or out) *v phr* To dress fancily and in one's best clothes; GUSSY UP: *This year the girls are dolling up in calico patchworks* (1906 +)

dolly **See** DOLL

do lunch **See** DO

-dom *suffix used to form nouns* The range, establishment, scope, or realm of what is indicated: *fandom/ moviedom/ klutzdom*

dome *n* The head: *But when the messenger's got a gat pointed at your dome, what are you gonna do?* (1880s +) **See** MARBLE-DOME

dominoes *n* Dice (1920s +) **See** GALLOPING DOMINOES

done and done *modifier* Unquestionably completed, finalized: *My to-do list is done and done*

done by (or with) mirrors *modifier* Illusory; done deceptively:
government processes done by mirrors

done deal *n phr* Something unlikely to be altered; a fait accompli: *If Ben shook your hand, it was a done deal/ President Bush's enormous popularity may appear to make his re-election a done deal (1980s +)*

done for *adj phr* Ruined; doomed; FINISHED, KAPUT, SOL: *Once this gets out, we're done for (1842 +)*

done in *adj phr* **1** (also **done up**) Very tired; POOPED: *I was done up* **2**
Killed **3** Ruined; wrecked: *My plans are done in but good (1917) +*

done over *adj* Completely defeated: *done over by the opposing baseball team*

done to a turn *adj* **1** Cooked until well-done: *burgers done to a turn* **2**
Defeated: *opponent done to a turn*

◁**dong**▷ *n* The penis [1891 + ; origin unknown; possibly fr *ding-dong* fr *dingus*, a euphemism for the unnamable thing; perhaps echoic to suggest striking; compare *wang*] **See** FLONG **one's DONG**, PULL **one's PUD**

Don Juan *n* A man who has great sexual success with a large number of women [1848 + ; fr the name of a legendary dissolute Spanish nobleman, popularized in Britain by Byron's poem *Don Juan*]

donk *n* Whiskey, esp raw or corn whiskey [1920s + ; because it has a kick like a *donkey*]

◁**donkey dick**▷ *n phr* **1** Salami and other cold-cut sausages; Horse

Cock (*WWII armed forces*) **2** A very durable penile erection, due to an effect of heroin use: *a reward known in smack circles as “donkey dick” (1960s + Narcotics)*

donkey’s years (or ears) *n phr* A very long time • Chiefly British use: *I got interested in his apprenticeship donkey’s years ago [1917 + ; a punning allusion to the long ears of a donkey]*

donkeywork *n* Tedious work needing little skill or wit; SCUT: *He uses computers to do what the “whiz kids” call their “donkey work” (1920 +)*

donna *See* PRIMA DONNA

donnybrook *n* A riotous scene, esp a general and energetic brawl; BRANNIGAN: *A donnybrook began when police arrested the operators [1852 + ; fr the reputation of a fair held annually at the Dublin suburb of Donnybrook]*

do someone nothing *v phr* To leave one unaffected, unmoved, unpleased, etc: *This book does me nothing [1950s + ; probably a play on the Yiddish phrase *tu mir eppes*, “do me something”]*

don’t *n* Something one should not or must not do; NO-NO: *The do’s and don’ts of sailing a leaky barge*

Don’t ask *sentence* The answer is not something you want to hear: *did I eat it? Don’t ask*

don’t-blink *adj* Very small; ONE-HORSE: *maybe east or west through the don’t-blink communities of LeRoy or Elmore [1990s + ; because if you blink you will miss them entirely]*

don't get no respect, someone or something *sentence* The subject is not treated with proper regard: *Although Luisa Miller has edged into the semi-standard repertory, it still doesn't get much respect/ We Republicans are not getting any respect from the White House/ Among superpower currencies, the Soviet ruble gets no respect* [1970s+; fr the tag line of the comedian Rodney Dangerfield]

◁**don't get your balls in an uproar**▷ *sentence* Don't get so excited; be calm; COOL IT: *Don't get your balls in an uproar. This isn't the first crime commission and it won't be the last* (1930s+)

◁**don't get your testicles in a twist**▷ *sentence* COOL IT: *I'm coming, Mr McAllister! Don't get your testicles in a twist!* [1990s+; perhaps influenced by British *Don't get your knickers in a twist*, which is attested from 1971]

don't get your wig pushed back *sentence* Don't get so excited; be calm; don't overreact; DON'T GET YOUR BALLS IN AN UPROAR, keep your hair on (1990s+ Teenagers)

don't give it a second thought *sentence* Don't worry unduly about what you said or did; FORGET IT: *You didn't mean to, I know. Don't give it a second thought* (1960s+)

don't give up (or quit) your day job *sentence* What you are planning or doing may not pan out; you may be making a mistake: *If you consider yourself to the left of, say, Michael Kinsley, then don't give up your day job* (1990s+)

don't go there *sentence* Don't bring that up; don't broach that topic: *Don't go there: increasingly popular catch phrase among teenagers*

(1990s + Teenagers)

don't have a baby (or cow) sentence Calm down; relax; COOL IT:

Don't have a cow; I'm only five minutes late (1980s + Teenagers)

don't hold your breath sentence Don't count on a certain event or outcome; be patient and skeptical: *Will Clinton's vague and toothless form of workfare dissolve the welfare-based underclass? Don't hold your breath (1960s +)*

don't knock it sentence Don't be critical of it; appreciate its value:

Don't knock it. Nobody who lived in the past would want to live in the past/ Don't knock it. Good bucks there

don't make a federal case out of it! sentence Don't make a fuss about something that is not that important: *Don't make a federal case out of my leaving crumbs on the counter*

don't make me laugh! sentence That is so ridiculous that I cannot believe you are saying it: *Watch basketball? Don't make me laugh*

don't pop the champagne corks yet sentence (also **don't uncork the champagne yet**) Don't celebrate a victory prematurely; don't count your chickens before they're hatched: *It didn't happen, but don't pop the champagne corks yet/ the S&L industry posted earnings of \$1.97 billion, the first gain in five years. But don't uncork the champagne yet [1990s + ; fr the custom of pouring champagne over the victors in a sports contest]*

◁**don't shit a shitter**▷ **sentence** Don't try to hoodwink an expert hoodwinker: *"Don't shit a shitter," said Dubie/ You can play it any way you like. But don't try to shit a shitter, okay? (1970s +)*

Don't sweat it! *sentence* Take it easy. Relax and don't worry: *I got your back. Don't sweat it*

don't take any wooden nickels *sentence* Take care of yourself; good-bye, and watch yourself • Used as an amiable parting salutation (1915 +)

◁**don't try to shit a shitter (or bullshit a bullshitter)**▷ *sentence* Never try to deceive a deceiver: *We get there you can play it any way you like. But don't try and shit a shitter, okay?*

do one's number *v phr* To behave in an expected way; play a role; GO INTO one's ACT: *He was doing his number about how you have to alienate no one* [1920s +; fr *number*, "theatrical act or routine, shtick," which is attested by 1885]

doo *See* HOOPER DOOPER, DO-RAG

doobie or **dubee** or **duby** *n* 1 A marijuana cigarette; JOINT: *I smoke a doobie at lunch/ and rolled myself an ample doobie* (1960s + *Narcotics*) 2 A database (1980s + *Computer*) [first sense, origin unknown; second sense probably fr *database*, influenced by first sense]

doodad *n* 1 (Variations: **do-dad** or **do-funny** or **doofunny** or **do-hickey** or **doohickey** or **do-hinky** or **doohinky** or **do-jigger** or **doojigger** or **doowhangam** or **do-whistle** or **doowhistle** or **do-willie** or **doowillie**) Any unspecified or unspecifiable thing; something one does not know the name of or does not wish to name; GADGET, THINGAMAJIG: *We may have turned into what looks like a nation of doohickeys/ Imagination and art aren't worth those little*

doowhangams you put under a sofa leg **2** Something useless or merely ornamental: *There was not one photograph, not a doodad, not a toy, not a cup, of my own (1905 +)*

doodah *See* ALL OF A DOODAH

doodle *n* **1** Wretched material; SHIT: *How can he write such doodle?* <**2**

▷ The penis • A child's term (1780s +) **v** **1** To cheat; swindle; DIDDLE (1823 +) **2** To make drawings and patterns while sitting at a meeting, talking on the telephone, etc: *From your doodling, the shrink sees what's in your noodle (1935 +)* **3** To defecate • Also *doo-doo*: *dog doodled in the yard* [second sense apparently coined by Robert Riskin, screenwriter for the movie *Mr Deeds Goes to Town*; third sense perhaps fr *doo*, childish word for "shit"] *See* DIPSY-DOODLE, WHANGDOODLE, WHOOP-DE-DO

doodle-brained *adj* Stupid; silly: *singing a doodle-brained folk song about "travelin'"* [1970s +; fr *doodle*, "fool, simpleton," attested by 1628, whence *Yankee Doodle*]

doodlebug *n* **1** A self-propelled railroad car; a one-car train (1940s + *Railroad*) **2** A small reconnaissance car (*WWII armed forces*) **3** A military tank, esp a light tank (*WWII armed forces*) **4** A German jet-propelled robot bomb, the V-1 (*WWII British armed forces*) **5** A divining rod or other device used for locating underground water, gas, etc (1924 +) [all senses connected with *doodlebug*, "the larva of the tiger-beetle or various other insects"]

<**doodle-shit**> *n* (Variations: **doodily-shit** or **doodley-shit** or **doodly-squat** or **doodly**) Nothing; very little; SQUAT, ZILCH: *I don't care doodily-shit about Jews and Nazis/ A whole lot of doodley-shit (entry*

form 1960s +, -squat 1930s +)

doodling *n* Idle playing; FOOLING AROUND, NODDLING: *When Sinatra entered the wings, the doodling ceased (1970s +)*

doodly-squat *adj* Penniless; BROKE (1930s + *Carnival*) *n* DOODLE-SHIT

doo-doo *n* Excrement; DO, SHIT: *I think doo-doo is coming out of your ears (1940s +)*

doo-doo head *n phr* A stupid person; an idiot; SHIT-FOR-BRAINS, SHITHEAD: *Let's face it, we're doo-doo heads for playing (1970s +)*

doofer or **dufer** *n* A cigarette or partial one found and saved for later [as it will "do for" later]

doofunny *See* DOODAD

doofus (also **doof** or **doofis** or **dufus**) *modifier*: *Many another dufus play among friends* *n* A fool; idiot; AIRHEAD, BIRDBRAIN, BOOB: *He'll do his best to make you feel like a doofus/ But this is the doofus you have to deal with, so hush up/ I have to be in front of this self-important doofis with his portable phone/ I felt like such a dufus/ when some big, loud, popcorn-chuggin' doof and his date sit in front of me [1960s + ; probably related to doo-doo and goofus]*

doohickey *n* (Variations: **do-hickey** or **do-hinky** or **doohinky**) Any unspecified or unspecifiable thing; something one does not know the name of or does not wish to name; GADGET, THINGAMAJIG (1914 +)

See DOODAD

doohinky *See* DOODAD, DOOHICKEY

doojee or **doojie** or **dujie** (Doo jee) *n* 1 Heroin 2 A baby born

addicted to heroin [1960s+ Narcotics; perhaps fr *do*, “feces,” since heroin is also called “shit”]

doojigger *See* DOODAD

doolie *n* A first-year cadet [1950s+ Air Force Academy; origin uncertain; perhaps fr Greek *doulos*, “slave,” which is the source of the early 1800s British schoolboy term *doul*, “fag, senior boy’s personal menial among the junior boys”; perhaps fr the West Point term *ducrot*, “inferior or despised cadet”] *See* BIG DOOLIE

do something on top of one’s head *v phr* To accomplish something easily: *You can do that shit on top of your head*

doop *See* WHOOP-DE-DO

dooper *See* HOOPER DOOPER, SUPER-DUPER

door *See* someone CANT HIT THE SIDE OF A BARN, KATIE BAR THE DOOR, REVOLVING-DOOR, SHOW someone THE DOOR

doormat *modifier*: *Cornell University’s doormat status on the gridiron* *n*
A person who is regularly and predictably exploited by others;
constant victim: *the soulful Earth Mother doormat of the kind played by Shirley MacLaine in the fifties/ the wife a rape victim, slave, doormat* *See* TREAT someone LIKE A DOORMAT

doorstep *v* To confront someone for a media interview on the very doorstep: *Mrs. Ashdown, doorstepped by a TV team, gave an impassive nod before disappearing into her house/ The first time I went to meet Kunayev, I tried to doorstep him; this was not a wise maneuver (1990s+)*

do someone **out of v phr** To deprive by cheating, fraud, stealing, etc:
They did the poor jerk out of his pay (1825 +)

do-over n phr A chance to do something over; a second chance: *a do-over on the quiz*

do someone **over v phr** To hit repeatedly; assault by hitting: *done over by the cops (1860s +)*

doowhangam or **doowhistle** or **doowillie** **See** DOODAD

doo-wop or **do-whop modifier**: *from the do-whop music and lovingly customized cars/ lead singer of her Sixties doo-wop outfit, Patti Labelle and the Bluebelles n* A style of street jazz-singing, esp by black ensembles (1950s + *Black musicians*) [echoic fr a common rhythm phrase of the songs]

doozie or **doozy** or **doosie n** A person or thing that is remarkable, wonderful, superior, etc; BEAUT, HUMDINGER: *a little 30-page doozey called "Making Chicken Soup"/ Want a swell Naval Air Station? I got two doozies up for grabs [1916 + ; origin uncertain; perhaps fr a humorous repronunciation of daisy; certainly reinforced by dusy, duesie, and other shortenings of Duesenberg, the name of a very expensive and desirable car of the 1920s and '30s]*

dope modifier 1: *a dope fiend/ dope stash 2* Wonderful; excellent; COOL, RAD, SUPER: *It's a dope day, dude!/ Redman was one of the people Andre said was dope/ have, in the parlance of the street, become "dope" and "phat," i.e. cool, greatest (1980s + Teenagers) n 1* Any narcotic drug, legal or illegal • First applied to opium, by 1889: *They searched him for dope/ The doctors kept him full of dope (1895 +) 2*

Coca-Cola™: *Jim Bob sat down and ordered a large dope (1915 +)* **3**
 Any liquid, esp a viscous one, used for a special purpose: *massaged his lamps with fragrant drug store dope (1872 +)* **4** **DOPER** (1909 +)
5 A stupid person; idiot; TURKEY: *Only a dope would refuse that chance (1851 + British dialect)* **6** Information; data; the LOWDOWN: *Get me all the dope you can on her colleagues/ What's the latest dope about Ruth? (1901 +)* **7** A prediction, esp about a race or a game, based on analysis of past performance; FORM: *The dope says Dream Diddle in a romp (1901 +)* **v 1**: *The nurse doped him so that he could sleep (1889 +)* **2** To use narcotics: *I like to dope (1909 +)* **3** To give drugs, vitamins, etc, to horses or athletes to improve their competitive prowess: *He couldn't run that fast if he wasn't doped (1875 +)* **4**: *I dope it like this, Ali all the way (1920s +)* [fr Dutch *doop*, "sauce for dipping," with elaborate semantic shifts] **See** HIT THE DOPE

dope out v phr To explain or clarify; figure out: *I doped that all out myself (1906 +)*

doper modifier: *with all these doper cops loose/ seemed merely a statement of doper hipness* **n** A narcotics addict or user: *alerting dopers of every stripe that where the penalties had been stiff, they would now be feudal/1 think to myself, some dopers're having a disagreement (1889 + Narcotics)*

dope sheet n phr Printed information or instructions, esp about the past performance of racehorses; FORM (1903 +)

dopester n A person who makes predictions based on available information, esp about races and games (1907 +)

dope stick *n phr* A cigarette (1915 +)

dope up *v phr* **1** To inject or take a dose of a narcotic: *doped up now*
2 To purchase drugs

dopey or **dopy** *adj* **1** Stuporous, esp from narcotic intoxication: *I was dopey after they gave me the shot* **2** Stupid; idiotic: *Most movies are written for women in their 20s and 30s, and these are sort of dopey parts* [1896 +; fr *dope*; the word has also meant “a thief’s or beggar’s woman” since at least the 1850s, and this may in some minds have influenced the modern senses]

Dora See DUMB DORA

do-rag *modifier*: *that famous do-rag militant, Sammy Davis* *n* A cloth or scarf worn over a processed hairdo or “conk”: *wears a “do-rag” on his new hairdo as he pours out hatred of whites/ Plaid work shirt, do-rag, pointy-toed shoes* (1960s + *Black*)

do-re-mi *n* Money: *Get the rubber band off the do-re-mi* [1920s +; fr the first three sol-fa notes, with a pun on *dough*, “money”]

◁**dork**▷ *n* **1** The penis: *the glorious acrobatics she can perform while dangling from the end of my dork* (1964 +) **2** A despicable person; JERK, PRICK: *a frightened, virtuous dork* (1970s + *Students*) *v* To do the sex act with or to; ruin or confound as if by violating sexually; FUCK, SCREW: *I said to myself, “Idorked him,” but the ball just kept floating like it was floating on air* (1970s +)

dorky *adj* Stupid; DOPEY, DUMB: *a dorky kid with Dumbo ears/ Casually include them in chitchat about how dorky the principal’s speech was* (1970s + *Students*)

dory *See* HUNKY-DORY

dose *v* To infect with a venereal disease, esp gonorrhea: *What's going to happen is that you'll get dosed* (1914 +)

dose, a *n phr* A case of venereal disease, esp of gonorrhea: *Don't Give a Dose to the One You Love Most* (1914 +) *See* LIKE SHIT THROUGH A TIN HORN

do-se-do or **do-si-do** (DOH *See* DOH) *n* **1** A dull fight, with more dancing than punching: *The guys who are supposed to do the fighting go in there and put on the old do-se-do* (1930s + *Prizefight*) **2** A regular alternation; predictable shift: *Fashion always does a do-si-do between artifice and the natural* (1960s +) [fr the square-dance figure, fr French *dos-à-dos*, "back to back," in which dancers pass each other back-to-back and return to their places]

dose of salts *See* LIKE SHIT THROUGH A TIN HORN

doss *n* **1** Sleep: *find good barns for a doss at night* (1890s + *Hoboes*) **2** (also **doss house**) A cheap lodging house; FLOPHOUSE (1888 +) **3** Abed; KIP (1789 +) [ultimately fr Latin *dorsum*, "back"]

do something standing on one's head *v phr* To do something easily [1896 +; the dated form is *do it on one's head*]

do one's stuff *v phr* To perform one's role, esp something one does very well: *Get in there and do your stuff* (1920s +)

dot, the *See* ON THE DOT

do tell *interj* An exclamation of surprise, incredulity, etc: *You shot the dog? Do tell!* (1840 +)

◁**do the bone dance** (or **the nasty**)▷ *v phr* To do the sex act; BOFF,

BONE, SCREW: *My parents walked in while I was doing the bone dance and grounded me for forty years (1980s + Students)*

do the dirty on someone v phr DO SOMEONE DIRT (1914 +)

do the Dutch (or the Dutch act) v phr To commit suicide: *Why did the old man do the Dutch?/ She only came aboard to do the Dutch act* [1904 + ; narrowed meaning of an earlier phrase meaning “to depart, abscond, go south”]

do the math v phr or **sentence** Figure it out yourself; also, carry out a simple arithmetic calculation: *To live where you want, do the math*

do the nasty v phr To do the sex act; BOFF, BONE, DO THE BONE DANCE, SCREW (1980s + Students)

do the trick v phr To do exactly what is needed for the desired result: *this makeup ought to do the trick*

do the wild thing v phr To do the sex act; BOFF, BONE, SCREW: *Elliot Gould first did the wild thing with Barbra Streisand in the early 1960s/It was a bad thing to do the wild thing without a blessing from the Almighty* (1980s + Students)

do one's (or one's own) thing v phr To follow one's special inclinations, esp despite disapproval; to act independently or alone: *Doing your own thing may be all right in prescribed doses (1840 +)*

do time v phr To serve a prison sentence (1860 +)

do tricks See GO DOWN AND DO TRICKS

dot the i's and cross the t's v phr To work meticulously, esp to make something clear and accurate: *Extraneous to my investigation,*

but I like to dot the i's and cross the t's (1885 +)

dotty *adj* Crazy; insane; feeble-minded: *a dotty old fellow [1885 +; origin uncertain; perhaps related to dotty, "of unsteady, uneven, or feeble gait," and this is the dated sense above; perhaps related to dote and doat, attested in the 1200s as "silly, crazy"; dote is also an early spelling of dot, so the matter seems quite complex]*

double *n* A person or thing that strongly or exactly resembles another; duplicate; DEAD RINGER, LOOK-ALIKE: *She's Grace Kelly's double (1543 +)*

double, *a n phr* A double portion or pair of anything: *scored a double, riding the winners of the fourth and seventh races*

double (or **double in brass**) *as v phr* To perform or work as, in addition to one's primary job: *He doubled in brass as a waiter when the cooking was done [1920 + Circus; fr the skill of a circus performer who does an act and also plays in the band]*

double-bagger *n* A very ugly person; TWO-BAGGER [1970s + Teenagers; fr the fact that one needs two *bags* to obscure the ugliness, one to go over the subject's head and one over one's own head]

double-barreled slingshot *n* A bra

double-clutcher *n* A despicable person; BASTARD, PRICK [1950s + Black; a rhyming euphemism for *motherfucker*]

double-clutching *adj* MOTHERFUCKING (1950s + Black)

double cross *n phr* A betrayal or cheating of one's own colleagues; an act of treachery, often in an illicit transaction: *The two suspected*

dealers were planning a double-cross v: I would never double-cross a pal [1834+; fr the renegeing on an agreement to lose, a *cross*, by actually winning] **See** GIVE SOMEONE THE DOUBLE CROSS

double dare or **double dog dare** *v phr* To challenge provocatively: *The movie double-dared its audience to find sympathy in its dour or manic characters/I double dog dare ya to find out which three!* [1940s+; fr a boys' response to "I dare you!," "I double dare you!"; *double dog dare* is still higher defiance]

double-dealing modifier: *a double-dealing little crum n* Deceitful or treacherous behavior (1529+)

double-dip *n* The practice of holding a second job that has retirement benefits while receiving a pension from former employment **v 1** To dip a food item into a sauce or dip, take a bite, and then dip it in the sauce again: *You can double-dip at home, but not at a party 2* To get money from two sources, often in a way that is not legal or by simultaneously drawing a government pension and holding a job [1970s+; fr an ice-cream cone with two *dips*, scoops, of ice cream]

double-dipper *n 1* A person who double-dips: *Federal pensioners are "double-dippers" who also collect Social Security checks (1970s+)* **2** A person who dips an appetizer into a dip or sauce after already biting the appetizer, which is unsanitary: *She's double-dipping the Mexican layer app*

double-dome modifier: *None of your double-dome pomp, please n* An intellectual; scholar; EGGHEAD: *Princeton, NJ, where the double domes*

congregate v: legitimate double-doming I suppose, but totally without fact (1930s+)

double Dutch *n phr* Language that cannot be understood, esp overly technical jargon: *Plain English will do; cut the double Dutch* [1864+; *Dutch*, “German,” being unintelligible, *double Dutch* is twice as opaque]

doubleheader *n* Two contests, esp baseball games, played at one meeting [1890s+ Sports; fr earlier railroad use for a train drawn by two engines]

double-minus *See* X-DOUBLE-MINUS

double nickel *n phr* **1** The 55-mile-per-hour speed limit (1970s+ *Citizens band*) **2** Interstate Highway 55, running south from Chicago (1980s+)

double-o *v* To examine carefully; scrutinize: *I stop a second to double-o the frame* [1917+; fr the abbreviation of *once-over*]

double-o, the *n phr* A close examination; the ONCEOVER: *You mean give him the double-o* (1917+)

double-quick *adj* Twice the usual speed; very quickly [1822+; orig military, from the notion of marching at twice the speed of quick time]

doubleR *n* A Rolls-Royce car: *I crossed back to the Union 76, paid my ransom for Full Service, and got back in the doubleR* (1990s+)

double sawbuck (or saw) *n phr* Twenty dollars; a \$20 bill: *so many sheets of dollars, ten-spots and double saws* (1850+)

double scrud *See* SCRUD

double (or fast) shuffle *n phr* **1** DOUBLE CROSS **2** Deception; duplicity;

RUNAROUND: *I don't want you to think I'm giving you a fast shuffle v: He was fast shuffling me, but I caught him* [1891 +; fr the deceptive shuffle of a cardsharp]

double six *n phr* A year, two six-month periods

double-take *n* A sudden second look or a laugh or gesture over something one has at first ignored or accepted; a belated reaction: *She suddenly caught the reference and did a double-take v: I double-took a little bit when she ordered a cigar* (1940s +)

double talk *n phr* **1** A sort of gibberish or patter that seems plausible but is nonsense, done for amusement: *Danny Kaye excelled at double talk* **2** Deceptive and insincere speech: *Don't be put off by his double talk* (1938 +)

double-team *v* To attack or defend against someone, esp a formidable athlete, with twice the usual forces: *He was gaining every play till they double-teamed him* [1860 +; originally fr doubling the team of horses used for a purpose]

double-time *v* DOUBLE-CROSS, TWO-TIME

double-trouble *modifier: a double-trouble day n* **1** Serious difficulty; DEEP TROUBLE • This was the name of a black shuffle dance as early as 1807, showing the potential of the rhyme **2** A source or cause of great difficulty or menace; BAD NEWS: *Watch that clown, he's double trouble* (1940s +)

double turkey *n phr* Six strikes bowled one after another (1940s + *Bowling*)

double whammy *n phr* A two-part or two-pronged difficulty; a dual disadvantage: *the double-whammy of steep home prices and steeper interest rates* (1940s +) **See** WHAMMY

double X *n phr* DOUBLE CROSS (1920s +)

◁**douche bag**▷ *n phr* A despicable and loathsome person; SCUMBAG: *dirty, filthy douchebag/Either this guy is a bigger douche bag than I even remember or something is way out of line* [1950s + Students; recorded in the 1940s meaning “a military misfit”]

dough *n* 1 Money; BREAD: *And to get the dough we'll put our watch and chain in hock* (1851 +) 2 DOUGHBOY **See** CASE DOUGH, HEAVY MONEY

doughboy *n* An infantry soldier; GRUNT, paddlefoot [1867 + ; origin unknown; perhaps fr a resemblance between the buttons of the infantry uniform and *doughboys*, “suet dumplings boiled in seawater,” a term fr the British merchant marine]

doughfoot *n* DOUGHBOY (WWI)

dough-head *n* A stupid person; idiot; KLUTZ (1838 +)

doughnut *n* 1 A truck tire (1930s + *Truckers*) 2 The driving of a car in tight circles, esp by hoodlums who have stolen the car: *Perform doughnuts, in which they lock the brakes, step on the gas, and send the car spinning in circles/spotted about 7 :20 doing doughnuts in the parking lot of Taco Bell* (1980s +) **See** TAKE A FLYING FUCK

do up *v phr* 1 To pummel and trounce; CLOBBER (1846 +) 2 To take

narcotics: *We'll do up some hash (1960s + Narcotics)*

do something up brown v phr To do something very thoroughly: *He didn't just finish it, he did it up brown* [1840 + ; fr the *brown* color of something well baked]

douse or dowse v To extinguish a light, lamp, candle, etc [1807 + ; specialized fr an earlier sense, "hit"]

dove (DUHV) n 1 Dear one; honey; love: *There at once, my dove (1596 +)* **2** A person who advocates peace and nonviolence; anirenic soul (1962 +) **See** TURTLEDOVES

dovetail v To say something linked and sequential: *Let me dovetail on what you just said (1970s + Army)*

dovey n LOVEY-DOVEY (1796+)

dovish adj Tending to advocate peace over war; irenic: *more and more room for dovish interpretations (1960s +)*

do what comes naturally v phr To do the simple obvious thing; respond unthinkingly: *As might have been expected, the Joint Chiefs of Staff did what came naturally* [1940s + ; Popularized by the song "Doing What Comes Naturally," which celebrates wholesome instinctive behavior]

do-whistle or do-willie See DOODAD

do whop See DOO-WOP

down adj 1 Depressed; melancholy; BLUE: *He's real down about losing that chance (1645 +)* **2** Depressing; pessimistic; dampening; DOWNBEAT: *I don't see the point of making such a "down" picture*

(1950s +) **3** Not functioning; ON THE BLINK: *The power plant has been down for two months/The computer's down again today* (1970s +) **4** Coolly cognizant; at ease in one's own skin; COOL: *To show how "down" you are to youthful consumers/Of course if you are "with it, "you "be down" (1970s +)* **5** Excellent; good; profoundly satisfying (1950 + *Jazz musicians*) **6** (also **down-ass**) Having special affinity; linked; in league • The term was strongly revived in the 1990s by black teenagers and street gangs: *It wasn't her turf, but she wasn't down special with one gang/You're down with the heavy metal crowd now/I am probably one of the few down-ass females on his team/You're down hard for the 'hood* (1930s + *Jazz musicians*) **7** Finished; completed: *one down and 30 to go* **n** DOWNER (1960s + *Narcotics*) **v** **1** To eat or drink: *I downed an enormous pizza* (1860 +) **2** To criticize; complain of; PUT someone or something DOWN: *My friends downed me for listening to country music* (1960s +) [cool and teenager senses perhaps fr jazz musicians' terms like *low down* and *down and dirty* used to praise gutbucket and other jazz when especially well played] **See** GET DOWN, GO DOWN ON someone, LOOK DOWN ON someone, the LOWDOWN, LOWDOWN, MELTDOWN, PUT-DOWN, PUT someone DOWN FOR something, UP-AND-DOWN

down (or **up**) someone's **alley** *adv phr* Of the sort one prefers or is best at; TAILOR-MADE: *That job's right down his alley* (entry form 1941 + , variant 1931 +)

down and dirty *adj phr* Nasty; low; vicious and deceptive • Also uttered in seven-card stud poker as the last cards are dealt face down: *Mississippi: A Down and Dirty Campaign/This is down-and-dirty*

time. Just witness Rizzo's angry characterization of Goode (1950s +)

down and out *adj phr* Penniless and hopeless; destitute: *When you're down and out, remember what did it* [1889 +; fr the condition of a fighter who is knocked down unconscious]

down-and-outer *n* A complete failure; derelict; BUM (1909 +)

down a peg *See* TAKE SOMEONE DOWN A PEG

downbeat *adj* Depressing; pessimistic: *a triumph of upbeat pictures over the downbeat* [1950s +; fr the *downbeat* of an orchestra leader's hand or baton, taken as the direction of dejection]

down-dressed *adj* Avoiding the obvious appearance of luxury or formality; understated; casual (1970s +)

down-dresser *n* A person who dresses casually: *Jack Sterk, faculty president of Vallejo College and notorious down-dresser* (1990s +)

downer *n* 1 A depressant drug, esp a barbiturate; sedative; DOWN (1950s + *Narcotics*) 2 A depressing experience; BAD TRIP, BUMMER, DRAG: *The opening scene's a downer* (1960s + *Narcotics*)

down for the count *adj phr* Utterly defeated; ruined; DOWN AND OUT [1922 +; fr the *count* of ten made over a *downed* boxer]

downhill *adj* 1 Simple and easy: *nearly done and all downhill from here* (1719 +) 2: *a downhill prospect* *adv* To a worse condition; to the bad: *all trends in-eluctably downhill* (1795 +) *n* The final half of a prison sentence or a military enlistment (1930 + *Prison*) *See* GO DOWNHILL

down home *adj phr* Simple; homey: *a down-home meal of roast*

chicken, potatoes, and peas **adv phr 1** In the southern US; in Dixie **2**
In a Southern regional or ethnic manner: *funkier than blues and
playing about as down home as you can get* **modifier**: He was getting
away from all that old down-home stuff **n phr**: *old buddy from
down home (1848 +)*

down in flames *See* GO DOWN IN FLAMES

down in the dumps *adj phr* Depressed; melancholy; BLUE, DOWN
[1785 +; in text of 1529, *in a dump* means “melancholy, dejected”;
modern use probably influenced by US *dump*, “rubbish heap,”
etymologically unrelated, which is attested from 1865]

down low, the *n* The information or explanation needed or wanted;
the LOWDOWN: *the down low on the opposing team*

down one's nose *See* LOOK DOWN ONE'S NOSE

down on someone or something *adj phr* Angry with or critical of:
Everybody's down on Mary since she reported Sue to the boss (1843 +)

down on one's uppers *modifier* Having no money [1895 +; fr the
notion of destitute people who have worn out the soles of their
shoes, leaving only the uppers]

downplay *v* To deemphasize; minimize; SOFT-PEDAL: *They're downplaying
the role of bias in all this (1968 +)*

downputter *n* A person who regularly criticizes and disparages;
KNOCKER (1950s +)

downside *n* The depressing or deflating aspect of something; the bad
news: *the more ability and ambition you need to survive the*

“downside” of this evolutionary process/It sounds a little too perfect. What’s the downside?/Developments of the past decades have surely had their down side (1980s +)

downsize *v* To reduce the size of a company by eliminating employees, in order to increase profits (1980s +)

down the drain *adv phr* To a futile end; to waste: *All his best efforts seemed to go down the drain (1930 +)* **See** POUR MONEY DOWN THE DRAIN

down the Goodyears (or the rollers) *v phr* To lower the landing gear • Esp the command to do so (1970s + *Airline*)

down the hatch *interj* *A toast, followed by the swallowing of a whole drink (1931 +)*

down the pike **See** COME DOWN THE PIKE

down the river **See** SELL SOMEONE DOWN THE RIVER

down the road *adv phr* Later; in the future: *It might save us a little now, but it’ll cost us down the road (1960s +)*

down the tube (or tubes or chute) **See** GO DOWN THE TUBE

down someone’s throat **See** JUMP DOWN SOMEONE’S THROAT

down ticket or downballot *adj phr* Having a lower place on the ballot, hence contending for less important or local offices: *A great deal of creative savagery is to be found in the down ticket races in campaigns from North Carolina to Washington/As a down ballot candidate, try to attend senatorial and gubernatorial events in your state (1990s +)*

downtime *n* 1 Time during which a machine, factory, etc, is not operating (1950s +) 2 Time away from work; leisure time: *He spends most of his downtime with Toby, his wife/He has more downtime than he did four years ago*

down to brass tacks *adv phr* Dealing with the essentials; concerned with the practical realities: *highbrow sermons that don't come down to brass tacks* [1897 +; apparently fr the *brass tacks* that were used to measure cloth on the counter of a dry-goods store, hence represented precision]

down to the ankles *See* BEATEN DOWN TO THE ANKLES

down to the ground *adv phr* Totally; utterly: *That'll suit me down to the ground* (1878 +)

down to the wire *adv phr* Near the finish; at or to the last possible moment: *The project is getting down to the wire and things are getting frantic* [1901 + Horse racing; fr the imaginary line marking the end of a horse race; horses were said to pass “under the wire”] *See* GO TO THE WIRE

downtown *n* Heroin; HORSE, SHIT (1980s + *Narcotics*)

down trip *See* BAD TRIP

Down Under *adv phr* In Australia and/or New Zealand; in the Antipodes *n phr*: *They're from Down Under* (1890s +)

downwinder *n* People who live where nuclear fallout reaches them on the wind: *Bush signed a bill to compensate downwinders and some workers who participated in above-ground atomic tests/The studies have not yet confirmed what the downwinders say they know*

(1980s +)

down with someone or something **adj** 1 Comfortable; on good terms or friendly: *down with the boys in the hood/down with Kyle* 2 Sick or ill with: *down with a cold*

down with it **adj phr** Coolly cognizant; absolutely in touch; WITH IT (1930s + *Jazz musicians*)

down yonder **adv phr** DOWN HOME (1840s +)

do you eat (or kiss your momma) with that mouth? **sentence** How dare you speak so rudely and filthily! • Said to someone who uses dirty language all the time

do you want an engraved invitation **question** Must you be especially asked and pleaded with? you are being too standoffish and scrupulous (1970s +)

dozen **See** a DIME A DOZEN

dozer **n** 1 A powerful blow, esp with the fist; BELT, BIFF (1950s +) 2 DOOZIE (1950s +) 3 A bulldozer (1940s +) [except for sense 3, the sources do not clarify pronunciation; senses 1 and 2 may be pronounced *DOOzer*, which would make them different in origin from sense 3]

DPT (pronounced as separate letters) **n** Dipropyl-phyptamine, a hallucinogen like LSD but having an effect lasting only an hour or two (1970s + *Narcotics*)

DQ **n** A Dairy Queen ice-cream restaurant: *DQ run for Dilly Bars*

draft **v** To drive close behind a vehicle so as to be drawn by reduced

air pressure: *The point person takes on the wind, allowing those behind him to draft and save as much as 20% of their energy (1970s+ Car racing)* **See** FEEL A DRAFT

drag modifier 1: *a drag queen/drag party* **2:** Take the quiz and unearth your drag quotient **n 1** Influence; weight; CLOUT, PULL: *We had a big drag with the waiter (1896+)* **2** A street: *from some bo on the drag I managed to learn (1851+)* **3** An inhalation of smoke; puff; TOKE: *The ponies took last drags at their cigarettes and slumped into place (1914+)* **4** A cigarette; BUTT: *a drag smoking on your lip (1940s+)* **5** (also **drag party**) A party or gathering, usu of homosexuals, where everyone wears clothing of the other sex; a clustering of transvestites (1920s+ *Homosexuals*) **6** Clothing worn by someone of the sex for which the clothing was not intended; transvestite costume, esp women's clothing worn by a man: *We shall come in drag, which means wearing women's costumes/Mother walked in, a little Prussian officer in drag (1870+ Homosexuals)* **7** DRAG RACE **8** A roll of money, purse, etc, used to lure the victim in a confidence game (*Police*) **9** A situation, occupation, event, etc, that is tedious and trying; DOWNER: *Life can be such a drag one minute and a solid sender the next/Keeping things at the cleaners was sometimes a last-minute drag (1940s+ Jazz musicians)* **10** A dull, boring person: *Don't ask John to the party; he's such a drag (1940s+)* **v 1:** *dragging on cigars and feeling grown up (1919+)* **2** To race down a straightaway (1950s+ *Hot rodders*) **3** To move an image, a file designation, etc, or expand a designated menu on the computer screen by using the mouse: *I copied the whole file onto a floppy disk,*

*dragged the original file into the electronic trash can (1980s +
Computer) See* MAIN DRAG

◁**drag ass or tail**▷ *n*: *We had twenty-five good guys on the club, no more drag-asses, no more prima donnas* **v phr 1** To depart, esp in a hurry; HAUL ASS **2** To be morose, sluggish, and whiny: *Quit drag-assing and get to work (1920s +)*

drag one's feet v phr To shirk; make less than a good effort, perhaps in the spirit of sabotage: *She spent a lot of time dragging her feet/I'm not dragging my feet. I'm just scared* [fr loggers; fr the action of an unenergetic member of a two-person sawing team, who would *drag his feet* or "ride the saw" rather than contribute the proper effort]

dragged out adj phr Exhausted; BEAT: *I fed awful dragged out today (1831 +)*

dragger See KNUCKLE-DRAGGER

dragging See one's ASS IS DRAGGING

draggy adj Slow; monotonous; sluggish: *a draggy movie (1922 +)*

drag in v phr To arrive: *Where'd you drag in from? (1940s +)*

drag someone kicking and screaming v phr To force someone to recognize or adapt to change; educate a rigid reactionary: *we dragged him kicking and screaming out of the '60s*

Dragon Lady n phr A powerful, intimidating woman [1940s + ; fr a character in the popular comic strip "Terry and the Pirates," which originated in the 1930s]

drag-out See KNOCK-DOWN DRAG-OUT

drag out v phr 1 To extend something tediously; make something

last too long: *He dragged out the story excruciatingly (1842 +)* **2** To extract; elicit: *She couldn't drag the truth out of him (1940s +)*

drag queen *n phr* **1** A male homosexual who enjoys dressing like a woman: *a rabidly right-wing congressman, a demented Southern drag queen, a pushy leather dyke* **2** A male homosexual who affects pronounced feminine behavior; QUEEN (1941 + *Homosexuals*)

drag race *n phr* A speed competition between or among cars, esp vehicles with very powerful engines and very elongated, skeletal bodies (1950s + *Hot rodders*)

dragster *n* A car used in drag races, esp one purposely built for such competition (1950s + *Hot rodders*)

drag strip *n phr* The straight track or portion of highway on which a drag race is held (1950s + *Hot rodders*)

dragsville *adj* Very dull; tedious; DRAGGY, DULLSVILLE: *My much touted party proved dragsville (1960s +)*

drag-tail *v* To move or work sluggishly; DRAG ASS: *Jimmy is drag-tailing it up Main Street (1940s +)*

drag one's tail (or **<ass>**) *v phr* To work sluggishly; loaf; DRAG ASS, DRAG-TAIL: *Two hours off with pay, why the hell are they draggin' their tails? (1930s +)*

drain *See* BRAIN DRAIN, DOWN THE TUBE, POUR MONEY DOWN THE DRAIN

drama *See* DOCU

drape *n* **1** A suit; ensemble of suit, shirt, necktie, and hat **2** A young man wearing black, narrow-cuffed slacks, a garish shirt, a loose

jacket without lapels, and no necktie: *Drapes resent any comparison with zoot-suiters (1940s + Jive talk)* **See** SET OF THREADS

drapes *n* Clothes; dress (1935 + *Black*)

dratted *adj* Cursed; awful: *that dratted girl (1845 +)*

draw *n* **1** A puff on a pipe, cigarette, etc; DRAG, TOKE (1876 +) **2** (also **drawing card**) Something that attracts: *A skin flick is always a good draw (1881 +)* **See** GET A BEAD ON someone or something, the LUCK OF THE DRAW, QUICK ON THE DRAW, SLOW ON THE DRAW

draw a blank *v phr* **1** To fail completely in recall: *I'm trying to remember, but keep drawing a blank (1940s +)* **2** To get nothing; have a negative result; fail: *I drew a blank when I solicited him (1825 +)*

draw a picture (or diagram) *v phr* To explain something in very simple terms; make things transparently clear: *I just don't like him. Do I have to draw you a picture? (1960s +)*

drawer **See** TOP-DRAWER

dreadlock or **dredlock** *modifier*: *a British skinhead playing the dreadlock music of Jamaica* *n* (also **dread**) A mat or clump of long ungroomed hair as worn by Rastafarians, reggae musicians, etc: *grown his hair in long dreadlocks, Rasta style/Her dark-brown dreads are very thick and practically matted to her head [1960 + ; fr the dread presumably aroused by the wearers]*

dream **See** PIPE DREAM, WET DREAM

dream and cream *v phr* To have sexual fantasies: *the kind of man you*

dream and cream about (1970s +)

dream bait (or puss) *n phr* An attractive, desirable person
(1940s + *Students*)

dreamboat *n* 1 Any very desirable vehicle: *A dreamboat for hot-rodders is a chromed roadster* **2** A very attractive person: *will star opposite James Mason, who she says is a “dreamboat” (1940s +)*

dream up *v phr* To invent; concoct in the mind: *Julian has to start dreaming up a story/conceptions of living dreamed up by such groups as the Mormons (1940s +)*

dreamy *adj* Very desirable; beautiful: *What a dreamy house you’ve got! (1920s +)*

dreck or drek *modifier*: *no point in my keeping every drek album/an opponent of the tacky-tacky world of dreck-tech architecture* ***n***
Wretched trash; GARBAGE, JUNK, SHIT: *the ugliness, dreck and horror of New York City/They may bring with them a pile of overfinished drek/the sad glitter of desert drek [1920s + ; fr Yiddish, “feces”]*

dredge up *v phr* To find or discover by effort and persistence: *Let’s dredge up more dirt on the candidate (1950s +)*

dress *See* GRANNY DRESS

dress down *v phr* 1 To reprimand; rebuke; chew out (1715 +) **2** To dress less formally or arrestingly than one might: *Casual Fridays raise new fashion issues. How much should you dress down? (1960 +)*

dress-down Friday or casual Friday *n phr* The last day of the workweek, when one can dress informally: *He cites the business*

community's adoption of dress-down Friday as an example/It's Friday, jeans day, pal (1990s +)

dressed to the teeth (or to kill or to the nines) *adj phr* Extremely well and fancily dressed or decorated; DOLLED UP: *She's dressed to the teeth in magenta silks* **modifier**: *our dressed-to-the-teeth test car* **v phr**: *when she wrote articles about textured stockings and dressed to the nines* [first form 1970s +, second 1940s +, third 1859 +; *to the teeth* implies “completely, from the bottom up”; *to the nines* is probably based on *nine* as a nearly perfect number just under ten, or on *nine* as a mystical or sacred number in numerology, the product of three times three] **See** the WHOLE NINE YARDS

dress-off *n* A competition among flashily garbed persons (1960s + *Black*)

dress something up *v phr* To alter something, usu with an aim to misleading: *It's an ugly story, no matter how you try to dress it up* (1691 +)

dribs and drabs *n phr* In skimpy bits; piecemeal: *Details about Whitewater are coming out in dribs and drabs* [1850s +; *drib* is probably a shortening of *dribble*; *drab* earlier meant “a small debt”]

dried **See** cur AND DRIED

drift *n* **1** A controlled sideways skid: *puts his Maserati or Ferrari into a corner with a four-wheel drift* (1950s + *Car racing*) **2** Meaning; intent: *Get my drift, chum?* (1526 +) **v** (also **drift out**, **drift away**) To leave; depart: *Beat it. Drift* (1960s + *Underworld & prison*) **See** GET THE DRIFT

drifter *n* A derelict; BUM (1908 +)

drift off track *v phr* To deviate from proper conduct: *I sometimes drift off track a bit, but I really try to do what is right (1970s +)*

drifty *adj* Stupidly inattentive; silly; SPACED-OUT: *It makes Dede and me both look a little drifty (1970s +)*

drill *n* The way of doing something; the plan of action: *Pain in the ass, but that's the drill (1940 +)* *v* **1** To speed with force, esp through obstacles: *skimmed by his head and drilled through the closed window (1674 +)* **2** To shoot; kill by shooting: *Go drill the mutt. He's strictly stool (1808 +)* **3** To hit a hard, straight grounder or line drive: *Lockman drilled a single past Hodges (1940s + Baseball)* *See* BLANKET DRILL, MONKEY DRILL, SACK DUTY

drink *See* CHAIN-DRINK, I'LL DRINK TO THAT, TAKE A DRINK

Drink *See* the BIG DRINK

drink, the *n phr* A body of water; the water: *She tripped and fell into the drink (1832 +)*

drinkage *n* Drinking in general; the amount drunk: *outlaw drinkage on campus/drinkage for the evening*

drink one's beer *v phr* To stop talking; SHUT UP • Usu an exasperated command: *Finally I had to tell him to drink his beer (1940s +)*

drink like a fish *v phr* To drink too much; overindulge in alcohol; BOOZE, HIT THE BOTTLE (1747 +)

drink one's lunch *v phr* To drink too much, esp during the working day: *I had to counsel Ames on the extent to which he was drinking his*

lunch (1960s +)

drink of water *See* LONG DRINK OF WATER

drink someone under the table *v phr* To drink much more than another person or persons: *She drunk the boys under the table (1921 +)*

drip *n* **1** A tedious, unimaginative, conventional person; SQUARE, WIMP • The term was apparently used a decade earlier in British schoolboy slang: *the biggest drip at Miss Basehoar's, a school ostensibly abounding with fair-sized drips/such drips; they're just sort of dull (1930s + Teenagers)* **2** Useless and idle talk; gossip (1930 + Hoboes)

drippy *adj* **1** Tedious; unimaginative; conventional; WIMPY **2** Sentimental; lachrymose; CORNY (1940s + Teenagers)

dripwad *n* An ineffectual, despised person; JERK, LOSER, WIMP: *Jason, have I ever told you what a total loser you are? Geek? Nerdboy? Dripwad? (1990s + Teenagers)*

drive *n* **1** Dynamism; insistent power: *a song with drive (1908 +)* **2** A thrill or transport of pleasure and energy; KICK, RUSH (1927 + *Narcotics*) *v* To play music, esp jazz, with strong forward impetus and rhythms (1930s + *Jazz musicians*) *See* BIG DRIVE

drive someone bonkers (or nuts) *v phr* To drive someone crazy: *music's driving me bonkers*

drive-by *modifier* Performed casually and callously while or as if while merely driving past: *Chicago woman convicted of the drive-by shooting of a teenage boy/Broder and Woodward correctly chide the*

political press for practicing quick, drive-by journalism rather than trying to elevate the level of discussion/a drive-by debate (1990s+)

drive-in modifier: *drive-in bank/drive-in church/drive-in movie* **n** A place where one eats, watches movies, worships, etc, while sitting in one's parked car (1930+)

driven **adj** Pressed along by some despotic or urgent force; haggard: *She works as if driven (1887+)*

-driven combining word Controlled or caused by what is indicated: *ego-driven, profit-driven, tax-driven, publicity-driven*

drive someone over the hill **v phr** To drive to distraction; drive mad: *That kid is going to drive me over the hill. I'm at my wits' end (1970s+)*

driver **n** An airplane pilot (*Vietnam War Air Force & Navy*) *See* BACKSEAT DRIVER, HACK-DRIVER, PENCIL-PUSHER, SUNDAY DRIVER

driver's seat *See* IN THE DRIVER'S SEAT

drive the big bus **v phr** Vomit into the toilet, esp from drunkenness; BARF [1970s+ Students; fr the resemblance of a toilet seat to a steering wheel]

drive-thru childbirth (or delivery) **n phr** The practice of allowing only one day of hospitalization for a childbirth: *new laws designed to stop so-called drive-thru childbirth/Drive-through delivery: Shortened hospital stay after childbirth* [mid-1990s+; fr restaurants, banks, etc, which provide quick service to customers in cars]

drive someone up the wall **v phr** To cause someone to become

irrational or hysterical; madden: *It drives most women right up the wall/Leave him alone and let him work. Quit driving him up the wall*

driving at See WHAT ONE IS DRIVING AT

driving while black or **DWB** *v phr* A putative motor-vehicle offense committed by blacks: *Most middle-class citizens don't know about the de facto driving violation known as DWB, driving while black (1990s +)*

drizzle or **drizzle-puss** *n* DRIP (1930s +)

droid modifier: *tends to get people in the droid positions and pay little n*
An inferior, mechanical sort of person; robot; a semihuman drone;
CLONE: *for all its ecumenical menagerie of creatures and droids [1970s + Teenagers; fr android, "humanlike," esp as used by science-fiction writers]*

drone *n* **1** A boring person; DRIP, WIMP (1930s + *Students*) **2** A small unmanned aircraft used as a target for gunnery practice (1940s +)

drool *n* **1:** *It gives me sharp and shooting pains, to listen to such drool* **2**
DRIP (1930s +) *v* To talk foolishly or stupidly; utter inanities (1900s +)

drool for (or over) *v phr* To show keen appreciation; show desire:
He's still drooling for Marilyn Monroe (1940s +)

drooly *adj* **1** Very attractive; YUMMY: *Rain can turn the sharpest dressed drooly dreamboat into a drizzly drip from the knees down (1940s + Teenagers)* **2** Stupid; driveling: *ought to shut their fat, drooly mouths and stick their opinions in their wax-infested ears (1940s +)* *n* A

popular and attractive boy: *Who's the chief drooly at Cooky?*
(1940s + Teenagers)

droop or **droopy-drawers** *n* A somewhat dull and stupid person:
He's such a droop, he can't even discuss the weather intelligently
(1930s + Teenagers)

drop *n* **1** (also *drop joint*) A seemingly honest place used as a cover for illegal matters, esp as a depot for stolen goods; FENCE (1930s + Underworld) **2** MAIL DROP (1950s +) **3** A drink or drinks: *I could see by his careful walking he'd taken a drop* (1775 +) **4** A home-less slum boy: *accepting anywhere from 25 cents to \$1 a week for taking in drops, rustles, fetches* (1950s + Black) **5** A paying passenger (1950s + Cabdrivers) **6** The base fee on a taxi meter registered when the cabdriver activates the meter (1950s + Cabdrivers) **v** **1** To be arrested; be caught with loot; FALL (1900 + Underworld) **2** To knock someone down; DECK (1812 +) **3** To kill someone, esp by shooting; BUMP, OFF, WHACK (1726 +) **4** To lose, esp money: *He dropped a bundle in the market yesterday* (1676 +) **5** To collapse, esp with fatigue: *I'll drop if I don't sit down* (1400 +) **6** To stop seeing or associating with someone: *She dropped her boyfriend* (1605 +) **7** To take any narcotic, esp in pill or capsule form: *We want a society where you can smoke grass and drop acid* (1960s + Narcotics) **See** GET THE DROP ON someone, KNOCKOUT DROPS

drop a brick *v phr* To blunder; commit a gaffe: *He rather dropped a brick when he mispronounced Lady Fuchs' name* (1905 + British students)

drop a bundle *v phr* To lose a large amount of money, esp by

gambling: *He's dropped a bundle that way (1900+)*

drop a (or the) dime v phr 1 To inform; give information, esp to the police; DIME, RAT • New York City teenagers have equated *dime* with an amount of information and also speak of dropping a quarter, more information, and dropping a dollar, the maximum of information: *Chaney questioned the man who had dropped the dime on Madison/And then he dropped the dime (made the phone call) and turned Vinnie in (1960s+)* 2 To point out the faults and failures of another; criticize (1970s+ *Army*) [fr the *dime* put into a pay telephone in that era]

drop one's beads v phr To leave a gang (1990s+ *Street gangs*)

drop bombs v phr To place accents in music, esp during improvised passages, using the foot pedal of a bass drum: *Joe Jones? He was the first drummer to drop bombs (1940s+ Jazz musicians)*

drop one's buckets v phr To make an embarrassing mistake; DROP A BRICK, GOOF: *You really dropped your buckets when you replied (1970s+)*

drop-by n A quick visit by a celebrity, political figure, etc: *Also, his people are trying to limit this thing to a drop-by (1990s+)*

drop case (or shot) n phr A stupid person; idiot; TURKEY: *Nobody was a big enough drop case to bet/Mr Williams called Mr Mallard a drop shot, which had been established as a derogatory term [1970s+; perhaps fr the notion that a stupid person had been dropped on his head when a baby, with some added connection with the ignominious drop shot in tennis]*

drop one's cookies See SHOOT one's COOKIES

drop dead *adj phr* **1** Unusually striking; sensational: *A drop-dead mansion in Beverly Hills, complete with his-and-hers whirlpools/the soulful voice and the drop-dead campiness (1970s +)* **2** Absolutely final: *Schedule the announcement for December 23rd, one day before the drop-dead date, and close to the holidays (1980s +)* **interj** Go to hell; GET LOST • Nearly always an exclamation of curt refusal or sharp disapproval: *At that rude suggestion she told him to drop dead (1930s +)*

drop-dead gorgeous *adj phr* Extremely attractive: *drop-dead gorgeous models*

drop-dead list *n phr* A usu fancied list of persons one does not wish to associate with or favor; SHIT LIST (1970s +)

drop (or throwaway) gun *n phr* A pistol dropped by police in order to justify a dubious shooting by claiming that the victim was carrying it: *Was Wolfie stupid enough to think that a drop gun was going to help anybody out of the shitstorm? (1980s + Police)*

drop-in *n* **1** A place of temporary and sometimes dubious resort: *drop-ins for youths wishing marijuana revels (1950s +)* **2** A person who attends classes and other college events without being registered: *NBC did some research on college drop-ins (1960s + Students)* **3** A new car engine as a replacement: *If you have a current model-year car, you can get a “drop-in.” That’s a brand new engine (1990s +)* [sense 2 is the opposite of a dropout]

drop someone in someone’s tracks *v phr* To knock down or kill someone suddenly and sharply: *One kick dropped him in his tracks*

(1820s +)

drop it v phr To discontinue or cut off a certain topic • Often an irritated command: *I'm not interested, so let's drop it* (1844 +)

drop joint *See* DROP

drop someone or something like a hot potato v phr To discontinue or get rid of very quickly: *When she frowned I dropped the topic like a hot potato* (1846 +)

drop like flies v phr To fall down in great numbers: *All over the hot theater people were dropping like flies* [1940s + ; *like flies* meant “in great numbers” by 1595]

dropout n A person who withdraws; voluntary self-excluder, esp from school or college (1920s +)

drop out v phr To remove oneself from the conventional competitive world of politics, business, education, etc: *rush back from every excursion into Big Power and drop out with town meetings and backyard picnics* (1960s +)

dropper n 1 A paid assassin; criminal who injures or kills his victims; HIT MAN: *We got to send East for a couple of droppers* (1920s + *Underworld*) **2** A thief who treats his victims violently; COWBOY, MUGGER (1920s + *Underworld*) **3** A confidence man who drops something of value, appears to find it, and offers the dupe a share, for a price (1785 +)

drops *See* KNOCKOUT DROPS

drop one's teeth v phr To be very astonished; be gapingly shocked: *I*

do drop my teeth at the notion that Shakespeare is busted and needs to be fixed (1980s +)

drop the ball *v phr* To fail, esp to fail in one's entrusted job or duty;

FLUB THE DUB: *I think the State Department dropped the ball on Iraq (1980s +)*

drop the other shoe *v phr* (occasionally **let the other shoe drop**)

To conclude or round out something in suspense: *The city dropped the other shoe/Get with Martinez and drop the other shoe (1980s +)*

◁**drop your cocks and grab your socks**▷ *sentence* Get out of bed immediately • A jovial instruction issued by a noncommissioned officer or barracks orderly to troops quite early in the morning (*WWII armed forces*)

drowned rat *See* LOOK LIKE A DROWNED RAT

drown one's sorrows (or **troubles**) *v phr* To alleviate or obscure the chagrins of one's life, esp by getting drunk (1674 +)

drubbing *n* Beating or total defeat: *drubbing by the rival team (1760s +)*

drug¹ *v* To annoy and nag at; BUG: *His constant bitching really drugs me (1970s +)* *See* DESIGNER DRUG, HARD DRUG, LOVE DRUG, ORPHAN DRUG, SOFT DRUG

drug² *adj* Displeased; angry; PISSED OFF: *If other players are drug about it or feel that I'm trying to horn in, then it's not much fun [1940 + Jazz musicians; past participle of drag, in a dialect variation]*

drug-chugging *adj* Drug-using; narcotic-addicted: *None of that hippy-dippy, war-protesting, free-loving, drug-chugging stuff for him*

[1990s + ; fr *drug* plus chug, “drink, gulp”]

druggie or **druggie** *n* A narcotics user or addict; DOPER (1960s +
Narcotics)

drughead *n* A heavy user of narcotics or other drugs; HOPHEAD: *every front-page report of violence by some freaked-out drughead* (1960s +
Narcotics)

drugola *n* Money paid by narcotics dealers for protection, esp to the police [1960s + *Narcotics*; based on *-ola* terms like *payola*, *plugola*, and *gayola*]

drugstore cowboy *n phr* **1** A young man who frequents public places trying to impress and entice women; a Romeo of the street corners: *bell-bottom trousers so much in vogue with the drugstore cowboys* (middle-1920s +) **2** An extra in a western film (*Hollywood*) [attributed to the cartoonist and humorist Tad Dorgan, who died in 1929]

drum *See* BEAT THE DRUM

drum-beater *n* A person, esp a press agent, who insistently lauds someone or something: *I'm something of a drum-beater for my Alma Mater* [1940s + ; *beat the drum*, “to make loud advertisement or protest,” is attested by 1611]

drummer *n* A traveling salesperson [1827 + ; fr the practice of going about with a *drum* to gain attention for recruiting and other purposes; for example, the sale of fish was announced by *drumming* in the London streets]

drum up *v phr* To stimulate; promote: *Go drum up a little enthusiasm for this turkey (1849+)*

drunk *adj* Intoxicated by alcohol; PLASTERED, SCHNOCKERED, SHIT-FACED (1340+) *n* **1** A drinking bout; spree; BENDER, BINGE (1779+) **2** A case or occasion of intoxication: *Took him an hour to get a good drunk (1849+)* **3** A drunken person, esp a habitual alcoholic; Drunkard, LUSH (1852+) [in all senses *drunk* verges on being standard English]
See CHEAP DATE, PUNCH-DRUNK

drunk as a skunk *adj phr* Very drunk; SCHNOCKERED: *They bring beer and cigarettes, are drunk as skunks (1940s+)*

drunk tank *n phr* A police detention cell for intoxicated persons: *A police reporter had to pick him out of the collection in the drunk tank (1940s+)*

druthers *n* Wishes; desires; preferred alternatives: *We know your druthers, The Marketplace [1895+; fr a dialect pronunciation of rather or had rather; used by Bret Harte in the form drathers in 1875]* **See** HAVE ONE'S DRUTHERS

dry *adj* **1** Not permitting the sale of alcoholic drink: *North Carolina has dry counties (1887+)* **2** Thirsty (1406+) *n* A person who favors the prohibition of alcoholic drink (1888+)

dry as a bone *adj phr* Very dry: *Drink, please, I'm dry as a bone (1649+)*

dry behind the ears, not **See** NOT DRY BEHIND THE EARS

◀**dry fuck (or hump)**▶ *n phr* To approximate the sex act without

penetration or divestiture, and typically without orgasm: *what he would call the dry humps v: Did attack-crazy kamikazes crash into dry-humping kids on the Hell's Kitchen shore? (1930s +)*

dry-gulch v 1 To murder, esp by pushing over a cliff (1930 + *Western*) **2** To knock senseless; BUSHWHACK, CLOBBER: *Then one of them got into the car and dry-gulched me (1940s +)* [origin uncertain; perhaps fr the practice of killing the animals of another rancher by stampeding them over a cliff into a *gulch*; perhaps fr attacking shepherders out of a *gulch* and killing their animals]

dry out v phr 1 To refrain from alcohol, esp in a medical facility as a part of treatment for alcohol abuse: *He dried out a couple of weeks up in the Valley 2* To be treated for narcotics abuse; be detoxified (1967 +)

dry run n phr A tryout, practice version, or rehearsal of something planned: *One more dry run, then tomorrow we do it (1940s +) v: so the medical staff could "dry run" their equipment*

dry up v phr To stop talking; SHUT UP • Usu an irritated command: *Finally I just told him to dry up (1852 +)*

DT n A detective; DICK, TEC: *"You DT?" "No." "So what you care who piped Devona?" (1920s +)*

DTs n Delirium tremens; the CLANKS: *When Bix got the DTs Whiteman treated Bix to a drunk cure (1858 +)*

duals n A pair of wheels and tires mounted as a unit on a truck or semitrailer axle (1970s + *Truckers*)

dub¹ *modifier*: A flood of dub versions followed **n** A form of reggae music marked by weird, unexpected, and discontinuous sounds: *The hypnotic weirdness of such music has helped make dub the most popular form of reggae* [1970s+; probably fr the electronic technique of *dubbing*, “doubling,” sound tracks]

dub² **v** **1** To replace or augment an original sound track with another, esp to substitute a movie sound track in a language other than the original **2** To add a singer, instrumental part, etc, to the tape for a recording: *They dubbed the final vocals last week* [1920s+; fr *double*]

dub³ **n** An awkward performer; novice; DUFFER: *planned by destiny for dubs and has-beens and that solemn brood* (1887+) **See** FLUBDUB, FLUB THE DUB

dubage (DOO bij) **n** Illegal narcotics: *He hid the dubage in my locker* (1980s+ Teenagers)

dubee or **duby** **See** DOOBIE

dubich (DOO bich) **n** Marijuana; POT, WEED: *The drug dealer sold a bag of dubich to a tourist* (1980s+ Teenagers)

dubok (D^{oo} bahk) **n** A seemingly innocent place where clandestine activity may be shielded; DROP [Underworld 1970s+ fr espionage; fr Russian, “oak tree”]

ducat or **ducket** or **duket** (DUH kət) **n** **1** A ticket or pass to a show, game, race, etc (1874+) **2** Money; dollars: *keep him in ducats for the rest of his life* (1775+) [fr the name of an originally Venetian gold coin; adoption probably influenced by its prominence in *The*

Merchant of Venice]

duchess *n* A female member of a street gang (1950s + *Street gang*)

duck *n* **1** A man; fellow; GUY: *That duck isn't a critic* (1846 +) **2** (also **ducks**) Dear one; precious; pet; DUCKY: *and his wife, a darling duck of a homebody* (1590 +) **3** DUCK-EGG (1868 +) **4** A hospital bedpan (1917 +) **5** An amphibious vehicle, esp a WWII troop carrier designated DUKW 1942, whence the nickname (*WWII armed forces*) **v**
1 To move, weave, squat, etc, so as to avoid a blow (1530 +) **2** (also **duck out**) To evade or escape: *He ducked over the wall/ They always felt she was trying to duck work* (1896 +) **See** DEAD DUCK, FUCK A DUCK, HAVE ONE'S DUCKS IN A ROW, KNEE-HIGH TO A GRASSHOPPER, LAME DUCK, RUPTURED DUCK, SITTING DUCK

duck bumps *n phr* GOOSE BUMPS (1940s +)

duck-butt *n* A person of short stature (1930s +)

duck-egg *n* A score or grade of zero; GOOSE-EGG, ZIP (1868 +)

duck-fit *n* A noisy fit of anger: *Clarice would throw a duck-fit, if she knew* (1881 +)

ducks *n* Dear one; precious • Chiefly British use: *Try this one, ducks* (1930s +) *n* A person, especially one thought of as peculiar: *hand me the pliers, ducks* **See** HAVE ONE'S DUCKS IN A ROW

◁**duck's ass**▷ or **arse modifier**: He had a 1950 duck's-ass haircut with enough grease to lubricate the QE2 **n phr** DA, DUCKTAIL (1951 +)

duck-shoot *n* Something very easy; CINCH, PICNIC, PIECE OF CAKE [1970s +; fr the notion of shooting a *sitting duck*]

duck soup *n phr* Anything easily done; CINCH, PIECE OF CAKE: *It would be duck soup for him to have led Willis into a trap/ Only duck soup for a guy like you (1908 +)*

ducktail *n* A haircut tapered in back so that it resembles a duck's tail; DA, DUCK'S ASS (1950s + Teenagers)

duck-walk *v* To move forward while squatting on one's haunches: *Maybe that reporter should duck-walk up Olympia ski hill (1930s +)*

ducky or **duckie** *adj* **1** Excellent, splendid; delightful • Often used ironically: *Everything was just ducky until Lally went into that dame's house/ Oh, me? I'm just ducky (1897 +)* **2** Cute; too cute; CORNY: *Pastel phials tied with ducky satin bows (1897 +)* *n* Dear one; precious; DEARIE, DUCKS: *Are you quite ready, duckie? (1819 +)*

dud *modifier*: a dud bomb **n** **1** A failure: *The show's a dud/ He was a bit of a dud (1908 +)* **2** A shell or bomb that fails to explode (WWI armed forces)

duddy *See* FUDDY-DUDDY

dude *n* **1** A dapper man, esp one who is ostentatiously dressed; dandy • In earliest use, to quote an 1891 source, a *dude* was “not a dandy; there is nothing gallant or dashing about him. He is soberness itself; he is as respectable as an undertaker. Yet your real dude is irresistibly comic” (1883 +) **2** A guest at a Western or Western-style ranch (1883 +) **3** A man; fellow; CAT, GUY: *I'm sittin' in the bus stop, just me an' these other three dudes (1918 +)* [origin unknown; perhaps an invented word]

dudette *n* A cool young woman, counterpart of *dude*: *party filled with*

dudettes

dude up v phr To don fancy clothes or one's best clothes; DOLL UP
(1899 +)

Dudley See YOUR UNCLE DUDLEY

Dudley Do-Right n phr A person of exceptional virtue; social and moral paragon; MR CLEAN: *Bush's carefully managed image as a square-shouldered Dudley Do-Right/ a '90s breed of Dudley Do-Right is back in the saddle* [1980s +; fr a character in a television cartoon series, *Dudley Do-Right of the Mounties*]

duds n Clothing; THREADS: *To see them washed and put in and out of their duds was perhaps the greatest pleasure of her life* [1300 +; origin unknown; perhaps fr one or another English or Celtic words meaning "cloth, rag"]

dues See PAY ONE'S DUES

duff n The buttocks; rump; ASS: *A bunch of lazy guys sitting around on our duffs* [1830s +; origin uncertain; perhaps black slang for *fud*, "buttocks," attested by 1785; perhaps fr *duff*, "a (sailors') pudding boiled in a bag," which bag may have suggested a human fundament in shape; in this sense *duff* is a Northern pronunciation of *dough*]

duffer n 1 An elderly man; GEEZER, JASPER • Used rather affectionately: *He's a sweet old duffer, isn't he?* **2** A mediocre or downright poor performer, esp at golf; HACKER [1840s +; perhaps fr Scots *duffar*, "dolt"]

duh or duhh interj A sound imitating that of a weak-minded person

collecting his thoughts • The gesture of flapping one's lower lip with one's fingers while uttering a droning sound is used to the same effect: *Bill Cosby doesn't really serve Jell-O chocolate pudding at dinner parties? Duh/ white male artists continue to dominate (duhhh) the blue-chip market (1940s +)*

dujie *See* DOOJEE

du jour (D^{oo} ZH^{oo} or J^{oo}) *adj phr* Of today; of the day; current: *Thought du jour/ Kennedy would quiz aides about the crisis du jour/ Where would the management gurus du jour find grist for their latest best-sellers?* [1990s +; fr French, "of the day," used to identify the day's specialties in restaurants]

duke *n* **1** A hand, esp when regarded as a weapon (1874 +) **2** The winning decision in a boxing match, signaled by the referee's holding up the victor's hand: *Even if I lose the duke I get forty percent (1930s + Prizefight)* *v* **1** To hand something to someone: *Duke the kid a five or ten (1940s +)* **2** To fight with the fists (1940s +) **3** To try to collect money from a parent for something given to a child (1940s + *Circus*) **4** To short-change someone by palming a coin owed him (1940s + *Circus*) **5** To shake hands; PRESS THE FLESH (1965 +) **6** To do the sex act with or to; BOFF, SCREW: *She might even have duked one of the Hobart Street Fros sometime (1990s + Street gang)* [perhaps fr Romany *dook*, "the hand as read in palmistry, one's fate"] *See*

DUKES

duke breath *n phr* Fetid breath; halitosis [1990s + Teenagers; fr the notion of *duke* as someone or something very strong; in prison slang, for example, a *duke* is a strong habitual criminal, and on the

farm the bull was the *duke*]

duke it out *v phr*: More than 90 percent of the fugitives don't want to **duke it out** (1960s +)

duke someone out *v phr* **1** To beat someone unconscious; KNOCK someone OUT: *What should I do, duke him or her out?* **2** To damage or injure someone: *Dirk Hamilton dukes himself out, adopts a style in which he's inferior* (1970s +)

dukes *n* The fists or hands: *I imagine you can handle your dukes, Jim* [1859 +; said to be Cockney rhyming slang fr *Duke of Yorks*, "forks, hands"]

dukes-up *adj* Combative; FEISTY: *Her salty language and dukes-up style endeared her* (1970s +)

duket *See* DUCAT

dull as dishwater *adj phr* Very tedious and unexciting; boring: *The sermon today was dull as dishwater, Your Eminence* [1940s +; the original form, and current British form, is *dull as ditchwater*, attested by the 1840s]

dull out *v phr* To live a quiet life; eschew excitement: *Fewer distractions, fewer parties, fewer people. "I need to dull out for a year"* (1980s +)

dull roar *n* A relatively quiet situation; a calmer situation: *checkers game kept to a dull roar*

dullsville *adj* Very dull; tedious; DRAGSVILLE: *a dullsville wimp* (1960 +)

See -SVILLE

dull tool *n phr* An ineffective person; DEAD ONE, LOSER (1700+)

dumb *adj* Stupid; mentally sluggish; DIM: *You think I'm pretty dumb, don't you?* (1823+) *adj* or *adv* DAMN, DARN (1787+) [fr Pennsylvania German *dumm*]

◁**dumbass**▷ *adj* Stupid; inane; tedious: *Our private life has to take a backseat to every dumbass little news story* **n**: *to understand how a dumbass like Newton can have a following* (1950s+) **See** HAVE A CASE OF THE DUMBASS

dumbbell *n* A stupid person; idiot: *She's an awful dumbbell* [1918+; fr *dumbbell*, a kind of weightlifter's barbell, attested from the 1880s]

◁**dumb blonde**▷ *n phr* A pretty but rather stupid blonde young woman; BIMBO, DUMB BUNNY, DUMB DORA: *Robelot's not just another dumb blonde out there; she's very aggressive* (1950s+)

dumb bomb (or **missile**) *n phr* A bomb or missile lacking a sophisticated and accurate guidance system [1970s+; fr contrast with *smart bomb*]

dumb bunny *n phr* A naive and unwary person; silly little fool: *My dear, you are the preshest old dumb-bunny* (1917+)

dumb cluck *n phr* A stupid person; clumsy bungler; CLUCK, KLUTZ: *all those dumb clucks snickering at you* (1929+)

dumb Dora *n phr* A stupid or vapid young woman; BIMBO, DUMB BUNNY: *You're just an average Dumb Dora from north-suburban Chicagoland* [1890s+; said to have been coined by Anita Pines, the first woman stage manager of a burlesque theater]

dumb down *v phr* To make simpler and easier, esp to alter a textbook to make it more elementary • Apparently first used of movies: *There has been a real “dumbing down” of the texts/ what some educators have called the “dumbing down” of textbooks/ There are jobs that will be dumbed down* [1940s +; attributed to Los Angeles Times reporter William Trombley]

dumbhead or <dumbfuck> *n* A stupid person: *This dumbhead has just gone nuts/ the dumbfuck who thought that up* [1887 +; perhaps fr German *Dummkopf*]

dumbjohn *n* 1 A person easily duped; EASY MARK, PATSY (1950s +) 2 A recruit; Cruik, POGGIE (1940s + Army)

dumbo (DUM boh) *n* 1 A stupid person: *an ace dumbbo friend named Cleo* (1950s +) 2 A blunder; stupid mistake; BLOOPER: *if you think you’ve seen dumbos pulled on the highways* (1970s +)

dumb ox *n phr* A stupid, sluggish person, esp a hulking one [1847 +; oddly enough, this was the nickname given by his schoolfellow to Thomas Aquinas, not for stupidity but for stolid silence]

<dumbshit> *n* Stupid; CRETINOID, Dufus: *Yeah, right. Dumbshit, two-term Reagan* (1960s +)

dumb something up *v phr* To make something simpler and easier; leach out all but the most puerile substance; DUMB DOWN: *They handed him the script and told him to dumb it up still more* (1960s +)

dum-dum or **dumdum** or **dumb-dumb** *adj*: The only man safe enough to see is this dum-dum cop *n* A stupid or foolish person (1940s +)

dummy modifier: a dummy machine gun/ dummy windows **n 1** A stupid person; idiot; CLUCK (1796+) <2> A deaf-mute or a mute (1874+) **3** Bread (1890s+ *Hoboes*) **4** A train carrying railroad employees (1890s+ *Railroad*) **5** A weakened or diluted narcotic; also, a nonnarcotic substance sold as a narcotic; BLANK (1960s+ *Narcotics*) **6** A pasted-up page, a blank book, or other preliminary representation of material to be published (1858+ *Newspaper office & publishing*) **7** A model or representation; MOCK-UP (1845+) **v:** *The designer dummied the new book* **See** BEAT one's MEAT

dummy dust n phr Cocaine (1980s+)

dummy up v phr To keep silent; CLAM UP: *You can't dummy up on a murder case/ When questioned, they invariably dummy up* (1926+)

dump n 1 Any place so shabby or ugly as to be comparable to a depository for trash and garbage; a repulsive venue: *What a dump my hometown is now!* (1899+) **2** Any building or place: *Nice little dump you got here/ fanciest dump in town* (1930s+) **3** A prison (1904+ *Underworld*) **4** A race, game, etc, that is intentionally lost, usu for gambling advantage; FIX: *When he took a dive in the first I knew we had a dump on our hands* (1940s+ *Gambling*) **5** A defecation; a SHIT: *To start the morning with a satisfactory dump is a good omen* (1940s+) **6** A fund-raising event that allows many contributions to be given at once; SCOOP: *The chief has a breakfast dump at the Century Plaza, then a stump speech at 2 p.m.* (1990s+ *Politics*) **v 1** To sell goods, stock, etc, in order to manipulate or depress a market (1868+) **2:** *Players accepting bribes to "dump" games* **3** To bunt a baseball: *Dehoney dumped one toward third*

(1920+ *Baseball*) **4** To kill (1930s+ *Underworld*) **5** To rid oneself of someone or something; DEEP-SIX: *He dumped the whole cabinet* (1848+) **6** To admit someone to a hospital without proper cause • Often done as a way of avoiding responsibility for a patient (1980s+ *Medical*) **7** To assign vulnerable novices and officers with disciplinary infractions to drug-ridden precincts (1990s+ *Police*) **8** To speak openly and volubly: *I shake my head and proceed to start dumping about my mom* (1990s+) [origin uncertain; perhaps related to a Scandinavian term meaning “to fall suddenly,” the connection being the tipping out of a load from a cart] **See** CORE DUMP, TAKE A DUMP

◁**dump a load**▷ **v phr** To defecate; CRAP (1940s+)

dumped on modifier Maligned or somehow abused; also, criticized severely • From dump meaning “defecate”: *dumped on by her sister*

dumper n 1 An erratic and extravagant gambler: *Professional gamblers describe the Colonel as a dumper* (1950s+ *Gambling*) **2** A container for trash; Dumpster™: *It was determined that disco would be in the dumper* (1970s+) **See** IN THE DUMPER

dumping n Harsh criticism; severe derogation: *A coupon is provided on page 47 for your dumping* (1950s+)

dumping ground n phr A place to which unwanted persons and things are relegated: *Because of such appointments the Department came to be seen as “a dumping ground”* (1885+)

dump job n phr A derogatory attack; HATCHET JOB: *They did a dump job on her* (1990s+)

dump on (or **all over**) (also do a dump on) *v phr* To criticize harshly, often unfairly; complain and carp at; PUT DOWN: *If he does something right, I'm not going to dump on him/ Don't dump on the teachers we have/ an acknowledgement of the fact that he had dumped on us all year* [1940s+; perhaps fr *dump*, "defecation"]

Dumpster diving or **urban mining** *n phr* Searching through trash for something of value: *Low-end thefts range from so-called Dumpster diving, searching the garbage for discarded carbons, to old-fashioned card theft/ On Dumpster Diving: Eighner offered a sophisticated essay on the theme of surviving on refuse* [late 1980s+; fr the trademark of a type of refuse receiver]

dune buggy *n phr* A small and squat open car, usu with a Volkswagen engine, equipped with very fat tires for traveling on sand (1960s+)

duner *n* A dune-buggy driver or rider: *Duners go out on runs, trips by a half-dozen dune buggies* (1970s+)

dunk *n* **1:** *Leroy had a quick dunk in the creek* **2** A basketball field goal scored by putting the ball into the hoop from just beside or above it: *Almost all of the baskets were dunks/ basketball courts where the dunks have been so fierce lately* (1937+ *Basketball*) *v* **1** To dip something into a liquid, esp to dip food into a drink: *Scientific temperature readings cannot be taken just by dunking a thermometer on a string* (1919+) **2** To go into the water: *Be right back, just want to dunk* (1940s+) **3:** *He jumped up and dunked another one* [fr Pennsylvania German *dunken*, "dip"] **See** SLAM DUNK

dunkie butt *n phr* A large fundament: *What is a dunkie butt? It's a big butt that's shapely (1990s + Rappers)*

dunk on someone *v phr* To attack someone: *He talked about my mother, talked about my shoes, my shorts, so I dunked on him [1990s + ; probably fr the notion of a violent basketball *dunk* or *slam dunk*]*

dunno *v* Don't know • Casual pronunciation of *don't know*: *dunno where he is (1840s +)*

dupe *n* A duplicate copy of a film or text (1902 +)

duper *See* SUPER-DUPER

durn or durned *See* DARN

durn, a *See* NOT GIVE A DAMN

dust *n* Narcotics in powder form (1960s + *Narcotics*) *v* 1 To leave quickly; flee; fly: *Dillinger used a Ford when dusting from a job (1850 +)* 2 To hit; swat: *dusted one of the lieutenants with an old shoe for trying to talk them back to work (1612 +)* 3 (also, earlier, **dust off**) To kill: *Watch me dust this bitch/ Don't suppose you just want to dust Esteva and go home (1970s +)* 4 To spray insecticide from a low-flying aircraft (1930s +) *See* ANGEL DUST, EAT someone's DUST, HAPPY-DUST, HEAVEN DUST

dust, the *See* BITE THE DUST

duster *n* 1 A pitch purposely thrown at or close to the batter to intimidate him or force him back from the plate; BRUSHBACK (1920s + *Baseball*) 2 The buttocks *See* KNUCKLE-DUSTERS

dust someone's jacket *v phr* To beat and pummel someone (1698 +)

dust kitty (or bunny) *n phr* One of the tufts of dust that accumulate under beds, tables, etc; GHOST TURDS (1980s +)

dust someone off *v phr* To pitch a ball at or close to the batter; BRUSHBACK (1920s + *Baseball*)

dust something off *v phr* (also **dust the cobwebs off**) To use or reuse something old; reclaim something: *Why don't we dust off a few of the good ideas our parents had?/ Hey, let's dust the cobwebs off the Declaration of Independence and take it seriously* (1940s +)

dustup *n* A quarrel or fight; altercation; SCRAP: *a big dustup in the office of a vice-president* (1897 +)

dusty *See* RUSTY-DUSTY

Dusty *n* **1** A common nickname for a person named Rhodes, Rhoades, Rodes, etc **2** A nickname for a short person, a "dusty butt" (1940s +)

dusty butt *n phr* A person of short stature; SHORTY (1940s +)

Dutch *adj* German: *Ann Arbor's a Dutch town* (1460 +) *adv* (also **dutch**) With each person paying his or her own share: *This meal is Dutch, okay?* (1887 +) *n* A nickname for anyone with a German surname: *Big Dutch Klängenfuss* (1920s +) *See* DOUBLE DUTCH, GO DUTCH, IN DUTCH, TO BEAT THE BAND

Dutch act, the *See* DO THE DUTCH

Dutch courage *n phr* False or fleeting bravery resulting from liquor: *A man in liquor is full of Dutch courage* [1820s +; like many other

pejorative uses of *Dutch*, this comes from the 17th century, when the English and the Hollanders were chronically at war. In some uses, though, *Dutch* means “German” rather than “Netherlandish,” and the cases are not easily sorted]

Dutch rub *n phr* The trick or torment of holding someone’s head and rubbing very hard and painfully at a small area of scalp with the fist; NOOGIE, Barbershop Quartet (1910 +)

Dutch treat *adv*: *We’ll eat Dutch treat tonight* *n phr* A meal, show, etc, where each person pays his or her own way (1887 +) **See** GO DUTCH

Dutch twins *n phr* Two people having the same birthday (1980s +)

Dutch uncle *n phr* A severely censorious person, usu a man: A “Dutch uncle” whose every word is reproof (1838 +)

Dutch way, the *n phr* Suicide (1908 +)

duty **See** PAD DUTY, RACK DUTY, SACK DUTY

DWB *v phr*: *Nor does William Julius Wilson wonder why he was stopped near a small New England town by a policeman. There’s a moving violation that many African-Americans know as DWB: Driving While Black* (1990s +) **See** DRIVING WHILE BLACK

dweeb or **dweebo** *modifier*: *biggest dweeb award of all* *n* A despised person; CREEP, NERD (1980s + Teenagers)

dweeby *adj* Revolting; silly; NERDLY: *Wear a visor (or something less dweeby)* (1980s + Teenagers)

◁**dyke** or **dike**▷ *modifier*: *That woman lives with her dyke daughter and her dyke daughter-in-law* *n* A lesbian, esp one who takes an

aggressive role; **BULLDYKE** [1930s + ; origin uncertain and much debated; perhaps fr a shortening of *morphodyke*, dialectal and substandard pronunciation of “hermaphrodite,” perhaps influenced by *dick*, “penis”; a source of 1896 lists *dyke*, “the vulva”]

◁**dykey** or **dikey**▷ **adj** Resembling or having the nature of an aggressive lesbian: *doing calisthenics with the dikey-looking brunette* (1960s +)

dynamic duo **n** A powerful pair of people or things: *dynamic duo of SpongeBob and Squidward* [fr the Batman television program]

dynamite **adj** (also **dyno-mite**) Excellent; superior; SUPER:

“Dynamite. I knew we’d get along/ DYN-O-MITE! The Blammo 12-gauge has a precision-cast hollow-core slug with stabilization tail fins for accuracy

at long range **n** 1 Heroin or cocaine of high quality: *a connection who deals in good-quality stuff, “dynamite”* (1920s + *Narcotics*) 2

Marijuana, esp a marijuana cigarette (1950s + *Narcotics*) 3

Something very disturbing or dangerous; a sensation: *Don’t talk about it, it’s dynamite* (1930s +)

dynamite charge **n phr** (also **Allen charge**, **deadlock charge**) A

very strong charge given by a judge to a jury, seeking to ensure a verdict: *might have been better off had the jury been instructed with a dynamite charge* [1990s + *Lawyers*; fr a punning use of *charge*]

dynamo **n** An energetic, hardworking, forceful person (1890s +)

E

each *See* PER EACH

eager beaver *modifier*: *her eager-beaver sincerity/ eager-beaver gung-ho spirit* ***n phr*** An energetic and willing worker; ambitious striver (1940s +)

eagle ***n*** A US one-dollar bill [fr the eagle pictured on the back] *See* LEGAL EAGLE

eagle-eye ***n*** **1** A person noted for keen vision or one who keeps a close watch: *It took a real eagle-eye to catch that* **2** A locomotive engineer (*Railroad*) **3** A detective, esp one assigned to watch for shoplifters or pickpockets

eagle-eyed ***adj*** **1** Having very keen vision **2** Keeping a close watch (1601 +)

eagle freak ***n phr*** A conservationist and environmentalist; ECOFREAK, Duck Squeezer (1970s +)

ear ***v*** To listen; hear: *Rosen Tapes To Be Eared By The Judge* (1583 +)

See ALL EARS, BEND **someone's** EAR, BLOW IT OUT, CAULIFLOWER EAR, CHEW **someone's** EAR OFF, ELEPHANT EARS, HAVE **something** COMING OUT OF **one's** EARS, IN A PIG'S ASS, NOT DRY BEHIND THE EARS, PIN **someone's** EARS BACK, PLAY IT BY EAR, POUND **one's** EAR, PRETTY EAR, PULL IN **one's** EARS, PUT A BUG IN **someone's** EAR, PUT IT IN YOUR EAR, RABBIT EARS,

STAND AROUND WITH **one's** FINGER UP **one's** ASS, STEAM WAS COMING OUT OF **someone's** EARS, STICK IT, TALK **someone's** EAR OFF, WARM **someone's** EAR

ear-bender *n* An overly loquacious person; GABBER, WINDBAG: *James Joyce was something of an ear-bender, no? (1930s +)*

ear candy *n phr* ELEVATOR MUSIC (1980s +)

eared *See* DOG-EARED

earful, an *n phr* A large or impressive quantity of talk, esp of a rambling or gossipy sort (1917 +)

ear-grabber *n* Something that catches one's attention; HOOK: *It's one of those short items that are perfect ear-grabbers for radio and TV (1990s +)*

early bird *modifier*: an early-bird session/ early-bird radio program *n phr* **1** A person who habitually gets up early in the morning; one who greets the dawn • Based on the proverb "The early bird catches the worm," attested fr the 1670s **2** A person who arrives early at a gathering, the office, etc **3** The first train, bus, airplane, etc, of the day (1883 +)

earn one's wings *v phr* To prove oneself competent and reliable in one's work [1940s +; fr the wing-shaped badge awarded to graduating air cadets]

ears *n* Small boxed announcements at the upper right and left hand of a newspaper page: *space in the small boxes known as "ears" on the tops of front pages (1940s +)*

earth muffin or **granola** *n phr* A person who is not stylish; for

example, a woman who does not wear cosmetics • Shows a mocking attitude toward “natural-looking” people and environmentalists (1980s + *Students*)

Earth to someone *interj* Hello? Are you listening? • As if someone was on a spacecraft or is *spacy*: *Earth to Kyle, come in*

ear worm *n* A song or part of a song that is stuck in one’s mind: *Billy Joel songs tend to become ear worms*

ease on (or **out** or **on out**) *v phr* To depart; MOSEY ALONG: *easing on down the road to the Land of Oz* (1920s +)

ease someone **out** *v phr* To dismiss or remove someone from a post or place gradually and gently (1940s +)

ease up *v phr* **1** To become less stringent or punishing: *Let’s ease up on them; they’ve got no fight left* (1915 +) **2** To become less tense, exertive, etc; GO EASY, LIGHTEN UP, **relax**, TAKE IT EASY: *Come on, ease up now, it’s all over* (1945 +)

easy *See* BREATHE EASY, FREE-AND-EASY, GO EASY, OVER EASY, SPEAKEASY, TAKE IT EASY, TAKE THINGS EASY

easy as pie *adj phr* and *adv phr* (Variations: **can be** or **could be** or **falling off a log** or **hell** or **rolling off a log** or **taking candy from a baby** may replace **pie**) Very easy or easily: *He did it easy as pie/ The thing’s easy as can be* (entry form 1921 + , log 1840 +)

easy digging *n phr* Anything easily done; PIECE OF CAKE [1950s + ; perhaps fr earlier sense, “sugar”]

easy eight *n phr* An easy job; sinecure: *Smith doesn’t relish the work;*

he tells himself the job's an easy eight, but wastes his nights drinking away the haunting images of the day (1990s +)

easy lay *n phr* A person easy to convince and control; PUSHOVER:
Don't expect Stone to direct: Oliver's been around the block and won't be seduced by money. He's not an easy lay (1934 +)

easy make *n phr* **1** (also **easy lay**) A woman easily persuaded to engage in the sex act **2** EASY MARK

easy mark *n phr* A person easily victimized or cheated; PATSY, SUCKER:
He was an "easy mark" (1896 +)

easy meat *modifier*: *their easy-meat score in the aerial spraying issue* *n phr* **1** Something done or acquired very easily (1920s +) **2** A person easily duped; MARK, PATSY, SUCKER (1986 +) [fr the earlier sense that something or someone is vulnerable, easily hunted and caught, etc, esp in the sexual sense, where *meat* means "sexual victim, conquest, object, etc"]

easy money *n phr* Money easily gotten or earned: *easy money for helping in the garden*

easy on the eye *modifier* Good-looking, pleasant to look at:
cheerleaders easy on the eyes (1938 +)

easy street *See* ON EASY STREET

eat *v* **1** To preoccupy or upset; engross; fret: *She asked what was eating me when I frowned so (1893 +)* **2** To be forced to swallow or recant something: *He mouths off a lot, and lately has had to eat many of his grand pronouncements (1382 +)* **3** To be unable to pass the

ball along: *They blitzed and the quarterback had to eat the ball*
(1970s+ Sports) 4 To accept and enjoy; EAT UP, SWALLOW: *You really eat
this shit, don't you? (1919+)* <5> (also **eat up**) To do fellatio or
cunnilingus; GO DOWN ON someone: *So Little Red Riding Hood said to the
wolf "Eat me" (1916+)*

eat cheese v phr To inform on someone; tattle; RAT [1970s+ Army; fr
the *cheese-eating* of the rodent]

eat crow v phr To admit that one was wrong; recant and atone
[1872+; said to have originated during an armistice of the War of
1812, when an American soldier shot a crow while hunting across
the Niagara River from his post; he was forced by guile to take a
bite of it; he in return forced the English landowner to consume a
portion]

eat dirt v phr To accept rebuke or harassment meekly; swallow one's
pride; EAT SHIT: *I ate dirt and apologized to that bastard (1857+)*

eat someone's dust v phr To be behind someone in a race or chase:
After two laps they ate Coghlan's dust (1940s+)

eater See CHALK-EATER, CHEESE BUN, FIRE-EATER, FROG, MOTHERFUCKER, PETER-EATER, SNAKE
EATER

eatery n A restaurant (1900+)

eatery/drinkery n A bar that serves food: *He opened an
eatery/drinkery called the Chelsea Street Pub (1980s+)*

eat one's hat See EAT one's WORDS

eat high on (or off) the hog v phr To live very well; thrive; prosper;

SHIT IN HIGH COTTON: *You will eat high on the hog, as a member of the ruling mob/ The institute will eat high off the hog (1940s +)*

eating *See* FROG, MOTHERFUCKING

◁**eatin' stuff**▷ *n phr* (also **eating pussy, table grade**) A woman of great sexual appeal • Although the reference is ambiguous, these terms need not connote cunnilingus (1940s +)

eat like a horse *v phr* To eat ravenously: *used to eat like a horse*

eat someone's lunch *v phr* (**catch** or **have** may replace **eat**) To defeat decisively and humiliatingly; CLOBBER, FINISH: *They are destroying the America that ate the world's lunch because we were the masters of change/ The hitters have been having his lunch (1960 +)*

Eat my shorts! *sentence* Leave me alone; drop dead: *I hate you. Eat my shorts*

eat out *v phr* To have a meal away from home, esp at a restaurant (1933 +)

eat someone out *v phr* **1** To reprimand someone severely; rebuke harshly; CHEW someone OUT: *Out came Joe McCarthy from the Boston dugout all set to eat me out (1940s +)* ◁**2**▷ To do cunnilingus or analingus (1960s +)

◁**eat pussy**▷ *v phr* To perform cunnilingus (1930s +)

eats *n* Food; provender: *A soft bed and good eats were paradise enow*

◁**eat shit**▷ *v phr* **1** EAT DIRT **2** To be accursed, humiliated, etc • Usua loud oral insult; in WWII, Japanese troops attempted to arouse US troops to a reckless frenzy by shouting "Babe Ruth eats shit!": *You*

eat shit, you son of a bitch! **See** TAKE SHIT

eat the carpet v phr To be obsequious; truckle: “*Eat the carpet*” is what endangered nominees do at confirmation hearings to make amends: *They crawl* (1990s +)

eat up v phr 1 To use entirely; deprive of completely; GOBBLE UP: *The rent ate up half my pay* (1535 +) **2** To accept and enjoy; have delectation for; EAT: *When a man receives wolf whistles, he eats it up* (1909 +)

eat one’s words (or hat) v phr To be forced either to retract or to suffer for what one has said: *They showed him proof and he had to eat his words/I’ll eat my hat if I’m wrong* (Words 1891 +, hat 1836 +)

eat your heart out sentence Look at me and be envious; suffer vexation over my situation • A rather nasty taunt: *Eat your heart out, Aaron Lebedeff!* [1581 +; current use influenced by Yiddish *es dir oys s’harts*, “eat out your heart”]

ech (EK) See YUCK

eco- combining word Having to do with ecology: *eco-activist/ ecofreak/ eco-terrorist/ eco-warrior* (1960 +)

ecofreak or econut n An environmentalist and conservationist; Duck Squeezer, EAGLE FREAK: *Ecofreaks will love the clean-burning engine* (1972 +)

econobox n A cheap car without frills: *The sleek and brightly painted Paseo’s body wraps a core that is strictly econobox* (1990s +)

ecstasy or X n A variety of amphetamine narcotic: *Ecstasy, by*

emergency order of the Drug Enforcement Administration, illegal (1980s + Narcotics)

Ed See OP-ED PAGE

edge *n* **1** An advantage: *soaking up that famous New York “edge” (1896 +)* **2** An irritated or sarcastic tone; sharp timbre: *She answered with a slight edge to her voice (1908 +)* **See** HAVE AN EDGE ON, HAVE AN EDGE ON someone

edge, the *n phr* Perilous territory; a risky situation: *Living closer to the edge somehow makes you more than just a pampered Hollywood pretty boy (1980s +)*

Edge City or technoburb *n phr* A sprawling suburb lacking a downtown core but well provided with malls and other consumer amenities and serving as a place of high-tech employment: *This is the most obvious truth of family life in Edge City: The old idea of neighborhood is dead/ They’re called edge cities, or technoburbs, suburbs a dozen or twenty miles outside old downtown cores that have burgeoned into centers for high-tech employment [1990s + ; the term was originated and propagated by Joel Garreau in his 1992 book *Edge City: Life on the New Frontier*]*

edged *adj* **1** Drunk: *When he was nicely edged he was a pretty good sort of guy (1894 +)* **2** Very angry; PISSED OFF (1980s + Teenagers)

edge someone out *v phr* To defeat by a close margin; barely surpass: *We edged them out by just three votes (1940s +)*

edgy *adj* **1** (also **on edge**) Tense and irritable; nervous; UPTIGHT: *I saw he was getting a bit edgy, so I agreed to include him (1837 +)* **2**

Daringly advanced; on the cutting edge: *Spurred by the sudden obsession with youth culture, these editors are producing a series of visually edgy, culturally progressive new glossies (1990s +)*

edifice complex *n phr* The keen desire of public and educational administrators to build buildings: *NY Gov. Nelson Rockefeller's edifice complex left a legacy of overly large and torpid buildings around the state [1940s +; a pun on Freud's 1890s Oedipus complex]*

Edsel *n* Something useless; a fiasco: *We have to win out. We're not selling Edsels, you know [1950s +; fr the Edsel car, so named in 1956, which fell short of commercial success]*

educated guess *n phr* A guess made with some basis of fact and knowledge: *Economists offer some educated guesses on why the adjustment in unemployment is so skewed (1954 +)*

-ee suffix used to form nouns The object of what is indicated: *baby-sittee/ kickee/ muggee*

eel *See* MANHATTAN EEL

◁**eff**▷ *v* or *n* **FUCK** • This curt euphemism is also the base for equivalents of *fucked, fucking, and fucker: eff off back to effing Russia/ She effed around until she was forced to work again/ this is the stupidest effing stunt you've ever pulled (1920s +)*

◁**effing** or **F-ing**▷ *adj* **Fucking** • Euphemistic: *Get that effing cat out of my office*

egads switch (or button) *See* CHICKEN SWITCH

egg *n* **1** A person: *Evelyn's a good egg (1853 +)* **2** Anything roughly

egg-shaped, such as the head, a baseball, an aerial bomb, etc:
bopped him on the egg/ reared back and chucked the old egg (1589+)
[first sense altered fr the mid-19th-century term *bad egg*, “bad or rotten person”] **See** BAD EGG, DUCK-EGG, FRIED EGG, GOOSE EGG, HARD-BOILED EGG, HAVE EGG ON **one’s** FACE, LAY AN EGG, NEST EGG, SUCK EGGS, WALK ON EGGS, YOU CAN’T MAKE AN OMELET WITHOUT BREAKING EGGS

eggbeater *n* **1** An aircraft propeller (*WWII Army Air Force*) **2** A helicopter • Now almost entirely superseded by *chopper*: *The “eggbeater” took off for Inchon with its burden (1937+)* **3** An outboard motor; **KICKER**: *wouldn’t be caught dead with an eggbeater on their boat (1940s+)*

egger **See** HAM-AND-EGGER

eggery **See** HAM-AND-EGGERY

egghead *n* **1** *A bald man (1950s+)* **2** An intellectual; thinker; **DOUBLE DOME** • Revived in the 1950s to designate the followers of Adlai Stevenson: *An egghead is “one who calls Marilyn Monroe Mrs Arthur Miller” (1907+)* [second sense presumably fr the putative high, domed, egg-shaped *heads* of such persons; the term was used in a letter of Carl Sandburg about 1918]

egg in someone’s beer *n phr* The height of luxury or pleasure; everything one could desire • Often part of an impatient question addressed to someone who asks for more than is merited or available: *So it’s got no air-conditioning. You want egg in your beer?/ I don’t call two weeks’ vacation exactly egg in my beer (1940s+)*

egg-sucker *n* A person who seeks advancement through flattery;

BROWN-NOSE (1950s +)

ego trip *n phr* Something done primarily to build one's self-esteem or display one's splendid qualities: *The pie-thrower said the guru was on an ego trip/ This isn't any ego trip, taking a job in this administration v: I was showing off, ego-tripping* [1960s + ; based on *trip*, "psychedelic narcotic experience"]

eh *interj* **1** An expression indicating that one is listening to what another is saying **2** An indication of slight surprise; hey! **3** An indication that one is puzzled about something said (*Canadian*)

eight *See* FORKED-EIGHT, FORTY-EIGHT

eightball *n* ◀**1**▶ A black person (1919 +) **2** A chronically unfortunate and ineffective person; LOSER, SAD SACK (1940s +) **3** SQUARE (1950s + *Jive talk*) [because the pool ball numbered eight is black and is unlucky if it blocks one's cue ball] *See* BEHIND THE EIGHT BALL

eighteen-wheeler *n phr* A semitrailer truck; cab and trailer: *The driver of the eighteen-wheeler to my left was wearing the uniform of the West Virginia Highway Patrol* (1970s + *Citizens band*)

eighter (or *Ada*) *from Decatur* *n phr* The card, roll, or craps point of eight (1940s + *Crapshooting & poker*)

eight-hundred-pound gorilla *See* SIX-HUNDRED-POUND GORILLA

eighty-six *n* **1** A cook's term for "none" or "nix" when asked for something not available (1930s + *Lunch counter*) **2** A person who is not to be served more liquor: *known as an "eighty-six," which means: "Don't serve him"* (1930s + *Bartenders*) **v 1:** *We had to eighty-six the*

French dip **2** (also **eight-six**) To eject or interdict someone: *I'll have you eighty-sixed out of this bar/ I been eighty-sixed out of better situations (1959+)* **3** To reject; refuse; eschew: *Kids, eighty-six those video games (1980s+)* **4** To kill; destroy; annihilate: *There'd been serious pragmatic reasons for not eighty-sixing the man then and there (1970s+)* [probably fr the rhyme with "nix"]

el bonzo *adj phr* Crazy; hectic; frenetic; BONZO: *At dinner time, this restaurant goes el bonzo (1990s+)*

elbow *n* A police officer or detective **v** To associate with someone as a friend; RUB ELBOWS **See** BEND THE ELBOW, NOT KNOW **one's** ASS FROM **one's** ELBOW, RUB ELBOWS

elbow-bender *n* A convivial person; drinker

elbow-bending *n* Drinking liquor: *the gentlemanly art of refined elbow-bending*

elbow grease *n phr* Muscular exertion; physical effort (1710+)

elbow someone out *v phr* To eliminate or replace someone by aggressive pressure: *She looked pretty secure, but he elbowed her out of the vice presidency*

elbow room *n phr* Barely enough space for the occupant; a minimum of space: *This office is so crowded I couldn't find elbow room for anyone else/ Don't crowd so, give me elbow room [1700s+;* propagated in the US because it was a nickname for General John Burgoyne, who boasted in the 1770s that he would find *elbow room* in this country]

el cheapo *modifier:* *Beware of plaid shirts, el cheapo haircuts and*

candidates who talk r-e-a-l slow **n phr** A cheap product; a piece of shoddy merchandise: *They bought the El Cheapos and found they didn't work* [1960s + ; probably first applied like *El Ropo*, to cheap cigars, since many cigars have Spanish names; see *el -o*, mock-Spanish combining form]

elephant *See* SEE PINK ELEPHANTS, WHITE ELEPHANT

elephant ears **n phr** Large, thick metal disks on the outer shell of a rocket or missile (1950s + *Astronautics*)

elephant linebacker (or position) **n phr** A linebacker or defensive end who specializes in rushing the quarterback on pass plays: *Now comes "elephant position"/ Paup started the first nine games at elephant, or rush, outside linebacker* (1990s + *Football*)

elephant tranquilizer **n phr** ANGEL DUST (1960s + *Narcotics*)

elevate **v** To rob: *go out and "elevate" a bank* [1920s + ; probably a play on *heist*]

elevated **adj** Drunk (late-1600s +)

elevator doesn't go to the top floor, one's sentence One is not very bright: *Those people, doesn't sound like their elevators go to the top floor/ But they should come down now. If they don't, their elevator doesn't go to the top* (1980s +)

elevator music **n phr** Bland, pretty music, of the sort played over speakers in elevators; EAR CANDY, MUZAK (1970s +)

elevenses **n** Light refreshments: *coffee and some sandwiches ... "Elevenses," he said*

el foldo *n phr* Academic failure, either general or in a course
(1940s+ College students) **See** PULL AN EL FOLDO

eliminated *adj* Killed: *eliminated in prison*

Elk *n* A conventional person; SQUARE: *kill themselves later with laughter over the amount of money the Elks spent* [1950s+ Beat talk; fr a scornful judgment of the Benevolent and Protective Order of *Elks*]

el -o combining form An amusing variation of whatever is infixed:
travel el cheapo/ flatchested el birdos in long dresses/ You still seeing El Sleazo these days?/ universal emptiness, el zilcho/ Our President did his famous el foldo/ If it is calm, it is el snoro [1940s+; fr a common pattern in Spanish]

El Ropo *n phr* A name for any inferior cigar, or for any cigar at all that one does not like [1940s+; imitation of a typical cigar name, of a cigar made of *rope*]

else **See** OR ELSE

embalmed *adj* Drunk

embalming fluid *n phr* Strong coffee, whiskey, or other potent drink
(1890s+)

emcee **See** MC

emote *v* **1** To play a theatrical role, esp one calling for a strong display of emotion; HAM: *all been panting to see her emote in the gangster film* **2** To indulge in a display of feeling, esp a pretense:
Now she's emoting about the electric bill (1917+)

emoticon *n* Symbols made from punctuation marks, used to denote

emotion: :-) *n* smile ;-); *n* smile with a wink; 8-) *n* smile from a person who wears glasses; :-(*n* frown (1990s+ Computer)

empty-nester *n* A person whose children have grown up and moved away from home: when my older boys were grown and I'm an empty-nester/ We are getting a lot of empty-nesters moving into a Leisure World development/ elderly "empty nesters" who sell their suburban homes and come to the city (1980s+)

empty suit *n phr* A person of some seeming distinction who is actually a product of publicity: Steven Brill calls him an "empty suit" whose main talent is getting his name in the papers (1980s+)

enchilada *See* BIG ENCHILADA, **the** WHOLE ENCHILADA

end *n* 1 A share; *CUT*: Eddie would be entitled to half an end/ I muscle in for an end of the beer racket (1903+) 2 Particular concern or portion; sector: Selling's his end of it (1909+) *See* GO OFF THE DEEP END, HIND END, JUMP OFF THE DEEP END, **the** LIVING END, REAR END, SHORT END OF THE STICK

end, the *n phr* The best; the greatest; the LIVING END: Mr Secretary General, you're the end! (1950s+ Beat & cool talk)

end of the line (or road) *n phr* The very end: end of the line for his big plans (1940s+)

end run *n phr* An attempt to avoid or evade higher authority by acting outside authorized channels: McLarty gave Shalala a dressing down about doing end runs around the White House v: Special interests have found new ways to end-run our system/ the label chiefs would no longer be allowed to end-run Morgado (1950s+ fr football)

ends *n* **1** Shoes: *When a hipster buys clothes, he begins with “ends”* (1950s+ *Beat & cool talk*) **2** A complete turning over of the motorcycle (1980s+ *Motorcyclists*)

endsville or **endville** *adj* Superb; unsurpassed: *Endville means the best* [1950s+ *Cool talk*; see **-sville**]

Energizer bunny, the *n phr* Someone or something that never runs out of energy: *Nixon, like the Energizer bunny, just goes on and on and on* [1990s+; fr television ads for Energizer™ batteries, which show a mechanical rabbit carrying on endlessly]

enforcer *n* A person, esp a gangster, hockey player, or other athlete assigned to intimidate and punish opponents; POLICEMAN (1930s+)

English¹ *n* An English muffin (1950s+ *Lunch counter*)

English² *n* A spin imparted to a billiard ball, tennis ball, etc, to make it curve [1860s+; fr French *anglé*, “angled,” similar to *Anglais*, “English”]

English spliff *n phr* A cigarette combining tobacco with some narcotic: *rolls an English spliff, tobacco mixed with hashish* (1960s+ *Narcotics*)

engraved invitation, an *See* DO YOU WANT AN ENGRAVED INVITATION

enjoy *interj* An exhortation to be happy, to enjoy oneself: *Go. Read. Enjoy. It couldn't hurt/ The trooper grinned. “Enjoy,” he said, and walked on toward the cruiser* [1980s+; fr a Yiddish speech pattern, recorded but not approved by Leo Rosten]

enough is enough *interj* An exhortation to be done, to desist: *More*

than a few descendants of immigrants are saying enough is enough
(1546 +)

enough to choke a horse *adv phr* To a very great degree; in a very large quantity: *His ego is big enough to choke a horse* (1940s +)

enough to gag a maggot *adv phr* Very disgusting; repulsive: *His excuse was enough to gag a maggot/ "Oh, gross," Lou Ann said. "Gag a maggot"* (1970s +)

enviro modifier: *Attending an enviro benefit because he cared about the rain forest* *n* An environmentalist: *Even Beltway enviros not promised jobs expected something* (1990s +)

equalizer *n* A pistol or other firearm; the DIFFERENCE (1900 +)

erase *v* To kill; RUB OUT (1940s +)

eraser *n* A knockout or a knockout punch (1940s + *Prizefight*)

-erino suffix used to form nouns (also **-arino** or **-orino**) A humorous version or a remarkable specimen of what is indicated: *peacherino/ bitcherino* [1900 +; probably fr the Italian diminutive suffix *-ino* combined with the agentive suffix *-er*]

-eroo suffix used to form nouns (also **-aroo** or **-roo** or **-oo**)
Emphatic, humorous, or affectionate form of what is indicated:
babyroo/ floperoo/ jivaroo/ screameroo/ sockeroo (1930s +)

-ers suffix used to form adjectives and nouns In the condition humorously indicated • These are all British imports, coming ultimately from public school slang: *bonkers/ champers/ preppers/ starkers* (1860s +)

-ery suffix used to form nouns **1** Place or establishment where the indicated thing is used, done, sold, etc: *boozery/ eatery/ minkery* (1920s +) **2** The collectivity or an instance of what is indicated: *claptrappery/ jerkery*

-ess suffix used to form nouns A woman member of the indicated group or calling • A standard suffix now used most often in slang partly because the standard use is regarded as, and sometimes meant to be, offensive: *loaferess/ muggess/ veepess* (1400s +)

etaoin shrdlu (ə TAY oh ən SHƏRD lōō) **n phr** Confusion; mistakes: *98 percent accurate and 2 percent etaoin shrdlu* [1931 +; fr the phrase typeset by sweeping one's finger down the two left-hand columns of Linotype keys, in a gesture made by compositors when they have erred and must begin again]

-eteria *See* -ATERIA

Ethel **n** **1** A coward, esp a cautious prizefighter **2** An effeminate man; PERCY, SISSY (1920s +)

euchre **v** To outwit, esp by cheating; SCAM (1855 +)

Euro **adj** or *combining word* European: *The majority of the Euro children hit the black box first/ Eurobrat/ Eurobucks/ Eurofunk/ Eurojargon/ dancing Europop strings* (1950s +)

even **adj** On the same footing: *When you hit me we'll be even* (1637 +)

See GET EVEN

even break **n phr** A fair and equal chance; honest treatment; a FAIR SHAKE: *The Bible, I think it is, says never to give a sucker an even break*

(1911 +)

evened out *adj phr* Restored to balance and health; rational: *“I was really emotionally fucked up.” “Are you evened out now?” (1970s +)*

evening *See* LARGE EVENING

even-stephen or **even-steven** *adj* Fair; even; equitable: *Give me the hundred and fifty and we’ll call it even-steven* **adv**: *And we’ll do likewise for San Francisco and Odessa, or any places we want, always even-stephen (1866 +)*

even the score *v phr* GET EVEN (1940s +)

ever *adv* Really; truly; certainly • Used postpositively for emphasis: *Boy, has it ever!/ Clinton’s generation has already had its chance to make its tastes the country’s tastes. Has it ever/ Did we win? Did we ever!*

evergreen *modifier*: *desperately searching the shelf of “evergreen” pieces, hoping to find some picture story that we could tie in with what was happening* **n** 1 (also **think piece**, **thumbsucker**) A story that is not news, but penetrating analysis, etc: *Such articles, the desperate resort of editorial writers everywhere, are known as evergreens and think pieces (1980s + Print & broadcast journalism)* 2 A perennial favorite, esp a song; GOLDEN OLDIE (1940s +) [journalism senses so called because such material is perdurably useful]

evergreen contract *n phr* A contract always written with a time extension: *It was an “evergreen” contract on which he’d always have two years to go automatically (1980s + Sports)*

ever-loving *adj* Devoted; faithful: *And this is my ever-loving bride*

intensifier: *Say that again and I'll bust your ever-loving ass (1930s +)*

everybody and his uncle (or **brother**, etc.) *n phr* Absolutely

everyone: *Everybody and his uncle came to the party/ Parvin received advice from everybody and his brother/ "Will enough people see that?" "Everybody and his dog will see that," Smith says [1940s + ; in earlier versions going back to the 1860s, his cousin or their mothers-in-law could replace uncle]*

every man jack *n phr* Everyone; every male; EVERY TOM, DICK, AND HARRY: *I'll have you in irons, every man jack (1840 +)*

everything but the kitchen sink *adj phr:* *Sunday dinner—salads with*

an everything-but-the-kitchen-sink touch n phr Everything imaginable
• First used in such phrases as "They hit us with everything but the kitchen sink" (*WWII armed forces*)

everything's coming up roses *sentence* Everything is going
marvelously well (*1980s +*)

every Tom, Dick, and Harry *n phr* Every and any man, esp a very
ordinary one; Ordinary Joe: *letting every Tom, Dick, and Harry in on
the election (1734 +)*

every which way *adv phr* In all ways; in all directions: *Mrs Bush now
has it every which way: she's the American queen mother and the
master politician (1824 +)*

evil *adj* 1 Excellent; splendid; MEAN, WICKED: *Geoffrey beats an evil set of
skins (1950s +)* 2 Biting and sarcastic; catty; BITCHY (*1970s +
Homosexuals*)

evil twin *n* An illegal or nasty counterpart or duplicate of something:
Spock's evil twin

ex or **x** *n* A former wife or husband, girlfriend or boyfriend, etc: *He introduced his ex rather casually, considering they were together 27 years (1929+)*

exam modifier: *exam results/ exam book* *n* An examination (1848+)

excess baggage *n phr* A person or thing regarded as unnecessary and likely to impede: *He thought his wife and kids were excess baggage (1909+ Theater)*

ex-con *n* A former convict (1906+)

excuse *n* A version or example of: *He's a rotten excuse for a lawyer (1940s+)*

excuse (or pardon) me all to hell *sentence* I apologize; I am sorry • Most often said ironically, when one thinks an accusation has been undeserved or too strong

excuse-me hit *n phr* A hit made with a checked swing or other unlikely contact (1980s+ *Baseball*)

exec modifier: *exec perks/ exec burnout* *n* 1 An executive officer (1920s+ *Navy*) 2 A business executive: *They'd never heard of female execs/ I find parking space for senior execs (1896+)*

executive modifier Stylish; luxurious; costly; POSH: *executive housing/ executive bus/ executive class (1970s+)*

exo *n* An exhibition game or match: *I mean she's playing a freaking exo (1990s+)*

expedition *See* GO FISHING

extra *n* 1 A special edition of a newspaper or a special broadcast of news made immediately on learning of an important event; news-break (1793+) 2 A person appearing in a crowd scene or otherwise in a minor capacity in a play or movie: *I was an extra in the Budapest showcase of “Godot” (1880+ Theater)*

extra cheese *n* All the trimmings, all the perks: *going out with him for the extra cheese*

extracurricular *adj* Irregular; irresponsible: *not an affair, but an extracurricular fling* [fr the college sense “outside the academic curriculum”]

extra mile, the *See* GO THE EXTRA MILE

-ey *See* -IE

eye *n* A private detective; PRIVATE EYE: *an eye named Johnny O’John*

(1930+) *See* BIG BROWN EYES, BLACK EYE, CATS’ EYES, EAGLE-EYE, FOUR-EYES, GIVE

someone THE EYE, GIVE **someone** THE FISH-EYE, GIVE **someone** THE GLAD EYE, GOO-GOO EYES, HAVE EYES FOR, IN A PIG’S ASS, KEEP AN EYE ON, MAKE GOO-GOO EYES, MUD IN YOUR EYE, NOT BAT AN EYE, PRIVATE EYE, PULL THE WOOL OVER SOMEONE’S EYES, PUT THE EYE ON SOMEONE, REDEYE, THE RED-EYE, ROUND-EYE, SHORT EYES, SHUT-EYE, SNAKE EYES, STONED TO THE EYES, A

THUMB IN **one’s** EYE

Eye, the, or the eye *n* The Pinkerton National Detective Agency, or one of its detectives [1914+; fr the *eye* used as the trademark symbol of the agency]

eyeball *v* To look at; look over; SCOPE ON • An isolated instance is attested in 1901: *He would eyeball the idol-breaker/ You locate trophies before they eyeball you (1940s+ Black)* *See* GIVE someone

THE FISH-EYE, UP TO **one's** EYEBALLS

eyeball to eyeball *adj phr*: *our eyeball-to-eyeball chat* *adv phr* Face-to-face; in confrontation: *We're eyeball to eyeball and I think the other fellow just blinked (1950s +)*

eye candy *n* Something or someone very pleasant to look at: *eye candy on campus*

eyed *See* COCKEYED, HOARY-EYED, PIE-EYED, WALL-EYED

◁**eye-fuck**▷ *v* To stare intently, esp at a sex object: *That's what he believed the trio was doing, eye-fucking Callaway and Nguyen (1916 +)*

eyeful *n* **1** A good look; close scrutiny; GANDER: *Get an eyeful of that place over there (1914 +)* **2** A very good-looking woman; DISH (1922 +)

eyegrabber *n* Something or someone that strongly attracts attention; GRABBER, HOOK: *Daily News front pages have been eyegrabbers on the newsstands for 70 years (1980s +)*

eyegrabbing *adj* Strongly attractive; magnetic: *Geena's so statuesque, she's so eyegrabbing on the screen (1980s +)*

eye in the sky *n phr* **1** In casinos, a security guard or video camera watching games from concealment above (1960s + *Gambling*) **2** A reporter, police officer, etc, who watches traffic from above, usu in a helicopter (1970s +) **3** A coach, coordinator, etc, who watches a game from the press box and calls plays and suggestions to the coaches on the ground: *Teams have the "eye in the sky" to get an edge*

on defense (1980s + Baseball)

eye-opener *n* **1** A drink of liquor taken upon awaking: *He fumbled for the jug and slurped an eye-opener (1818 +)* **2** An addict's first injection of the day (1960+ *Narcotics*) **3** Anything that informs or enlightens one: *Listening to that story was a real eye-opener (1863 +)*

eyepopper *n* Something that makes one's eyes bulge in astonishment; EYEGRABBER: *The president added a further eyepopper (1940s +)*

◁**eyes like pissholes in the snow**▷ *n phr* Very bleary eyes; tired and dim eyes, esp those of a severe hangover • *Pissholes in the sand* is found by 1932: *Your eyes look like two piss holes in the snow (1940s +)*

eyes only *adj phr* Very personal and confidential [1960s +; fr the government security phrase "for your eyes only"]

◁**Eyetic** or **Eytic**▷ (Ī tee; Brit Ī tī) *adj*: *an Eytic village/ Eyetic chick n* An Italian (1925+ *British armed forces*)

eyewash *n* **1** HOGWASH • *Eye*, "nonsense, humbug," is attested by 1859, and *all my eye* a century earlier; although the connection is not clear, these probably led to *eyewash (1884 +)* **2** Flattery; cajolery: *eyewash to soften him up for the touch (1919 +)*

F

fab *adj* or *interj* Excellent; wonderful; fabulous: *a man who would think it a fab idea to rent a silver limo (1950s+ Teenagers)*

face *n* **1** A celebrity, esp a show-business notable (1960s+ *Show business*) **2** A person: *bad face, a surly, mean, no-good cat (1950s+ Cool talk)* **3** A white person; **FAY**¹: *Don't see why we need some high-priced face down here telling us how to live (1940s+ Black)* **v** To insult; embarrass; humiliate; **BURN** • This sense probably originated in basketball, where aggressive players put their hands in front of other players' faces: *face, which means to embarrass (1980s+ Students)* **See** **BAG YOUR FACE, DOLLFACE, FEED one's FACE, GET OUT OF someone's FACE, GO UPSIDE one's FACE, HAVE A RED FACE, HAVE EGG ON one's FACE, JUST ANOTHER PRETTY FACE, LAUGH ON THE OTHER SIDE OF one's FACE, LET'S FACE IT, PALEFACE, PIEFACE, POKER FACE, RED FACE, SHE CAN SIT ON MY FACE ANYTIME, SHIT-FACED, SHOOT OFF one's MOUTH, a SLAP IN THE FACE, STRAIGHT FACE, SUCK FACE, TILL one IS BLUE IN THE FACE, WHAT'S-HIS-NAME, WHITE-FACE**

face card *n phr* An important person; star; **BIG SHOT**: *Oh, don't be so modest, you're a face card yourself now (1970s+)*

faced *adj* **SHIT-FACED (1960s+)** **See** **POKER-FACED, RED-FACED**

face someone down *v phr* To disconcert in a direct confrontation: *I am being faced down by a ten-or twelve-year-old boy (1530+)*

face fungus *n phr* A beard; whiskers: *Which do you fancy, the blue-eyed chap in the tux or the loser with the face fungus? (1972 +)*

face-off *n* Confrontation, esp one before action: *continuing face-off and stalemate [1896 + ; the date reflects use in hockey and lacrosse, where play begins with players scrabbling for the puck or ball]*

face that would stop a clock, a *n phr* A very ugly face: *Unfavored of nature indeed must be that member of the gentler sex whose face would “stop a clock” (1891 +)*

face the music *v phr* To endure whatever punishment or rigors one has incurred; take what one has coming [1850 + ; origin uncertain; perhaps fr the necessity of forcing a cavalry horse to face steadily the regimental band; perhaps fr the plight of a performer on stage]

face time *n phr* Time spent face-to-face or in close proximity, esp with persons useful to one’s career: *Getting ‘face time,’ as insinuating your way into a photograph with the President is known/ He recently spent some “face time” chatting with his new pig (1990s +)*

face up *v phr* To confront boldly; acknowledge: *It’s time you faced up to how wrong you’ve been (1920 +)*

fack *sentence* That’s a fact: *She’ll die a Turnipseed. Fack* *v* To tell the truth; utter facts: *Negroes know that facking means speaking facts [1940s + Black; fr the normal pronunciation of fact in black English]*

facockta *adj* Accursed; wretched; CRAPPY, SHITTY: *Robbed. Upstairs in your facockta parking lot [1990s + ; fr Yiddish, literally “shitty”]*

factoid *n* A presumed fact of dubious validity; a popular assumption or belief: *Of the eight factoids pertaining to the present Administration/ a paragraph, part human interest, part factoid* [1970s + ; fr *fact* plus -*oid*] See -*OID*

factor See FINAGLE FACTOR, FUDGE FACTOR

factory *combining word* Place where what is indicated is done, pursued, used, etc • A jocular appropriation of the term: *brain factory/ freak factory/ nut factory* (1920s +) *n* The apparatus used for injecting narcotics; WORKS (1940s + *Narcotics*) See BONE FACTORY, CRACKER FACTORY, JOINT FACTORY, NUTHOUSE

facts See HARD FACTS

facts of life *n* An explanation of human reproduction, esp for a child: *facts of life explained in a sixth-grade film*

faddle See FIDDLE-FADDLE

fade *n* 1 A white person (1970s + *Black*) 2 A black person who prefers white friends, sex partners, attitudes, etc; OREO (1970s + *Black*) 3 A hairstyle with a thick upright flat top that tapers toward the ears: *Will has a fresh fade* (1980s + *Black teenagers*) *v* 1 To leave; depart: *He faded to Chicago* (1848 +) 2 To take one's bet; cover one's offered bet: *When I saw I was faded, I rolled the dice* (1890 + *Crapshooting*) 3 To lose or cause to lose power and effectiveness: *And I would try to fade the heat off me* (1450 +)

fadeaway *n* A pitch that moves away from the batter so that he would have to reach out for it [1908 + Baseball; identified esp with the pitcher Christy Mathewson]

fade away (or out) v phr To depart, esp gradually (1820 +)

fade-out n The end of a scene, film, etc, where the picture gradually disappears (1923 + *Motion picture*)

fag modifier <1>: *frenetic hot-rhythm dancing, the cheap fag jokes/ like a fag party n 1* A cigarette; BUTT, COFFIN NAIL: *He passed them swell fags around* (1888 +) <2> A male homosexual; FAGGOT, QUEER: *Fags are certain to arouse the loathing of all decent fiction addicts/ sicker by a long shot than any fag, drag, thang, or simple gay man or woman* (1923 +) **v (also fag out)** To fatigue; exhaust • The sense “to study hard, go without sleep,” is attested in Cambridge University slang by 1803: *This sort of work fags me quickly* (1930 +) [origin unknown; the “homosexual” sense may be connected with the British term *fag*, “the boy servant, and inferentially the catamite, of a public-school upperclassman”; perhaps influenced by Yiddish *faygele*, “homosexual,” literally “bird, little bird”]

<**fag bag**> **n phr** A woman married to a homosexual (1960s + *Homosexuals*)

fag end n phr The useless, dreary, or extreme end of something: *The fag ends of my days are irretrievably grungy* [1622 + ; origin uncertain; one early sense of *fag* was “end, dragging end,” and in the earliest dated example *fag end* means “ass end”; later use influenced by *fag*, “cigarette, cigarette butt,” found by 1888]

fagged out adj phr Exhausted; BEAT, POOPED (1833 +)

<**faggot**> **n** A male homosexual: *Hot faggot queens bump up against chilly Jewish matrons/ an amazing job of controlling the faggots*

[1914+; origin unknown; perhaps fr *fag*; perhaps fr *faggot*,
“woman,” found by 1591]

◁**faggotry** or **faggery**▷ **n** Male homosexuality: *Faggotry was at the very least a terrible embarrassment/ I have a feeling he was arrested sometime in his life. For faggery if nothing else (1970s +)*

◁**faggoty** or **faggy**▷ **adj** Homosexual, esp in an overt way • Used only of males: *who lives with his faggoty American friend (first form 1928 +, second 1950s +)*

◁**fag hag** or **faggot’s moll**▷ **n phr** A heterosexual woman who seeks or prefers the company of homosexual men: *Zeffirelli seems to have created a sort of limp-wrist commune, with Clare as the fag hag/ Michael once referred to her as “the fag hag of the bourgeoisie” (1969 +)*

fagocyte **n** An effeminate boy or man; SISSY [1930s + New York City boys; modeled, surprisingly, on *phagocyte*, “a cell that ingests and destroys foreign particles,” altered by *fag*]

fag tag **n phr** (also **fairy loop**, **fruit loop**) A cloth loop sewn into the middle pleat of the upper back of a shirt [1970s +; *fruit loop* variant fr a breakfast cereal called *Froot Loops*TM]

fair dinkum **adj phr** Honest; fair and just • Still chiefly Australian use (1894 + *Australian*)

fair enough **interj** Agreed: *Want to stop now? Fair enough (1925 +)*

fairhaired (or **blue-eyed** or **white-haired**) **boy** **n phr** 1 A favored or favorite man or boy: *the latest “fairhaired boy” of the musical world/*

the white-haired boy of the happy family **2** A man destined for and being groomed for principal leadership or other reward; **COMER:** *A job had to be found for Patten, the blue-eyed boy of British politics (first form 1918 +, second 1924 +, third 1923 +)*

fair shake, a **n phr** Equal treatment; the same chance as others; **EVEN BREAK:** *He complains he didn't get a fair shake [1830 +; fr an honest shake of the dice]*

fair-weather **adj** Insincere and temporary: *fair-weather fans*

◁**fairy**▷ **n** A male homosexual, esp an effeminate one; **FAG, QUEER:** *Too bad you weren't a fairy (1895 +)*

fairy godfather **n phr** A potential sponsor, advertiser, or financial backer, esp in show business (1930s +)

◁**fairy godmother**▷ **n phr** A male homosexual's homosexual initiator and tutor (1970s + *Homosexuals*)

◁**fairy lady**▷ **n phr** A lesbian who takes a passive role in sex: *Then there was the fairy lady who said "Argyle it to me!" (1950 +)*

fairy tale or **bedtime story** **n** Simplistic explanation, often condescending: *don't want to hear your little bedtime story*

fake **adj:** Sham; deceptive **n** A sham or deception; something spurious (1827 +) **v** **1** To make something spurious; imitate deceptively: *He was good at faking Old Masters (1812 +)* **2** To improvise lines in a play (1909 + *Theater*) **3** **FAKE IT** [origin uncertain; perhaps fr earlier *feak*, *feague*, or *fig*, "to spruce up, esp by deceptive artificial means"; perhaps ultimately fr German *fegen*,

“clean, furbish,” or Latin *facere*, “to do”]

fake-bake *n* **1** A tanning salon **2** A tan acquired in a salon: *Look at Tiffany’s fake-bake! (1980s + Students)*

fake it v phr **1** To make a pretense of knowledge, skill, etc; bluff;
CHEEK IT **2** (also **fake**) To improvise more or less compatible chords or notes as one plays or sings something one really has not learned
(1915 + *Jazz musicians*)

fake off v phr To loaf; idle; GOOF OFF (1950s +)

fake someone out v phr To bluff or deceive someone; mislead: *Bailey had faked out Keuper into using a preempt (1940s + Sports)*

faker *See* POODLE-FAKER

falderal or **folderol** *n* Wasted effort; also, mere nonsense: *the falderal involved in PTA*

fall *n*: *This your first fall, ain’t it?/ Another fall meant a life sentence (1893 +)* **v** **1** To be arrested; be imprisoned; DROP: *When you have bad luck and you fall, New York is the best place/ the best thief in the city till he fell (1879 + Underworld)* **2** To become enamored; become a lover: *Once Abelard saw her he fell (1906 +)* *See* PRATFALL, the ROOF FALLS IN, TAKE A FALL, TAKE THE RAP

fall all over oneself v phr To be eager or confusedly effusive; to try overly hard: *He fell all over himself trying to apologize/ Administration analysts “fell over themselves” whenever he or his staff sought information (1895 +)*

fall apart v phr To lose one’s usual poise and confidence; lose

control; LOSE one's COOL: *Even the seasoned troupers fall apart*
(1945 +)

fall apart at the seams v phr To be or become spoiled or ruined:
marriage falling apart at the seams (1965 +)

fall (or slip) between (or through) the cracks v phr To be ignored, overlooked, mismanaged, or forgotten, esp because of ambiguity in definition or understanding: *The entire problem simply fell between the cracks/ a conviction that otherwise might have fallen through the cracks* (1970s +)

fall down and go boom v phr **1** To take a tumble; fall heavily **2** To fail, esp utterly and obviously (1930s +)

fall down on the job v phr To fail at one's responsibilities; shirk an obligation (1898 +)

fall for v phr **1** To become enamored with; become a lover of: *He's constantly falling for long-legged brunettes* **2** To be deceived or duped by; acquiesce to: *Americans would continue to "fall for" this* (1903 +)

fall guy n phr **1** An easy victim; EASY MARK, SUCKER **2** A person who willingly or not takes the blame and punishment for another's misdoings; PATSY: *He said he would not be the president's fall guy* (1906 +)

falling-down drunk adj phr Too drunk to stand up; very drunk:
O'Hara was fired from most of the jobs he held; he was a falling-down, no-holds-barred, contentious drunk/ some rather large, falling-down drunk individuals (1980s +)

falling off a log *See* EASY AS PIE

falling-out *n* A disagreement: *falling-out over the basketball coach*

fall money *n phr* Money set aside to deal with the expenses of being arrested: *Mike set aside a percentage of his takings for “fall money” (1893 + Underworld)*

fall off the map *v phr* To disappear from view and attention; drop out of sight: *This show marks a return of sorts for a figure who fell off the map [1980s + ; off the map in this sense is found by 1904]*

fall off the roof *v phr* To menstruate, esp to begin a menstrual period [1930s + ; probably a fanciful way to explain bleeding]

fall off the wagon *v phr* To begin drinking liquor again after a period of abstinence; also, to breach abstinence or moderation in anything: *But like most of us, she falls off the wagon from time to time, and heads for a stadium hot dog (1905 +)*

fall on one's ass *v phr* **1** (also **fall flat on one's ass**) To fail, esp ignominiously and spectacularly: *They want to see you fall on your ass/ Pratt and Murphy fell on their ass (1940s +)* **2** To deteriorate beneath operational limits • Said of the weather conditions at an airport (1970s + *Airline*)

fall on one's face *v phr* (also **fall flat on one's face**) To make an embarrassing mistake, failed attempt, catastrophic decline, etc; FALL ON ONE'S ASS: *Trying to be stately, I fell flat on my face/ If the dollar was stumbling, the Japanese stock market was falling on its face (1970s +)*

fall on one's sword *v phr* To commit suicide, esp after a defeat and

for the good of the general cause: *Cells that become irreparably damaged are expected to fall on their swords for the greater good of the organism* [1990s + ; fr the ancient Roman mode of self-immolation, reflected in Horatio's noble sentiment "I am more an antique Roman than a Dane"]

fallout *n* 1 An accompanying or resultant effect of something; an aftermath: *Talking to oneself is a fallout of watching too many primaries on TV* 2 Incidental products, esp when copious and of little value: *reports, memoranda, and other printed fallout from the executive suite* [1950s + ; fr the radioactive dust and other debris of a nuclear explosion]

fall out *v phr* 1 To go to sleep or into a stuporous condition from narcotic intoxication: *Only those who are uptight fall out/ If you resist falling out and pass the barrier, the curve is up to a mellow stupor* (1950s + *Narcotics*) 2 To become helpless with laughter or emotion; CRACK UP: *I tried double tempo and everybody fell out laughing/ sizing up audiences and delivering the goods that would make them fall out, whether in church or not* (1950s +)

fall through *v phr* To fail; miscarry; FIZZLE: *Our plans for the building fell through* (1879 +)

fall up *v phr* (Variations: **by** or **down** or **out** may replace **up**) To come for a visit; arrive: *The bash is in the basement, Dad. Fall up anytime* (1930s + *Black*)

faloosie *See* FLOOZY

falsie or **falsy** *n* 1 Anything false or artificial; a prosthesis: *Its tail, a*

falsy, fell off **2** A brassiere padded to give the appearance of large breasts; also, padding worn in other places to increase the generosity of a woman's body (1940s +)

falsies or **gay deceivers** *n* A pair of breast pads worn to give the appearance of large breasts (1940s +)

family jewels *n phr* The testicles; **NUTS**: *A kick in the family jewels will often dampen a man's ardor* (1920s +)

famous last words *n phr* Something said that proves singularly wrong or inappropriate • An ironic reference to the final deathbed utterances of famous people: *"I certainly hope this won't be made public," North said. Famous last words* (1940s +)

fan¹ *n* A devotee or enthusiast, esp of a sport; aficionado; **BUFF, BUG**: *a tennis fan/ cathedral fan* [1889 + Baseball; origin uncertain; perhaps fr *fanatic*, or perhaps fr *the fancy*, "sports followers or fanciers"]

fan² *n* **1** An aircraft propeller or engine (*WWII Army Air Forces*) **2** A quick brush or pat used by pickpockets to find the place of the victim's wallet (1847 + *Underworld*) **v** **1** To strike out; **WHIFF** (1886 + *Baseball*) **2** To search someone; **FRISK**: *The gendarmes fan them to see if they have any rods on them* (1920s + *Police*) **3**: *You will be fanned by hands feeling for an impression of your wallet* **4** To chat; gossip; **BAT THE BREEZE**: *all the other chauffeurs I'd stand around fanning with* (1940s +) **5** To manipulate the coin-return lever of a pay telephone in the hope of dislodging coins: *Mary was embarrassed at being observed at her fanning activities* (1970s +) **See** **BAT THE BREEZE, FAN**

someone's TAIL, the SHIT HITS THE FAN

fanboy or fangirl *n* **1** A person obsessed with an element of video or electronic culture, such as a game, sci-fi movie, comic or animé, music, etc; a person obsessed with a single subject or hobby **2** A person obsessed with an actor or a fictional character (1919+)

fancy-Dan *adj* Pretentious; HIGHFALUTIN: *It's fancy-Dan nomenclature* (1930s+)

fancy Dan *n phr* **1** A skillful boxer with a weak punch (1940s+ *Prizefight*) **2** A player who makes every play seem spectacular; HOT DOG, SHOWBOAT (1927+ *Baseball*) **3** A skillful, polished ball player: *called Bush's abilities "absolutely superb, a real fancy Dan"* (1980s+)
See DAPPER DAN

fancy (or fast) footwork *n phr* Very adroit evasion; clever dodging and maneuver: *It will take fancy footwork to explain this one/ The American Medical Association tried a little fast footwork before Congress last week* (1900+ *Sports*)

fancy man *n phr* A lover, esp the adulterous sex partner of a married woman (1811+)

fancy pants *modifier: one of your fancy-pants diplomats* *n phr* **1** A dressed-up or overdressed person **2** An effete man; Sissy (1940s+)

fancy-schmancy *adj* Very elegant or ornate, esp pretentiously so; HIGHFALUTIN: *mostly fancy-schmancy Roman numbers like IIs and IIIs* [1970s+; fr the humorous and derisive Yiddish rhyming of a first word with a second one beginning *shm-*, as in "Oedipus-shmoedipus, just so he loves his mother"]

fandangle¹ *n* An ornamental object; gewgaw (1835 +)

fandangle² *n* A confused profusion; generous lively miscellany:
cranes, firebirds, foxes, flamingos, a fauna fandangle hard to believe
[mid-1800s +; fr eastern US dialect *fandango*, “a boisterous
assembly,” fr the Spanish dance]

fandom *n* Devotees and aficionados collectively: *All fandom welcomes
the new summer football* (1903 +)

faniggle *See* FINAGLE

fanner *n* **1** A person who locates wallets for a pickpocket to steal
(1847 + *Underworld*) **2** A person who manipulates coin-return
levers on pay telephones, hoping to dislodge coins: *little old lady of
about 80 who was dubbed Mary the Fanner* (1970s +)

Fannie Mae *n phr* A publicly traded security backed by the Federal
National Mortgage Association (FNMA), established in 1938
(1948 +)

fanny *n* The buttocks; rump; ASS: *I can hardly sit down, my fanny is so
sore* [1920 +; fr earlier British *fanny*, “vulva,” perhaps fr John
Cleland’s 18th-century heroine *Fanny Hill*]

fanny pack *n phr* (also **butt pack**) A small crescent-shaped cloth bag
worn about the waist on a belt [mid-1980s +; a 1971 use is found
in *Outdoor Life*, before use of the fanny pack became general]

fantabulous *adj* Wonderful; fantastic and fabulous: *fantabulous job at
designing the set* (1958 +)

fan someone’s **tail** *v phr* To spank someone; TAN: *Don’t let him out of*

your sight or I'll fan your tail (1884 +)

fan the breeze *v phr* BAT THE BREEZE (1950s +)

fantods, the *n phr* Fidgety nervousness; uneasy restlessness; the

WILLIES: *You just got the fantods, that's all* [1880s + ; fr British dialect, "indisposition, restlessness," perhaps fr *fanteague*, "commotion, excitement," or fr *fantasy*]

fanzine (FAN zeen) *modifier*: *The fanzine set is not scared off by raunchy lyrics* *n* A fan magazine: *wants to start his own fanzine* (1940s +)

FAQ (pronounced as separate letters) *n* A set of frequently asked questions, often with their answers: *The best thing to do first is to read the FAQ, the list of frequently asked questions* (1990s + *Computer*)

far gone *modifier* In an extreme state, such as drunk: *too far gone to help her/ fans are far gone*

Farley *See* FARLEY

farm¹ *v* To be killed in action; die in the armed services; BUY THE FARM: *Just about the whole company farmed that day* [1970s + *Army*; fr *buy the farm*] *See* BET THE FARM, FAT FARM, FUNNY FARM, NUTHOUSE

farm² *n* A minor-league club used as a training ground by a major-league club: *Columbus is a Yankee farm* (1898 + *Baseball*)

◁**farmer**▷ *n* A stupid person; ignorant rustic; CLOWN (1902 +)

farmisht (far MISHT) *adj* Confused; mixed up; ambivalent and/ or ambiguous: *I'm afraid she's a little farmisht* [1970s + ; fr Yiddish]

far out *adj* **1** Very unconventional; unorthodox and strange; WEIRD:
*Drake liked “Suzie Q.” Which to us was really far out/ a curious
combination of far-out medicine, pampering, and very shrewd doctoring*
2 Excellent; splendid; COOL: *The next thing I heard from her was “Far
out!” (1950s +)*

◁**fart**▷ *n* **1** A man; fellow; person; GUY: *What’s that stupid fart up to?*
(1930s +) **2** The least thing; nothing; DIDDLY, ZILCH: *It isn’t worth a fart*
(1460 +) *v* To expel gas through the anus; relieve flatulence by the
most immediate expedient; TOOT (1250 +) **See** LAY A FART, OLD FART

◁**fart around or about**▷ *v phr* **1** HORSE AROUND **2** GOOF AROUND [1930s + ;
perhaps fr Yiddish *arum-fartzen*, “fart around”]

◁**fart off**▷ *v phr* To waste time or goof off: *a great spring day to fart
off*

◁**fart sack**▷ *n phr* A sleeping bag (*Army by WWII*)

fascinoma *n* An interesting, difficult, or unusual disease or condition
[1970s + Medical; fr *fascinating* plus *-oma*, the suffix used to form
the names of tumors]

fashion plate or **fashionista** *n phr* A well-dressed person, esp a
stylish one: *The present-day racketeer is a veritable fashion plate*
(1920s +)

fashion roadkill *n phr* **1** A person who tries to dress fashionably, but
looks ridiculous: *young entertainers who look like fashion roadkill* **2**
An outfit worn because one thinks it is fashionable, but rather is
ridiculous

fast *adj* Morally lax; libertine: *on Long Island with the fast younger married set (1859 +)*

fast (or quick) buck *modifier*: *Fast-buck speculators were getting rich on inflated* FHA *appraisals/ Fast-buck artists, dreamers, and even some well-heeled companies* *n phr* Money gotten quickly, esp without too fine a concern for ethics or the future: *tryin' to hustle me for a fast buck (1940s +)*

fast burner *n phr* A person whose success is rapid; BALL OF FIRE *(1970s + Army)*

fasten one's seat belt *sentence* Prepare for difficulties; get ready for a rough time: *Fasten Your Seat Belts for the Fare War [1940s + ; fr the preflight instructions of airliners]*

fast-feed *v* To dispense fast food: *a culinary wasteland that seemed to exist totally to fast-feed the captive audiences (1990s +)*

fast food *modifier*: *a fast-food chain* *n phr* Food like hamburgers, fried chicken, etc, cooked and served very rapidly and uniformly, usu by large catering corporations *(1951 +)*

fast footwork *See* FANCY FOOTWORK

fast-forward *adj* Very much up-to-date; socially and intellectually dynamic; proactive; Ahead of the Curve: *hip, fast-forward people [1980s + ; fr the control on a tape player that advances the tape very rapidly]*

fast lane (or track) *modifier*: *its glittery fast-lane image/ New York's fast-track, high-yield high culture* *n phr* A pace and quality of life

emphasizing quick success against strong competition, along with the trappings of wealth and style: *amazing woman, lives on a fast lane/ Jean Piaget started academic life on a fast track/ certainly influenced the 1960s expression “life in the fast lane”* [1960s + ; fr the left-hand or *fast lane* of a superhighway, which slower drivers enter at their risk, and a horse-racing *track* in good, dry condition]

fast one *n phr* A trick or deception; clever subterfuge; DIPSY DOODLE:

That was sure a fast one, you wearing the false mustache **See** PULL A FAST ONE [1924 + ; probably fr *fast shuffle*]

fast on one's feet *v phr* Ready and resourceful; skillful in debate and

repartee: *He is a man who knows how to ask questions and answer them. He showed himself to be fast on his feet* (1970s + fr *prizefight*)

fast shuffle **See** DOUBLE SHUFFLE

fast talk *n phr* Talk meant to deceive or confuse: glib and plausible nonsense: *Ignore the fast talk and don't sign a thing* (1950s +)

fast talker *n phr* A person who engages in fast talk: *Loose Manhattan from its moorings and let it float out to sea. Good-bye dirt, noise, crack dealers, street peddlers, fast talkers* (1950s +)

fast track, a *n phr* A very rapid and urgent information requirement:

This is on a fast track and we hope to have more information by next week (1990s +)

fat *adj* **1** Marked by fruitfulness: *fat profits/fat prospects* **2** Wealthy; in funds, esp temporarily so; FLUSH: *Hit him up now, he's pretty fat* (1700 +) **3** (also **phat**) Attractive; up to date; COOL, DOPE, RAD • *Fat* is recorded by 1932 as meaning “hot” in US dialect, and this may

underlie the teenage use: *If they are real fat, real crazy, naturally they're real cool/ Timberland boots have, in the parlance of the street, become "dope" and "phat," i.e. cool, greatest (1951 + Teenagers) 4* (also **phat**) Sexy; having a shapely body • Some think this, when spelled *phat*, is an acronym for *pretty hips and thighs: The three boys thought that Carolyn looked fat as she walked down the street (1980s + Students) 5* Slow and easy to hit: *Williams then leaped on a fat pitch to knock the baseball 400 feet (1940s + Baseball) n 1* The best and most rewarding part; CREAM: *He just took the fat; screw the long term (1570 +) 2* A fat person; FATTY: *I met the other 18 women or fellow fats (1970s +)* **See** BIG FAT, CHEW THE FAT

fat Albert *n phr* **1** A kind of guided bomb (1970s +) **2** A Boeing 747 jet aircraft or other jumbo jet (1980s + Airlines) [fr a character used in stories by the comedian Bill Cosby]

fat-ass *adj*: *Get your fat-ass self out of here n 1* A fat person **2** A person with large buttocks; BUFFALO BUTT (1916 +)

fat cat *modifier*: *the fat-cat cases, where big money is involved/ whether fat-cat contributors or New Hampshire coffee-klatschers n phr* Any privileged and well-treated person, esp a wealthy benefactor; tycoon: *A millionaire fat-cat who, when the revolution comes, will probably be allowed to keep at least one of his chauffeurs/ the late arrival even of such famous "fat cats"/had jousting with Nelson Rockefeller at a formal dinner for fat cats v: "fat-cattling" ... a term applied to higher leaders who try to pad themselves with special privileges and comforts (1928 +)*

fat chance *n phr* No chance at all: *entry without prior permission fell*

into the category of fat chance (1906+)

fat city *n phr* **1** An ideal situation; splendid state of affairs • In earlier use *fat city* meant “vulva”: *You’re in fat city while other poor slobs sweat on assembly lines/Johnny came marching home from college and announced he was in “fat city” (1960s+)* **2** Poor physical condition, esp because of being overweight: *Its principal characters wind up in “fat city” (argot for “out of condition”) (1970s+)*

fat, dumb, and happy *adj phr* Blissfully and rather bovinely contented (1970s+)

fat farm *n phr* A resort or treatment center where people go to lose weight: *It’ll be adventures of me, and takes place at a fat farm/ I went to a California fat farm a couple years ago (1960s+)*

fathead *n* A stupid person; BLUBBERHEAD (1842+)

fatheaded *adj* Stupid: *some fatheaded motorist (1748+)*

◀**fatherfucker**▶ *n* MOTHERFUCKER (1970s+ *Homosexuals*)

fat lady sings *See* the OPERA’S NEVER OVER TILL THE FAT LADY SINGS

fatmouth *v* **1** To blab and chatter; CHEW THE FAT **2** To cajole verbally; BULLSHIT, SWEET-TALK: *I ain’t asking you to fatmouth me, just as I am not interested in getting into any argument (1970s+)*

fat mouth *n phr* One who talks incessantly; MOTOR-MOUTH: *With very little prodding Jimmy began the conversation because he was feeling like a fat mouth [1942+; probably fr the locution I had to open my big fat mouth]*

fat part *n phr* A prominent role sure to delight the audience (1901+)

Theater)

Fats *n* (Variations: **Fat** or **Fatty** or **Fatso** or **Fat stuff**) A nickname for a fat person (1940s +)

fatso *adj* Fat, in any sense: *a fatso deal in six figures* (1940s +)

fatter *See* HAM-FATTER

fatty *n* **1** A fat person: *designed to keep all us fatties from committing hara-kiri* (1797 +) **2** A thick marijuana cigarette (1980s +
Narcotics)

faunet or **faunlet** (FAW nət, FAWN lət) *n* An adolescent or preadolescent boy as a homosexual sex object [1970s +
Homosexuals; on analogy with *nymphet*, probably influenced by *fawn*]

faux *adj* False; FAKE, PHONY: *A British conglomerate told Ms Tabb to shelve her plans to sell the faux burger/ The facade drops, revealing them as the faux funsters they really are/ She had a faux art clock that ran on a battery* [1980s + ; fr French]

fave or **fave rave** *modifier*: *My absolute fave-rave model was printed boldly* *n* or *n phr* A favorite song or musical number, film, person, etc: *That group scats Mozart, Vivaldi, Bach, and other fave raves/ includes many of the quintet's faves* (first form 1938 + , second 1967 +)

fax attack *n phr* Unsolicited advertising received over facsimile machines: *A Connecticut state legislator is going on the offensive against "fax attacks"* (1980s +)

◀**fay**¹▶ **n** A white person; HONKY, PECKERWOOD [1920s + Black; fr *ofay*]

fay² **adj** Homosexual; GAY [1950s + Homosexuals; fr earlier *fay*, “fairy”]

faze **v** To surprise and create discomposure: *those grades don't faze her* (1830 +)

featherbed **v** **1** To work languidly and sluggishly; seek easy tasks **2** To create or retain unnecessary jobs; do essentially fictitious jobs: *featherbedding clauses in labor agreements* (1920s +)

featherheaded **adj** Empty-headed; silly: *The Color Purple speaks to the heart, and no featherheaded translation is needed* (1647 +)

feather merchant **n phr** **1** A civilian, esp one who evades military service **2** A reserve officer, or a person commissioned directly into the Navy **3** A sailor who has a desk job [WWII armed forces; perhaps fr a group of small rather parasitic persons called *feather merchants* in the comic strip “Barney Google”]

feather (or **line**) one's **nest** **v phr** To be primarily concerned with one's own gain; take care of oneself (1590 +)

feathers **See** HORSEFEATHERS

Fed **n** Any federal government worker or agent, esp in law enforcement or taxation: *right up to the day the Feds dragged him into court* (1912 +)

Fed, the **n phr** The Federal Reserve System, Board, or Bank: *Now the Fed has apparently decided to let the market carry interest rates upward/ The Fed was reluctant to raise its discount rate* (1960s +)

federal case *See* MAKE A FEDERAL CASE OUT OF something

fed up *adj phr* Disgusted; tired; surfeited; BRASSED OFF: *A number of people suddenly became fed up with a slang phrase like “fed up”*
[1900+; the related form *fed up to the eyelids* is found by 1882]

feeb *n* A feeble-minded person; idiot: *Then why are you treating me like a feeb? (1914+)*

Feeb or **Feebie** *n* An agent of the Federal Bureau of Investigation; G-MAN: *the agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, whom they call “Feebs”/ make sure the Feebies didn’t get any credit for it (1970s+)*

feed *n* **1** A meal: *Stop by for a feed, anytime (1830+)* **2** Money (1900+) **3** Contributions of opinion, advice, etc; input: *They put their feed into the project (1990s+)* **v** To board; take one’s meals; eat (1895+) *See* CHICKEN FEED, OFF one’s FEED

feedback *n* Response, esp information and opinion: *We’ll wait for feedback before we try anything else* [1950s+; fr the portion of output *fed back* to the input in an automatic control circuit or system]

feedbag, the *n phr* A meal; food: *I’m ready for the feedbag* [1920s+; fr the *bag of feed*, or nosebag, hung on the head of a horse] *See* PUT ON THE FEEDBAG

feed one’s face *v phr* To eat (1930s+)

feeding frenzy *n phr* A scene of frantic competition, unexampled greed, etc: *First the feeding frenzy begins. We did the story for two days, then the media angle on the story, and then the legal angle* [1980s+; fr the phrase used to describe the behavior of sharks]

who smell blood, find meat, etc]

feed the bears v phr To receive a traffic ticket and pay the fine
(1975 +)

feed the fish v phr To vomit over the side of a vessel, from
seasickness (1880s +)

feed the kitty v phr To contribute to a fund, esp to put what one
owes into the pot of a card game (1940s + *Poker*)

◁**feel or feel up**▷ **v or v phr** To touch, caress, or handle the buttocks,
breasts, legs, crotch, etc; COP A FEEL (1930 +)

◁**feel, a**▷ **n phr** A caress or touch, esp of the buttocks, breasts, or
crotch: *The eager amorist entreated a quick feel* (1932 +) **See** COP A FEEL

feel a draft v phr To feel unwelcome, snubbed, etc; esp to sense
racial prejudice against oneself (1940s + *Black*)

Feelgood or feelgood modifier: a general “relax, feelgood” vibe/ *The
President is running a feelgood campaign* **n 1** DR FEELGOOD **2** A condition
of contentment or euphoria: *a purveyor of religious feelgood*
(1940s +)

feel good v phr To be slightly and pleasantly drunk: *Old Charley was
feeling good that night* (1930s +)

feelie See TOUCHIE-FEELIE

feelies n A sort of motion picture that has tactile as well as visual
and auditory effects: *When the holograms acquire tactile capability,
they fulfill Huxley’s vision of ‘feelies’* [1931 +; modeled on *movie* and
talkie; most prominently employed by Aldous Huxley in his 1932

novel *Brave New World*]

feel no pain v phr To be drunk: *three men who were feeling no pain/*
The anticipated audience should be feeling no pain (1940s +)

feel one's oats v phr To be active and high-spirited; act brashly and
confidently: *The manufacturer was just feeling his oats, having*
accomplished his happy intention [1831 + ; fr the vigor of a just-fed
horse]

feel out v phr To inquire or investigate tentatively: *Let's feel out the*
possibilities first (1920s +)

feel the pinch v phr To feel the effects of not having enough money:
need a job fast, feeling the pinch (1861 +)

feened out adj phr Surfeited or overdosed with caffeine (*1980s +*
Students)

feep n The electronic bell-or whistle-like sound made by computer
terminals **v: The machine feeped inexplicably but insistently**
(1980s + Computer)

feet See DRAG **one's FEET**, GET **one's FEET WET**, GO HOME **FEET FIRST**, HAVE COLD **FEET**, HOLD
someone's FEET TO THE FIRE, VOTE WITH **one's FEET**

fegelah or **feygelah** (FAY gə lə) **n** A male homosexual; FAG: *The guy*
must be a real whacko. A fegelah, you figure? [1960s + ; fr Yiddish,
“little bird”

feh or **fehh interj** An exclamation of disgust: *Thus, soccer. Feh/ Well,*
fehh, Petro thinks that Dr Scholl's spray seems to work [1950s + ; fr
Yiddish]

feisty *adj* Truculent; irascible: *They said the president was a feisty little chap/ He was having trouble with a feisty old lady who didn't want to move* [1896 + ; fr *feist*, found by 1770, “small, worthless cur, esp a lapdog”]

fella *n* Fellow; guy: *fella, wipe your shoes*

fellow *See* REGULAR FELLOW

fellow traveler *n phr* A person who sympathizes with a cause or doctrine, without openly identifying himself with it: *These people are not hipsters, they are fellow travelers* [1930s + ; said to have been coined by Leon Trotsky in Russian as *sputnik* and translated into English as “fellow traveler”]

◁**fem** or **femme**▷ *modifier* 1: *looks more like a post deb than a femme comic/ whereas women with big heads of fat hair always look femme* 2: *Butch-femme role players are sad relics of the uptight past* **n** 1 A woman: *He has aired the fem that got him the job* (1900 + *Students*) 2 A lesbian who takes a passive, feminine role in sex (1970s + *Homosexuals*) 3 An effeminate homosexual male: *active or passive, manly (“stud”) or womanly (“fem”)* (1970s + *Homosexuals*) [fr French, “woman”]

fenagle *See* FINAGLE

fence *n* A person or place that deals in stolen goods: *but even big fences like Alphonso can get stuck/ The loot had disappeared and been handled by a fence* (1700 +) *v*: *The clown that stole the Mona Lisa found it hard to fence* (1610 +) [all senses are shortenings of *defence*; in the case of criminal act, the notion is probably that of a

secure place and trusty person, well defended] **See** GO FOR THE FENCES, ON THE FENCE

fence-straddler or **fence-hanger** *n* Mugwump (1940s +)

fender-bender *n* A minor car accident; trivial collision: *I've only had one fender-bender since I got it (1960s +)*

fer instance **See** FOR INSTANCE

ferret (out) *v* To search inquisitively; find by searching: *ferret out the whole story* [1570 +; fr the notion of the *ferret* as a restless and assiduous searcher]

fer sure (or **shure** or **shurr**) **See** FOR SURE

fess (or 'fess) *up v phr* To confess; admit the truth: *Then why doesn't the judge come clean and fess up?/ He finally fessed up to something that I've known a long time (1840 +)*

-fest *combining form* A celebration or extensive exercise and indulgence of what is indicated: *slugfest/ gabfest/ fuckfest/ jazzfest/ schmoozefest/ splatterfest* [1880s +; fr German, "festival"] **See** BULL SESSION

fetching *adj* Attractive: *a fetching appearance (1902 +)*

fetch-me-down **See** HAND-ME-DOWN

fever *n* 1 The five of a playing-card suit 2 Five or the point of five; PHOEBE (1940s + *Gambling*) **See** CABIN FEVER

few, a **See** HANG A FEW ON, WIN A FEW LOSE A FEW

few quarts low, a *adj phr* Stupid; mentally deficient; NOT WRAPPED TOO TIGHT, OUT TO LUNCH (1980s +)

few tacos short of a combination plate, a *adj phr* Stupid; mentally deficient; NOT WRAPPED TOO TIGHT, OUT TO LUNCH: *clearly a few tacos short of a combination plate in the intelligence area (1990s +)*

feygelah *See* FEGELAH

fickle finger of fate, the *n phr* The dire and unpredictable aspect of destiny: *It wasn't anything she specially deserved, just the fickle finger of fate at work [1940s +; regarding finger as both a pointer and a violator of the body]*

fiddle *n*: *His new boat is a tax fiddle (1874 +)* **v 1** (also **fiddle around** or ◀**fiddle fart around** or **fiddle-fart**▶) To waste time; GOOF AROUND, FART AROUND: *and the school board fiddled (entry form 1663 +)* **2** To cheat; defraud (1604 +) *See* BULL FIDDLE, GIT-BOX, PLAY SECOND FIDDLE, SECOND FIDDLE

fiddled *adj phr* Illegally altered; COOKED: *how a Park Avenue corporation based on fiddled data might have no more financial stature than an Orchard Street pushcart (1604 +)*

fiddle factor *n phr* A cheating maneuver; tricky move: *The Navigation Foundation's study "has more fiddle factors than the New York Philharmonic" (1980s +)*

fiddle-faddle *interj* An exclamation of irritation, disapproval, dismissal, etc (1671 +) *n* Nonsense; foolishness; BULLSHIT: *such homemade fiddle-faddle (1577 +)*

◀**fiddlefucking**▶ *adj* Particular and accursed; DAMN • Used for vehement and vulgar emphasis: *Not one swingin' dick will be leavin' this fiddlefuckin' area (1960s +)*

fiddlesticks *n* Nonsense; foolishness; **BULLSHIT**: *When I explained, she only said, "Fiddlesticks!"* [1857 + ; the singular form is found by 1600]

field *v* To handle; receive and answer; cope with: *The secretary fielded the questions rather lamely* (1902 +) **See** **OUT IN LEFT FIELD, PLAY THE FIELD**

field day **See** **HAVE A FIELD DAY**

fiend *combining word* A devotee or user of what is indicated: *camera fiend/ dope-fiend/ sex fiend* (1865 +) *v* To use a choke hold on a robbery victim: *They'd take out a bodega, or fiend a few housewives* (1980 + *Underworld*)

fierce *adj* Nasty; unpleasant; awful: *Gee, it was fierce of me* (1903 +)
See **SOMETHING FIERCE**

FIFO *n* First In, First Out; the first items are on the top of the stack to be done (*Computers*)

fifth wheel *n phr* A superfluous person or thing: *I feel as though I'm a fifth wheel* [1902 + ; the date reflects the full form *fifth wheel of the coach*]

fifty-fifty *adv* Equally or fairly shared: *split the pizza fifty-fifty* (1913 +)

fifty-seven varieties *n phr* A very great number; a large assortment: *She's sampled just about all 57 varieties of excess and illumination available in Western civilization* [1896 + ; fr the trademark designation of products made by the H J Heinz Company]

fifty-six *n* The time off that substitutes for the weekends of those

who work Saturdays and Sundays [1950s+ Police; because the time adds up to *fifty-six* hours]

fig n The amount of money won or lost by a gambler [1990s+ Gambling; fr *figure*] **See** MOLDY FIG

fight n A party; STRUGGLE: *the cocktail fights attended by the old man (1891+)* **See** CAT FIGHT, DOGFIGHT, YOU CAN'T FIGHT CITY HALL

fight a bottle v phr To drink liquor, esp to excess: *after fighting a bottle all evening (1940s+)*

fighter See BOOZEHOUD, HOP FIEND, NIGHT PEOPLE

fightin' tools n phr Eating utensils; silverware (*WWII armed forces*)

fightin' words n phr Provocative speech; words inviting combat • Often said in a broad cowboy style: *I can go along with a little ribbing, but them is fightin' words, son (1917+)*

fight shy v phr To avoid: *We had better fight shy of the chaos in the Balkans (1821+)*

fight one's way out of a paper bag, can't See CAN'T FIGHT one'S WAY OUT OF A PAPER BAG

figure v 1 To make sense; be plausible and reasonable: *It figures he'd be next in line (1950s+)* **2** To be expected; be very likely: *The pup figured to be in the room when Einstein discussed the bomb with the president (1930s+)* **See** BALLPARK FIGURE, GO FIGURE

filch v To steal or grab something from someone: *filched the remote control*

file n 1 A pickpocket (*1754+ Underworld*) **2** A wastebasket • Often

humorously called *file 17, the circular file*, etc (1940s +) [first sense perhaps fr the tool; perhaps related to French *filou*, “pickpocket”]

See CIRCULAR FILE

file 17 (or 13) n phr A wastebasket; CIRCULAR FILE (*WWII armed forces*)

filk music n phr A set of songs and parodies sung by assembled science-fiction fans: *Their performances can be divided into “bardic” filk and “chaos” filk* [1950s +; apparently fr the misspelling of *folk* on a 1950s poster]

fill (or stuff) one’s face v phr To eat a lot of food quickly: *stuffing his face at BK*

fill-in n 1 A summary account; information meant to supply what one does not know: *A friend gives me a fill-in on how Costello is running the country (1945 +)* **2** A substitute, esp a substitute worker: *Get a fill-in, I gotta split (1920s +)*

fill in v phr To substitute; replace temporarily: *I’ll fill in for you (1940s +)*

fill someone in v phr To complete someone’s knowledge; brief someone; PUT someone IN THE PICTURE: *Fill me in so I know what’s up here (1945 +)*

filling station n phr A very small town; JERKWATER TOWN (1940s +)

fill the bill v phr To suffice; meet the requirement: *I’d like the job, if you think I fill the bills (1861 +)*

filly n A girl; young woman [1616 +; fr French *fille*, “girl”]

film See SNUFF FILM, SPLAT MOVIE

filthy *adj* **1** Wealthy; rich; LOADED: *He's filthy with dough (1930s +)* **2** Obscene; salacious; BLUE, DIRTY: *filthy movies/ filthy minds (1535 +)* **3** Excellent; desirable; COOL, RAD (*1990s + Teenagers*)

filthy, the *n phr* Money; FILTHY LUCRE: *just trying to make a bit of the filthy (1930s +)*

filthy lucre *n phr* Money [1526 +; fr the Pauline epistle to Titus]

filthy rich *adj phr* Very rich; LOADED

fin¹ *n* **1** The hand: *Reach out your fin and grab it* **2** The arm and hand (1840 +)

fin² *n* A five-dollar bill; five dollars: *I gave my pal a fin/ It was the fin seen round the world. Where Reagan got the five bucks is a mystery [1920s + Underworld; fr Yiddish *finif*, "five"]*

finagle (fə NAY gəl) (also **faniggle** or **fenagle** or **finigal** or **finagel** or **phenagle**) *v* **1** To manage or arrange, esp by dubious means; contrive: *Well, she's always trying to finagle me out of it/ He finagled the driver into doing it for him* **2** To acquire, esp by trickery: *She finagled a couple of choice seats [1920s +; origin unknown; perhaps related to British dialect *finegue*, "to evade," or *fainague*, "to renege"]*

finagle factor or **Fink's constant** *n phr* The putative mathematical constant by which a wrong answer is multiplied to get a right answer (1950s +)

find *n* A remarkable discovery, esp of something unexpected (1872 +) **See** IF YOU CAN'T FIND 'EM

fine *adj* Attractive; DISHY, HUNKY: *if a guy or girl is cute, they're a "hottie" or "fine"* [1990s + Teenagers; a revival of 1940s bop and cool use, from black, "pleasing, wonderful, exciting, cool"]

fine how-de-do (or **how-do-you-do**), a *n phr* A situation; usually deplorable set of circumstances: *which is a fine how-de-do in a country that prides itself on progress* [1835 +; the dated instance is *pretty how do you do*]

fine kettle of fish *n phr* A nasty predicament; lamentable situation (1800 +)

fine print, the *See* the SMALL PRINT

finest, the *n phr* The police force • Often in city name plus *finest* phrases like *San Francisco's finest, Madison's finest* (1890s +)

fine-tune *v* To make delicate and careful adjustments; TWEAK: *knowledge and techniques to fine-tune the economy* (1960s +)

finger *n* **1** A police informer; STOOL PIGEON (1930s + *Underworld*) **2** A person who tells thieves about potential loot (1920s + *Underworld*) **3** About a half-inch of liquor in a glass: *Maybe I'd better have another finger of the hooch* (1856 +) *v* **1** To locate and point out someone: *You're the guy that fingered Manny Tinnen/ artificially heightening the tale's drama (by fingering the sponsor)* (1920s + *Underworld*) **2** To tell thieves about the location, value, etc, of potential loot: *I fingered the robberies* (1920s + *Underworld*) **3** To insert a finger into the vulva; FINGERFUCK: *With one hand Larry was fingering me* (1970s +) *See* BUTTERFINGERS, FIVE FINGERS, GIVE FIVE FINGERS TO, GIVE

SOMEONE THE FINGER, NOT LAY A GLOVE ON SOMEONE, PLAY STINKY-PINKY, PUT ONE'S FINGER ON

SOMETHING, PUT THE FINGER ON **someone**, STAND AROUND WITH **one's** FINGER UP **one's** ASS

finger, the *n phr* **1** The act of identifying or pointing out potential loot, a hired killer's victim, a wanted criminal, etc (1920s + *Underworld*) **2** A lewd insulting gesture made by holding up the middle finger with the others folded down, and meaning "fuck you" or "up yours"; the BIRD, ONE-FINGER SALUTE (1950s +) **See** GIVE someone THE FINGER, PUT THE FINGER ON someone

fingered **See** LIGHT-FINGERED, STICKY-FINGERED

◀**fingerfuck**▶ *v* To insert a finger into the vulva; FRIG, PLAY STINKY-PINKY:
She wants you to fingerfuck her shikse cunt till she faints (1970s +)

finger man *n phr* A person who points out potential loot, potential victims, wanted criminals, etc (1920s + *Underworld*)

finger-pointing *n* The assessing of blame, guilt, etc: *Criticism of the President's foreign policy has produced a spate of finger-pointing within the Administration (1990s +)*

finger-popper *n* A listener who is sent into finger-snapping transports by music; an enthusiastic devotee (1950s + *Cool talk*)

fingers **See** BUTTERFINGERS, FIVE FINGERS, GIVE FIVE FINGERS TO

fingers in the till *n phr* Stealing money from one's place of work or money for which one is responsible: *caught with his fingers in the till (1974 +)*

finger up one's ass **See** STAND AROUND WITH **one's** FINGER UP **one's** ASS

finger wave *n* Giving someone the *finger*: *she gave him the finger wave*

when he turned away

finif or **finiff** or **finnif** *n* A five-dollar bill; five dollars; FIN [1850 + fr British; fr Yiddish *finif*, “five”]

finigal *See* FINAGLE

finish *v* To put a disastrous end to something or to someone’s prospects; COOK someone’s GOOSE: *She finished him off with a passing shot (1755 +)*

finished *adj* Ruined; no longer able to function or compete; DEAD, KAPUT: *After two tries he was finished/ She couldn’t act any longer and was finished at thirty*

finisher *n* A blow that knocks one unconscious; quietus (1827 + *Prizefight*)

finish last *See* NICE GUYS FINISH LAST

finito *modifier* Ended, finished: *After that, finito*

fink *n* **1** A strikebreaker; SCAB (1890s +) **2** A labor spy; a worker who is primarily loyal to the employer: *unpopular with the other waiters, who thought him a fink (1902 +)* **3** A police officer, detective, guard, or other law-enforcement agent: *This Sherlock Holmes, this fink’s on the old yocky-dock (1925 +)* **4** An informer; STOOL PIGEON: *Now he’s looking for the fink who turned him in/ The glossary runs to such pejorative nouns as fink, stoolie, rat, canary, squealer (1920s + Underworld)* **5** Any contemptible person; vile wretch; RAT FINK, SHITHEEL: *All men are brothers, and if you don’t give, you’re a kind of fink (1894 +)* **v**: **Dutch knew I worked for his friend and I wouldn’t**

fink (1920s +) [origin unknown; perhaps fr *Pink*, “a Pinkerton agent engaged in strikebreaking,” or fr German *Fink*, “finch,” a university students’ term for a student who did not join in dueling and drinking societies; first sense said to have been used during the Homestead Strike of 1892; fifth noun sense was unaccountably revived in the early 1960s]

fink out v phr **1** To withdraw from or refuse support to a project, movement, etc, esp in a seemingly cowardly and self-serving way; BACK OUT: *he will “fink out,” as Kauffman believed he had done so far (1960s + Counterculture)* **2** To become untrustworthy and a potential informer (1960s +) **3** To fail utterly (1970s +)

Fink’s constant *See* FINAGLE FACTOR

Finn *See* MICKEY FINN

finnagel *See* FINAGLE

fire v **1** To discharge someone from a job; dismiss, usu with prejudice; CAN, SACK (1887 +) **2** To throw something with great force: *The big left-hander fired a fastball down the middle (1910 +)* **3** To ask or utter with bluntness and vehemence: *The panel fired questions at me and I soon wilted (1850s +)* *See* BALL OF FIRE, HOLD someone’s FEET TO THE FIRE, ON THE FIRE, PULL something OUT OF THE FIRE, SURE-FIRE

fire away v phr **1** To begin; go ahead • Usu an invitation: “*Maybe this is something you can help me with*” “*Fire away*” **2** To attack verbally: *As soon as I walked into the room he began to fire away at me (1775 +)*

fireball *n* BALL OF FIRE

fire blanks *See* SHOOT BLANKS

fire-breathing *adj* Fierce; menacing; dragon-like: *ABC now planned to swap Ellen with Wednesday's fire-breathing Grace Under Fire (1591 +)*

firebug *n* An arsonist; pyromaniac [1872 +; fr *fire* plus *bug*, "maniac"]

firecracker *n* A bomb; torpedo (*WWII armed forces*)

fired up *adj phr* **1** Drunk (1850 +) **2** Angry (1824 +) **3** (also **all fired up**) Full of enthusiasm, energy, and resolve: *If he gets fired up he's unbeatable (1970s +)*

fire-eater *n* **1** A quarrelsome and energetic person (1804 +) **2** A firefighter; Smoke-Eater (1920s +)

fire in the belly *n phr* Zealous ambition; energy; high spirits: *You want someone with fire in the belly/ It's hard to get fire in the belly over health insurance when it's stuffed with pate [1951 +; probably fr the French phrase avoir quelque chose dans le ventre, "to have something in the gut"]*

fireless cooker *n phr* An outdoor toilet; privy; BACK-HOUSE [1920s +; fr a device for cooking with stored-up heat, found by 1908]

fireman *n* A relief pitcher, esp an effective one: *a four-run blast against fireman Joe in the eighth inning (1940s + Baseball)* *See* VISITING FIREMAN

fire on v phr To strike; hit: *looking at this one dude Huey had fired on (1960s + Black)*

fire on all cylinders *v phr* To operate or proceed at maximum speed and efficiency: *Europe's economy will fire on all cylinders/ a world firing on all cylinders, where the US, Japan, and Europe are all growing simultaneously (1990s+)*

fire stick *n phr* A firearm; gun; PIECE (1950s+ *Street gang*)

firestorm *n* An intense and often destructive spate of action or reaction: *The report has already generated a firestorm of criticism/ A lawyer from Time-Warner expected a firestorm of protest from the shareholders after the vote* [fr the catastrophic and unquenchable fires caused by aerial bombing of cities in World War II]

fire someone up *v phr* To fill someone with energy and enthusiasm; excite someone: *She fired them up with promises of huge winnings (1970s+)*

firewall *n* **1** Computer hardware or software that protects internal networks from outside intrusion: *Firewalls, in recent years, have become the bulwark against computer breakins (1990s+ Computer)* **2** A strong safeguard between one operation or area and another: *Impenetrable firewalls between federally insured banking activities and their nonbanking commercial activities would prevent stock manipulation (1990s+)* [fr a *firewall* built to contain a fire in a building, a meaning found by 1851, and a barricade between an engine and a passenger compartment, found by 1947]

firewater *n* Liquor; BOOZE [1826+; the term is attributed to North American Indians]

fireworks *n* **1** Excitement; furor; noisy fuss; HOOPLA: *speeches that would*

produce the “fireworks” supporters have demanded (1883 +) **2** Anger; quarrels; rancorous rhetoric (1880s +) **3** Shooting; gunfire or cannon fire : *The riot ended when the National Guard showed up and the fireworks began (1860s +)*

first base *n phr* In early sexual play, holding hands: *“In sixth grade,” she said, “first base is holding hands, and second base is kissing on the mouth” (1980s + Schoolchildren)* **See** GET TO FIRST BASE

first crack out of the box *adv phr* Immediately; before anything else: *Get him back home and, first crack out of the box, he’s run away again (1940s +)*

firstest (or fustest) with the mostest *adv phr* First with the most; soonest and best equipped [fr explanation said to have been given by Confederate General Nathan B Forrest of how he won a skirmish; he actually said “Get there first with the most men”]

first john *n phr* A first lieutenant (1940s + Army)

first luff *n phr* A naval lieutenant, senior grade (1850 + Navy)

first man (or shirt or soldier) *n phr* A first sergeant; Top-Kick (1940s + Army)

first off *adv phr* First in order; to begin with: *I said that first off I wanted an apology (1880s +)*

first-rate *adj* Excellent; of best quality (1697 +) *adv*: *That’ll do first-rate* [fr the rating of warships in the 1600s]

first sacker *n phr* A first baseman (1911 + Baseball)

fish *n 1* A new inmate: *As a “fish” at Charlestown, I was physically*

miserable (1870s + *Prison*) **2** A nonmember of a street gang; a person regarded as inimical and distasteful by a street gang (1950s + *Street gang*) **3** A weak or stupid person, esp one easily victimized; PATSY, SUCKER: *Why should he be the fish for the big guys?/ The superteams get stronger. They can pad their schedules with the occasional fish* (1753 +) **4** A person, esp a criminal, thought of as being caught like a fish: *The cops catch a lot of very interesting fish* (1885 +) **5** A heterosexual woman (1970s + *Homosexuals*) **6** A prostitute; HOOKER • *Fish* meant “vulva” by the 1890s and retained the meaning, at least in black English, until at least the 1930s (1930s +) **7** A dollar: *The job paid only fifty fish* (1920 +) **8** TIN FISH • *Fish torpedo* is found by 1876 (1928 +) **v** **1** To seek information, esp by a legal or quasi-legal process having a very general aim; GO FISHING (1563 +) **2** To ask for something, usu a compliment, esp in an indirect and apparently modest way (1803 +) **See** BIG FISH, BIGGER FISH TO FRY, COLD FISH, FINE KETTLE OF FISH, GO FISHING, KETTLE OF FISH, LIKE SHOOTING FISH IN A BARREL, POOR FISH, QUEER FISH, TIN FISH

fishery *n* A religious mission in a working-class neighborhood [1920s + Hoboes; ultimately fr the concept of St Peter as a *fisher* of men]

fish-eye, the **See** GIVE someone THE FISH-EYE

fish-eyed *adj* Cold, staring, and inhuman • The dated form is *fishy-eyed*: *have to persuade a fish-eyed insurance claims adjustor* (1836 +)

fishhooks *n* The fingers (1846 +)

fishing **See** GO FISHING

fishing expedition *n phr* An attempt, on the part of the police, a

prosecutor, etc, to discover evidence where it may or may not be; a sort of inquisition: *She had nothing special in mind to ask Joan Tesell; it was just a fishing expedition (1961 +)* **See** GO FISHING

fish-kiss *n* A kiss made with puckered lips: *not a real kiss, but a fish-kiss* **v** To kiss someone with puckered lips

fish or cut bait *sentence* Do one thing or another, but stop dithering; take action; SHIT OR GET OFF THE POT • Usu a firm or irritated demand: *The union leader warned that the city had until Feb 1 to “fish or cut bait” (1876 +)*

fishskin *n* **1** A dollar bill (1930s +) **2** A condom (1930s +)

fish story (or tale) *n phr* A series of lies or exaggerations; a false or improbable explanation: *His whole alibi is a fish story* [1819 +; fr the tendency of an angler to exaggerate the size of the catch]

fishtail *n* **1** A women’s dress or skirt style featuring a flare at the bottom (1950s +) **2** Flaring rear fenders on a car (1950s + *Hot rodders*) **v** To swing a car, motorcycle, etc, from side to side at the rear: *causing his rear wheels to spin or the rear end to fishtail, that is swing back and forth (1927 +)*

fish to fry **See** BIGGER FISH TO FRY

fishwife *n* The wife of a homosexual man (1970s + *Homosexuals*)

fishy *adj* Very probably false or dishonest; very dubious: *The whole proposition is decidedly fishy* [1840 +; probably fr the unpleasant odor of spoiled *fish*]

fishyback *n* The transport of loaded containers or semitrailers by

ship or barge [1954 + ; modeled on *piggyback*]

fist *n* **1** The hand used for operating a telegraphic key (1930s + *Telegraphers & radio operators*) **2** A signature (1842 +) **See** MAKE MONEY
HAND OVER FIST

fisted **See** HAM-HANDED.

◀**fist-fucking**▶ *n* (also **fisting**) **1** Anal intercourse, usu homosexual, in which the hand is inserted into the partner's anus (1970s +) **2** Male masturbation (1890s +)

fistful *n* **1** A handful, usu a large amount: *I've got a fistful of overdue bills* (1611 +) **2** A large amount of money: *The digital stereo set me back a fistful* (1950s +) **3** A five-year prison sentence (1940s + *Underworld*)

fistiana *n* The sport or business of prizefighting; the boxing game: *that hotbed of fistiana known as Las Cruces* (1840 +)

fit *n* The devices used for injecting narcotics; drug paraphernalia;
WORKS [1950s + Narcotics; probably a shortening of *outfit*] **See** DUCK-FIT, HAVE A SHIT FIT, THROW A FIT

fit as a fiddle *adj phr* In very good condition; in fine fettle (1616 +)

fit to be tied *adj phr* Very angry; STEAMED (1894 +)

five *n* The hand; the five fingers (1950s + *Jive talk*) **See** GIVE someone FIVE, HANG FIVE, NINE-TO-FIVE, SLIP (OR GIVE) ME FIVE, TAKE FIVE

five-and-ten or **five-and-dime** *adj* Cheap; paltry; second-rate: *Dr Ruth is strictly a five-and-dime affair* *n* A variety store selling relatively cheap items; DIME STORE (1908 +)

five-case note *n phr* A five-dollar bill (1920s +)

five-dollar gold piece *See* COME UP SMELLING LIKE A ROSE

five-finger discount *n phr* Shoplifting (1960s + Teenagers)

five fingers *n phr* **1** A five-year prison sentence **2** A thief (1940s + Underworld) *See* GIVE FIVE FINGERS TO

five it *v phr* To refuse to answer on grounds of the Fifth Amendment: *How many questions would they be able to get in before DeMeo began to “five it”* (1970s +)

Five-O *n* A police officer; the police: *Why you think you and the flap can shut the Deuce down? Five-oh can't do it* [1980s + Teenagers; fr the television police-adventure series *Hawaii Five-O*]

five o'clock shadow *n* A growth of stubble that becomes visible in the late afternoon on the face of a man who has shaved earlier in the day (1937 +)

five-ouncers *n* The fists [1940s + Prizefight; fr the minimum weight of boxing gloves]

five-pound bag *See* BLIVIT

fiver *n* **1** A five-dollar bill; five dollars: *For a fiver, cash, you could ride* (1843 +) **2** A five-year prison sentence; FIVE FINGERS (1940s + Prison) *See* NINE-TO-FIVER

fives *See* BUNCH OF FIVES

five-second rule (also called the **three-second rule**, **10-second rule**, **15-second rule**) *n phr* The belief that if one picks up a

dropped food item very quickly, it is safe to eat: *five-second rule in the cafeteria*

five-spot *n* **1** A five-dollar bill (1890s +) **2** A five-year prison sentence (1900 + *Underworld*)

fix *n* **1** A fight, game, etc, of which the winner has been fraudulently predetermined: *The World Series that year was a blatant fix* (1890s +) **2** (also **fix-up**) A dose of a narcotic, esp an injection of heroin; BLAST: *a fix to calm her jittery nerves* (1930s + *Narcotics*) **3** Anything needed to appease a habitual need or craving • One of the common transfers of narcotics terms, like *junkie*: *He had to have his daily fix of flattery* (1970s +) **4** A difficult situation; a nasty position or dilemma: *I'm afraid her lying has gotten her into quite a fix* (1809 +) **5** A clear idea; an accurate notion • The dated use refers to the determination of a point or line in navigation: *I can't get a fix on this guy's intentions* (1902 +) **v** **1** To prearrange the outcome of a prizefight, race, game, etc (1790 +) **2** To arrange exoneration from a charge, esp by bribery; have a charge quashed: *He had a pal could fix tickets for five bucks* (1872 +) **3** To castrate an animal, esp a cat (1940s +) **4** To punish; injure; FIX someone's WAGON: *Make him wash the dishes, that'll fix him* (1800 +) **See** QUICK FIX

fix, the *n phr* **1** Arrangements, esp illicit payments, assuring the prearranged outcome of a prizefight, game, race, etc: *It's in the bag. The fix is on/ If he doesn't get the Nobel, the fix is in* (1940s +) **2** Arrangements assuring exoneration from a police charge: *The super hisself couldn't put the fix in any faster* (1920s +)

fixed *adj* **1** Having the outcome prearranged: *the World Series is fixed*

2 Neutered: *fixed cats* 3 Intoxicated or drugged

fixer *n* A person who arranges shady and illegal affairs: *He's a fixer you have to see if you want to open a gambling hall (1889+)*

fix someone's **hash** *See* SETTLE someone's HASH

fixings *n* Things, esp food, normally accompanying some central or focal object: *turkey and all the fixings (1842+)*

Fixit *See* MISTER FIXIT

fix-up *n* A date arranged by a third party: *not sure if a fix-up is any better than a blind date*

fix someone **up v phr** To provide or arrange what is needed: *We can fix you up with a nice new car/ If you want a date I can fix you up with Gert (1861+)*

fix someone's **wagon v phr** To punish; injure; ruin; CLEAN someone's CLOCK (1940s+)

FIZBO *n* A person who attempts to sell property without a real-estate broker, or the arrangement for doing so: *Another is their dislike for brokers who offer their services at a discount to FIZBOS, which stands for For Sale By Owner (1980s+)*

fizz *n* A failure; FIZZLE: *"It was a big fizz," the ambassador said (1940s+)*

fizzle *n*: *Our monster bash was a fizzle v* To fail; lose effect; FLOP, PETER OUT: *I bail out of all my commitments and things fizzle [1840s+ College students; fr the lackluster sibilance of a damp firecracker]*

flabbergast *v* To amaze; perplex; THROW (1772+)

flack¹ or **flak modifier**: *The flack description is also worth quoting* **n** 1 Publicity; public relations material; BALLYHOO, HYPE: *Mr Mogul's latest epic was preceded by wheeling galaxies of affecting flack (1940s +)* 2 (also **flacker**) A publicity person or press agent: *something that would cause your basic, self-respecting flack to want to slit his throat/ "He's shown steady improvement," said a medical flak* **v**: *his publishers, who flack it into a best seller/ He's not flakking for ulterior motives* [origin unknown; said to be fr the name of Gene Flack, a moving-picture publicity agent, and first used in the show-business paper *Variety*; probably influenced by *flak*]

flack² or **flack out v** or **v phr** 1 To fall asleep; lose consciousness 2 To be tired or depressed 3 To die (1950s + *Cool & beat talk*)

flackery n Publicity; FLACK¹, HYPE: *A White House insider's name, with enough flackery, can be sold like mouthwash (1960s +)*

flag n 1 The pennant awarded annually to a league championship team (1883 + *Baseball*) 2 An assumed name; alias (1930s + *Underworld*) **v** 1 (also **flag down**) To hail a vehicle, person, etc; signal a stop: *He was barreling along till she flagged him down (1850s +)* 2 To arrest; BUST: *They flagged my reefer man yesterday (1940s + Underworld)* 3 To designate as someone who will not be served more liquor; EIGHTY-SIX: *Babris asked Pilone whether the men were "the local troublemakers" and then demanded that they be "flagged," the bartender testified (1980s +)*

flagged adj Forbidden further drinks because already drunk (1980s +)

flag it v phr To fail an examination or a course; FLUNK (1950s + *College students*)

flagpole *See* RUN something UP THE FLAGPOLE

flagship modifier: *and not one damn word in the nation's flagship papers* **n** The most imposing constituent; premier specimen: *This car's the flagship of the line* (1955 +)

flag-up adj With the taxi meter not started: *a flag-up ride* (1960s + *Cabdrivers*)

flag-waver n **1** A conspicuously patriotic person; superpatriot **2** A book, play, etc, that is strongly patriotic (1890s +)

flak n **1** An antiaircraft gun or guns; antiaircraft fire (*WWII armed forces*) **2** (also **flack**) Severe criticism; angry blame: *This order provoked little political flack/ Joe took considerable flak from white co-workers* (1960s +) **3** Trouble; fuss; dissension; STATIC: *Let's not have a lot of flak about this* (1960s +) [fr German *Fliegerabwehrkanonen*, "antiaircraft gun"]

flake adj: *Don't act so flake* (1960s + *Baseball*) **n** **1** An eccentric person, esp a colorful individualist; BIRD: *what is known in the trade as a flake, a kook, or a club-house lawyer/ Users and flakes clung to her* (1950s + *Baseball*) **2** The quality of flamboyant individualism: *The Yankees have acquired an amount of "flake"* (1960s + *Baseball*) **3** A stupid, erratic person; RETARD (1960s + *Teenagers*) **4** Cocaine (1920s + *Narcotics*) **5** An arrest made in order to meet a quota; ACCOMMODATION COLLAR (1970s + *Police*) **v** **1** To arrest someone on false or invented charges; FRAME (1970s + *Police*) **2** To plant evidence on a

suspect: *I have a throwaway gun. We're going to flake him* (1970s + Police) **3** To cancel an appointment without notice; STAND someone UP: *It is already seven o'clock; I guess he flaked* (1980s + Students) [all except police senses ultimately fr an attested phrase *snow flakes*, "cocaine"]

flaked-out *adj* Asleep; unconscious (1950s + Beat & cool talk)

flake off *v phr* To leave; depart • Often an irritated command: *Want to brush off such friends? Suggest that they flake off* [1960s + Teenagers; probably a euphemism for *fuck off*]

flake-out *n* A total failure; FLOP (1970s +)

flake out *v phr* **1** FLACK OUT **2** FLAKE OFF **3** To fail [1970s +; origin uncertain; *flax out* in the third sense is found in New England dialect by 1891 and is probably related]

flak jacket *n phr* A bulletproof vest or other protective garment for the chest: *the flak jacket Oiler QB Dan Pastorini wore last year/ Nebraska officials said that Berringer, who was wearing a flak jacket, was not in pain but was held out in the second half* [1950s +; fr the protective jacket worn by aircrew members in WWII]

flaky or **flakey** *adj* **1** Colorfully eccentric; buoyantly individualistic (1960s + Baseball) **2** Insane; SCREWY, WACKY: *a flaky old professor, a snake expert* (1960s +) **3** Disoriented; barely conscious; dizzy: *He played the last 23 minutes of the game in a condition that was described as "flaky" and "fuzzy"* (1960s +) **See** FLAKE

flam **See** FLIMFLAM

flamdoodle *See* FLAPDOODLE

flame *n* **1** A sweetheart; beloved (1647+) **2** (also **flame-mail**) An angry and often obscene message on a computer network: *countless scornful messages, called “flames” on the network/ Bill sent Michael this totally wicked flame-mail from hell (1980s+ Computer)* *v* **1** (also **flame it up**) To flaunt or exaggerate effeminate traits; CAMP IT UP (1970s+ *Homosexuals*) **2** To rant angrily and often obscenely on a computer bulletin board or other network: *You may even get the chance to “flame” someone else (1980s+ Computer)* *See* SHOOT someone DOWN

flameout or **flame out** *modifier: Gramm, flameout Jack Kemp* *n* **1** The failure of a jet engine where the flame is extinguished (1940s+) **2** A person of fleeting fame; FLASH IN THE PAN, HAS-BEEN: *He is the Russian Hotspur, a fiery flameout who will soon become a historical footnote/ Michael Jackson was a flameout, too (1990s+)* *v phr* **1** Of a jet engine, to fail by losing the flame of its fuel (1940s+) **2** To lose energy; falter; collapse: *The Stevens Point native flamed out in the 1500 meters (1990s+)*

◁**flamer** or **flaming asshole** or **flaming fruitbar**▷ *n* or *n phr* A male homosexual; QUEEN: *It doesn’t have anything to do with me being a flamer (1970s+ Homosexuals)*

flames *See* GO DOWN IN FLAMES

flamethrower *n* A pitcher with a very fast fastball (1970s+ *Baseball*)

flame war *n phr* An extended outbreak of vituperation on a computer network: *The whole net will basically collapse through*

flame-wars/ They flame back, and then a flame war begins (1990s + Computer)

flaming *adj* Blatantly homosexual, esp in an effeminate way; SWISH: *in hiding the fact that Babe Ruth and Lou Gehrig were flaming homosexuals (1970s + Homosexuals)* **adv** Very • Used as an intensifier, usu preceded by “so”: *I can’t believe he’d be so flaming stupid (1895 +)* **n** (also **flamage**) The use of rude, strong, obscene, etc, language on a computer bulletin board, in computer mail, etc • This sort of verbal license is said to be common and apparently to be an effect of the medium itself (1980s + *Computer*)

flammer *See* FLIMFLAMMER

flannel-mouth *n* An exaggerated talker (1880s +)

flap *n* **1** Disturbance; tumult; fuss: *Law was one direction open to me with the least amount of flap (1916 + British)* **2** A fight between street gangs; RUMBLE (1950s + *Street gang*) **3** A white person: *I wouldn’t give a fuck what you or the flap or anybody thought ‘bout it (1990s + Black street gang)* **v** To become flustered; lose one’s composure: *I’ve seen him under hostile pressure before. He doesn’t flap and he doesn’t become a doormat (1920s +)*

flapdoodle or **flamdoodle** *n* Nonsense; foolishness; BALONEY: *He then goes on to utter other flapdoodle for the nourishment of the mind (1833 +)*

flap one’s gums *See* BAT one’s GUMS

flapjack *n* A pancake (1600 +)

flapjaw *n* 1 Talk; discourse; chat: *We caught Mannone and Moore for a moment's flapjaw before we left* 2 A loquacious person; MOTOR-MOUTH (1950s +)

flapjawed *adj* Talkative; notably loquacious: *to describe the flapjawed Turner as outspoken* (1950s +)

flap one's lip *See* FLIP one's LIP

flapper *modifier: the flapper era/ flat flapper chest* *n* 1 The hand; FLIPPER (1770s +) 2 A young woman of the type fashionable in the 1920s, with pronounced worldly interests, relatively few inhibitions, a distinctive style of grooming, etc • The date refers to two senses, “a young whore” and “a young girl”; the 1920s revival seems to blend these (1893 +) [origin uncertain; perhaps from the idea of an unfledged bird *flapping* its wings]

flash *adj* 1 Excellent; wonderful; DYNAMITE (1970s + Teenagers) 2 FLASHY (1600s +) *n* 1 Thieves' argot (1718 +) 2 A look; quick glance: *We slid into the cross street to take a flash at the alley* (1900 +) 3 A person who excels at something, esp in a showy and perhaps superficial way; WHIZ: *He's a flash at math* (1603 +) 4 A display of gaudy merchandise or prizes: *expensive flash that the mark couldn't win* (1920s + Circus) 5 RUSH: *Harry shot up a couple of the goof balls and tried to think a bigger and better flash than he got* (1960s + Narcotics) 6 Distinctive personal style and charm; charisma: *Flash is in the clothes, the cars, the walk, the talk* (1970s +) 7 A sudden idea, impulse, or insight: *the joy when I get the flash, figure out who did it* 8 Something one is currently doing; BAG, THING: *His current "flash," as he calls it, tends toward gaucho suits* (1970s +) 9 In decent exposure: *He*

gave her a flash and she squawked **10** Urination; PISS: and said he'd pay double in case of a "flash," which is a delicate way of describing one of nature's indelicate imperatives (1970s +) **11** Showiness; superficiality; GLITTER, GLITZ: For all the flash Carlito's Way is pretty tame (1990s +) **v 1** To set up a display of presumed prizes • *Flash it, "to show the bargains offered,"* is found by 1849: *Flash the joint* (1920s + *Circus*) **2** To vomit • The dated example is *flash the hash* (1811 +) **3** To have a hallucinatory experience from a narcotic: *He flashed he was as big as a mountain* (1960s + *Narcotics*) **4** To feel the sudden pleasurable effect of a narcotics injection: *As soon as the needle went in, she flashed* (1960s + *Narcotics*) **5** To have a sudden idea, insight, or impulse (1920s +) **6** To expose one's genitals, breasts, etc • The earlier British forms were *flash it* and *flash one's meat*: *Judy thought she was gonna flash me. She started unbuttoning her blouse* (1846 +) **7** To display suddenly and briefly: *We flash our tin and ask him if he's lost a ball-peen hammer* **8** To climb a route on the first try (1990s + *Rock climbing*)

flashback *n* **1** A scene or passage in a novel, movie, etc, that depicts events earlier than those in the main time frame (1916 +) **2** A hallucination or sensation originally induced by LSD or other drugs but recurring after the drug experience has ended (1960s + *Narcotics*)

flasher *n* A person who exposes the genitals in public; exhibitionist [1960s + ; male exhibitionists were known as *meat-flashers* by the early 1890s]

flashforward *n* A scene or passage in a novel, movie, etc, that

depicts events later than those of the main time frame (1949+)

flash in the pan *n phr* A person or thing that does not fulfill an apparent potential: *If he's not a flash in the pan he'll be the best poet we ever had* [1809+; fr the igniting charge in an old gun that goes off *in the pan* or holder without igniting the main charge]

flash on *v phr* To recall; realize vividly: *I flashed on all that stuff in basic about it being better dead than captured/ She just flashed on it for once in her life, she ought to put her own needs right up front* (1960s+)

flash point *n phr* The place or time when something “takes fire,” becomes exciting and exemplary: *We want the White House to function as a flash point for whatever's great in this country* [1990s+; in the technical sense, “lowest point of ignition of a fluid, compound, etc,” the term is found by the 1870s]

flash roll or **flash money** or **front money** *n phr* A bundle of cash shown as proof that the holder is in funds: *thinking it would make for a fatter looking flash roll/ showed suspects six million in cash as front or flash money to prove that they indeed had funds* (1970s+)

flashy *adj* Gaudy; meretriciously showy: *flashy rings/ a flashy new car* (1690+)

flat *adj* **1** FLAT BROKE (1833+) **2** Having to do with any gambling game, esp one in which money rather than prizes may be won (1940s+ *Carnival*) [carnival sense fr earlier meaning of *flats*, “playing cards,” or fr earlier meaning “dishonest dice”] **See** GRANNY FLAT, IN NOTHING FLAT

flat as a pancake *adj phr* Very flat: *The car was squashed flat as a pancake* [1761 +; the form *flat down as pancakes* is found by 1611]

◁**flat-ass**▷ *adv* Totally; absolutely: *Some farmers are absolutely flat-ass broke/ It's not just that. I'll flat-ass leave her* (1960s +)

flatbacker *n* A prostitute: *His prostitutes are well known for being unhooked flatbackers* (1960s +)

flat broke *adj phr* Entirely without funds; penniless (1842 +)

flatfoot *n* A police officer or detective: *The flat-feet scratched their heads* (1899 +)

flatfooted *adj* Unprepared; surprised • Usu in the phrase *catch someone flatfooted*: *He just stood there flatfooted and watched it roll in* (1912 + *Baseball*) *adv* Straightforwardly; without ceremony: *If they were going to turn it down, they would have just flatfooted done it* (1828 +)

flathead *n* **1** A stupid person; FATHEAD (1862 +) **2** A police officer; FLATFOOT (1950s +) **3** A nontipping patron at a restaurant or club (1950s + *Restaurant*) **4** An L-head or side-valve car engine (1950s + *Hot rodders*)

flatheaded *adj* Stupid: *The speaker was a flatheaded idiot* (1880 +)

flatline *modifier* Dead: *The defendant's face was flatline* *v* To die: *State government is in a coma. We're going to flatline at any moment* [1980s +; fr the *flat line* showing no waves, hence no heartbeat, on a heart-monitoring machine]

flatlined *adj* Drunk; PLASTERED, SHIT-FACED: *I've had so many reebs I'm*

flatlined (1990s +)

flatliner *n* **1** A dead person (1980s +) **2** A nontipping customer;

FLATHEAD (1990s + *Restaurant*)

◁**flat on one's ass**▷ *adj phr* **1** Penniless and exhausted; DOWN AND OUT:

He blew his pay pack and he's flat on his ass (1960s +) **2**

Incompetent; feckless: *That platoon's a loser, flat on its ass* (1970s + *Army*) *See* FALL ON ONE'S ASS

flat-out *adj* **1** Open and direct; unambiguous; plain: *Bunuel resorts to*

flat-out assertions in the last scene/ This time a flat-out demand **2**

Total; unrestricted • The noun *flat-out*, "a failure," is found by

1870; the following example is an unconscious redundancy: *a*

husband who was a flat-out failure/ Despite its creep-show pretensions, much of it is flat-out dull

flat out *adv phr* At full speed; ALL OUT, WIDE OPEN: *The economy is running*

flat out and revenues are pouring in/ Flat out, working on it myself, it

will take a week [1932 +; perhaps fr the elongated shape of a horse going at top speed]

flats *n* **1** Horse racing in which the jockey is mounted and the horse

runs rather than trotting (1840s + *Horse racing*) **2** A pair of

dishonest dice (1591 + *Gamblers*) **3** A pair of footwear with no

heels or flat heels

flat-tailed *adv* Totally; completely: *They controlled the game. They just*

flat-tailed beat us (1990s +)

flattener *n* A blow that knocks one down and unconscious; knockout

punch (1920s + *Prizefight*)

flat tire (or hoop) n phr A tedious person; an insipid companion
(1920s +)

flattop n An aircraft carrier (WWII armed forces)

◁**flavor or flava**▷ **adj:** *That's a very flava lady* **n** A sexually attractive woman (1960s + Black)

flavor of the month n phr Something ephemeral; a short-lived phenomenon: *That 23 percent could dwindle, Mr. Perot could be the political flavor of the month/ She's not seeing him any more; turned out to be another flavour of the month* (1990s +)

FLB (pronounced as separate letters) **n** Strange or arrhythmic heartbeats [1970s + Medical; fr *funny-looking beats*]

fleabag or fleahouse or fleatrap modifier: *She will no longer take her dates to fleabag hotels* **n 1** A bed; mattress; bunk or hammock (1839 +) **2** An inferior racehorse (1950s + Horse-racing) **3** A cheap and wretched hotel or rooming house; FLOP, FLOPHOUSE: *my last French hotel of the war: a fleabag two rooms wide/ He has transformed the motel from the old wayside fleabag into the most popular home away from home* (late 1820s +) **4** Any cheap, dirty, or ramshackle public place: *unveiled at an owl show in a Forty-second Street flea bag* (1950s +)

flea-flicker n A play combining a lateral pass and a forward pass: *You won't get the flea-flickers and special-teams gambles from Holmgren* (1920s + Football)

flea powder n phr A weakened or diluted narcotic, or a nonnarcotic substance sold as a narcotic; BLANK (1960s + Narcotics)

fleece *v* To cheat or swindle: *get back the money he'd fleeced me out of/ For these traders the function of the outside public speculator is to be fleeced (1577+)*

flesh *See* IN THE FLESH, PRESS THE FLESH

flesh flick *See* SKIN FLICK

flesh-peddler *n* **1** A pimp or prostitute • The earlier version, *flesh-monger*, is found by 1603 (1940s+) **2** An actor's or athlete's agent: *The old Hollywood flesh peddlers never stop talking money (1930s+)* **3** A person working at an employment agency; HEADHUNTER (1960s+)

flesh-pressing *modifier* Handshaking, meeting and flattering voters, etc, in politics: *The flesh-pressing process remains invariable, as you will glean from the weekly schedule of City Alderman Joe Pantalone (1920s+)*

flexitarian *n* A vegetarian who is flexible enough to occasionally eat meat or fish • Also an adjective [1992+; blend of *flexible* + *vegetarian*]

flex one's muscles *v phr* To give a sample of one's power, esp in a threatening way: *I'm not sure they mean harm, probably just flexing their muscles (1960s+)*

flextime or **flexitime** *n* Flexible working time that varies as to hours and days worked: *flextime for working mothers and fathers in business* [1970s+; fr the trademark of a device used to record the hours an employee works]

flic (FLICK, FLEEK) *n* A police officer: *if the flic had the slightest*

suspicion [fr French slang]

flick or **flicker** *n* **1** A movie: *a cheapie hard-core porno flick/ He will play a role in the flick* **2** A movie theater [1920s +; fr the *flickering* of early movie images] **See** SKIN FLICK

flicks or **flickers** or **flix**, the *n phr* The movies; the cinema: *When I went to the flicks, I was forced to sit far back/ the getting-away-from-it-all surcease we seek at the flicks (1920s +)*

flier **See** FLYER

flies **See** CATCH FLIES, NO FLIES ON

flight *n* A hallucinogenic drug experience; TRIP (1960s + *Narcotics*)

flimflam *modifier*: *a flimflam game/ flimflam man n*: *Don't fall for that flimflam v* To cheat or swindle; defraud; BAMBOOZLE, CON: *We've been flimflammed/ He talked like some hick begging to be flimflammed (1538 +)*

flimflammer *n* A confidence man; cheater; swindler: *an expert flimflammer who worked up crime's ladder (1880s +)*

flimsy *n* A copy of a bill, artwork, etc, on thin paper (1857 +)

fling *n* **1** A period of pleasure and indulgence, often as relaxation after or before stern responsibilities: *He had a last fling before going to the monastery (1827 +)* **2** A try; CRACK, GO, SHOT: *Will you have a fling at climbing that wall? (1592 +)* **3** A dance; party; SHINDIG (1940s + *Students*)

fling woo **See** PITCH WOO

flip¹ adj Flippant; impudent; CHEEKY: *Mr Lawrence is flip and easy/*
Someone else thought he was too flip at press conferences (1847+)

flip² n Something that causes hilarity or pleasure: *The big flip of the year is Peter Arno's book of cartoons (1950+)* **v 1** To change or switch diametrically; FLIP-FLOP: *So I flipped over to the opposite opinion (1900s+)* **2** To respond enthusiastically; feel great excitement and pleasure: *"They flipped over it," Riveroll recalls/ I flip over this record (1950+)* **3** To cause one to respond with enthusiasm; give one great pleasure: *My imitation of Mr Kissinger flipped the assemblage (1950+)* **4** To become angry: *When he told me what he had done, I flipped (1940s+)* **5** To go insane; behave irrationally; FLIP OUT: *I was flipping at first but then the marvelous vibes got to me (1950s+ Cool talk)* **6** To become an informer; FINK OUT, SING: *Someone had tipped the police off to where they should look: a suspect who had been persuaded to flip, become a government informant, on the night of his arrest/ It was the easiest flip Stone ever made. The man rolled over like a puppy (1980s+ Police)* **7** To vomit: *Many jockeys have to "flip" (regurgitate) their meals to make weight (1980s+)* **8** To exchange one for another; trade in: *You buy one, get it out of your system, flip it for a gray Lexus or Infiniti (1990s+)*

flip-flop modifier: *flip-flop views and reluctance to confront the issues n*
A complete reversal of direction; about-face • The primary meaning is "somersault": *Commodities have been doing flip-flops on the price ladder v: So Kennedy's flip-flopped again (1900+)*

flip-flops n A type of open shoe, often made of rubber, with a V-shaped strap that goes between the big toe and the toe next to it: *in*

a flowered housedress and flip-flops (1960s +)

flip one's **lid** (or **wig** or **raspberry**) **v phr** **1** To become violently angry; BLOW one's TOP: *When she told him he flipped his lid* **2** To go insane; behave irrationally: *When he started mumbling I was sure he'd flipped his wig/ flipped his lid and blew a whole list of nuclear warhead targets* **3** To show great enthusiasm and approval: *When she finished reading, the crowd flipped its raspberry (1940s + Jazz musicians)*

flip (or **flap**) one's **lip** **v phr** To talk, esp idly or foolishly (1940s + Students)

flip-lipped **adj** Flippantly loquacious; FLIP, SMART-ASS: *Pine was a flip-lipped bastard who should have had his ears pinned back long ago (1940s + students)*

flip on **v phr** To turn on; activate: *was vacationing in Norway recently when he flipped on the telly (1990s +)*

flip on someone **v phr** To rob; hold up (1990s + Street gang)

flip-out **n** **1** A spell of anger, disturbance, craziness, etc: *Harriet has a minor flip-out and flees* **2** An exciting or wondrous experience: *Her performance was a real flip-out (1950s + Bop & cool talk)*

flip out **v phr** **1** To evoke an enthusiastic response: *I flipped out these guys with my crazy stories* **2** To display enthusiasm; crow: *My junkie brother continues to flip out about what a cool dude I am* **3** To go insane; FLIP, FREAK OUT: *And I flipped out and went crazy (1950s + Bop & cool talk)*

flip over v phr To be very or overly excited about someone or something: *flipped over the new convertibles*

flip one's pancake v phr To delight one; inspire on; turn one on: *MTV's Real World does not flip my pancake either (1990s +)*

flipper n 1 A hand; FLAPPER: *I manfully gripped his flipper (1832 +)* **2** Traders who buy initial public offerings as the market opens and sell them when vigorous trading begins: *It's been a boom year for initial public offerings, just the right environment for "flippers" (1990s + Stock market)* **3** A person who buys real estate and then turns around and quickly tries to sell it for a profit

flip phone n phr A cellular telephone with a mouthpiece that folds up to decrease total size (1990s +)

flipping adj Accursed; wretched; DAMN, FREAKING: *Give me the flipping thing and I'll get it fixed [1911 + British; a euphemism for fucking]*

flip side n phr 1 The reverse surface of a phonograph record; B-SIDE: *a golden oldie on the flip side* **2** The other side of a question, issue, etc: *It is true that the flip side is that/ As usual, there is a flip side. Any of the films revered by men are detested by women* **3** Tomorrow: *catch you on the flip side*

flip the bird v phr (also **flash the bird, fly the bird, flick off, flip off**) To make a contemptuous sign with the hand, middle finger extended; GIVE SOMEONE THE FINGER: *The six ladies flipped the bird to all their earthling viewers, lifting their minis/ He's like the jerk who whips around traffic, flashing the bird as he passes/ How did it feel to you when Mr Harrington stared you down and flipped you off in that*

manner? (1980s+ *Students*)

flip the script *v phr* To reverse a role or situation; turn a circumstance around: *But is that still true if we flip the script?* (1990s+)

flip-top *See* POP-TOP

◁**flit**▷ *n* A male homosexual; effeminate man (1940s+)

fliv *n* FLIVVER (1920s+) *v* To fail; FLOP (1914+ *Show business*)

flivver *n* **1** A failure (1914+) **2** A Model T Ford car (1914+) **3** Any car, airplane, or other vehicle, esp a small or cheap one (1920s+) *v* To fail; FLOP: *If the production flivvers, I'll need that thirty cents* (1910+ *Show business*) [origin unknown]

flix, the *See* the FLICKS

FLK (pronounced as separate letters) *n* An abnormal, sick, or ugly child [1960s+ *Medical*; fr *funny-looking kid*]

float *n* A customer who leaves while one is looking for merchandise (1950s+ *Salespersons*) *v* **1** To loaf on the job; GOOF OFF (1930+) **2** To disseminate; send out: *Reporters have been told to float their resumes* (1970s+)

floater *n* **1** A person who habitually moves about; vagabond; DRIFTER (1958+) **2** A blunder: *made an error, slip or floater* (1913+ *British universities*) **3** A slow pitch that appears to float in the air (1906+ *Baseball*) **4** A corpse taken from the water (1852+)

floating *adj* **1** Drunk (1940s+) **2** Intoxicated with narcotics; HIGH (1950s+ *Narcotics & black*)

floating crap game *n phr* A professional crap game that moves about to thwart police interference: *The floating crap game run by an underworld gambling syndicate (1940s +)*

flock, a *n phr* A large number; HEAPS: *She buys him a flock of drinks afterwards, and hopes for the best (1920s +)*

flog *v* To offer for sale; peddle, esp in the sense of public hawking: *I went to the convention to flog a new book/ Motel and bus companies flog special charter rates [British 1919 + fr armed forces; fr British slang flog the clock, “move the clockhands forward in order to deceive,” applied later to the illicit selling of military stores]*

flog a dead horse *v phr* To expend effort ineffectually or futilely (1870s +) *See* BEAT A DEAD HORSE

◁**flog one's meat**▷ *See* BEAT one's MEAT

◁**flong one's dong**▷ *v phr* To masturbate: *If it weren't for flonging my dong, I don't know what I'd do (1970s +)*

flood pants *See* HIGH WATERS

flooey *See* GO BLOOEY

floor *v* **1** To knock down; DECK (1812 +) **2** To shock, surprise, or hurt to the point of helplessness: *I was floored when some of our players accepted their offer (1830 +)* **3** (also **floorboard** or **floor it**) To drive at full speed; push the throttle pedal to the floorboard; PUT THE PEDAL TO THE METAL: *She floored the Porsche on the freeway and got caught/ You better floor it and get out of here (1950s +)* *See* CLEAN UP ON someone, IN ON THE GROUND FLOOR, MOP THE FLOOR WITH someone, PUT someone ON THE FLOOR

floozy (Variations: **faloosie** or **floogy** or **floosie** or **floozie** or **flugie**)

n 1 A self-indulgent, predatory woman, esp one of easy morals; cheap and tawdry woman: *He'd learn more about their psychology by taking a floozie to Atlantic City/ the central figure of an adult whodunit, an obviously no-good floosie* **2** A prostitute: *You been with some floozy, George* [1911 + ; origin uncertain; said to be an alteration of *flossy*]

flop n 1 A place to sleep, esp a cheap and sordid hotel or shelter;

FLOPHOUSE: *I went into the flops and the shelters and was shocked/ in a three-dollar-a-week flop* **2:** *My great idea was a total flop* **v 1** To lie down for rest or sleep; sleep; CRASH: “Kip,” “doss,” “flop,” “pound your ear,” all mean to sleep (1907+ *Hoboes*) **2** To fail completely; BOMB: *The show flopped, ran one night only* (1893+) **3** To transfer a police officer from one station to another, one assignment to another, etc: *That's funny. Abbott's giving me advice and he's about to be flopped* (1980s+ *Police*) **See** BELLY FLOP

flophouse n A cheap and sordid rooming house or hotel, esp one with dormitories for men; CHINCH PAD, FLEABAG: *I'm spending my nights at the flophouse* (1923+)

flopper See BELLY-FLOPPER

flopperoo n A particularly spectacular failure; FLOP: *three subdivisions: flop, flopperoo, and kerplunk* (1931+)

floppola n A failure, esp a severe one; FLOPPEROO: *And Fortune's worst floppola seems apocalyptic. Who will care for the poor?* (1940s+)

flop sweat n phr An actor's anxiety; fear of failure: *Flop sweat is what*

an actor gets when he's nervous on stage/ Lights, camera, and flossweat (1960s +)

flossy or flossie *adj* Fancy; frilly; HIGHFALUTIN: *It may be highly important to know a flossy name for the boss (1890s +)*

flow *v* To menstruate: *am flowing, so can't do inverted poses*

flow, the *See* GO WITH THE FLOW

◁**flower**¹▷ *n* **1** An effeminate man or boy; Sissy • Horticultural metaphors are favored here: *lily, pansy* **2** A male homosexual (1950s +)

flower² *See* HEARTS AND FLOWERS, WALLFLOWER

flower child *n phr* A member of the hippie movement or counterculture, who typically advocated love, peace, and nonviolence: *a caricature of a London flower child who is about as interesting as a boiled potato/ Woodstock is long over, and the bloom has gone off these flower children/ the flower people of the late 1960s, mostly middle-class kids trying to create a gaudy secular religion (1960s +) [plural is flower children or flower people]*

flower power *n phr* The influence and merits of the pacifistic, altruistic values of the 1960s hippie movement

flu, the *n* Influenza (1839 +)

flub *n* **1** A stupid blunderer; LUMMOX, KLUTZ: *Pick up your feet and don't be such a flub* **2: The flub, as generally defined, is a mistake** *v* **1** To blunder; err; commit a gaffe; GOOF: *I flubbed as soon as I opened my big mouth* **2** To ruin by blundering; spoil with mistakes: *She flubbed*

the introduction, but did okay afterwards **3** To avoid work or duty; shirk; GOOF OFF (1920s +)

flubdub *n* **1** Incompetence; ineptitude: *They would remove much of the amateur flubdub* **2** An awkward person; blunderer; GOOF-UP, KLUTZ *v*: *I flubdubbed the stage entrance* [1920s +; first sense found by 1888 in the sense “foolishness, bunk, hot air”]

flub the dub *v phr* **1** To avoid one’s work or duty; shirk; GOLDBRICK: *He learned to flub the dub, but still stay pals with his associates* **2** To think, work, move, etc, sluggishly and haplessly **3** To fail by blundering; ruin one’s best chances: *I think I flubbed the dub again, bidding so late (esp WWII armed forces)*

flub-up *n* **1** A blunder: *The attempt was one big flub-up* **2** A blunderer; GOOF-UP, KLUTZ: *a kooky police cadet flub-up* (1950s +)

FLUF (FLUHF) *n* the Boeing 737 airliner [1970s + Airline; fr *fat little ugly fucker*]

fluff *n* ◁1▷ A girl or young woman • Found in the sense “female pubic hair, bush, beaver” by the 1890s: *A wan little fluff steals a dress so as to look sweet in the eyes of her boyfriend/ Thanks for the great interview with Cindy Crawford. It brings the word fluff to a new low* (1903 +) **2** An oral error, esp one made by an actor, announcer, etc; lapsus linguae: *A hell of a fluff, talking about Montezuma’s revenge to the president of Mexico* (1891 +) **3** A blunder; misplay (1920s +) *v*: *Show me an actor that never fluffed a line* **See** BIT OF FLUFF, GIVE someone THE FLUFF

fluffhead *n* A frivolous or stupid young woman; DITZ: *To judge*

masculinity you need a woman, and not some little fluffhead either
(1970s +)

fluff-off *n* A sluggard; shirker; GOLDBRICK, GOOF-OFF (*WWII armed forces*)

fluff off *v phr* To avoid work or duty; shirk; GOOF OFF [*WWII armed forces*; probably a euphemism for *fuck off*]

fluff someone off *v phr* To snub or cut someone; reject someone haughtily: *He thought he was pretty good, so he fluffed us all off*
(1940s +)

flugie *See* FLOOZY

fluid *See* embalming fluid fluke *n* A good or bad stroke of luck; an extraordinary and unpredictable event: *My winning was just a fluke/ We got onto that flight by a fluke* [1857 +; origin unknown, but perhaps fr *fluke*, “flatfish,” by way of an early 1800s British slang sense of *flat*, “easy dupe, victim,” altered in billiards jargon to *fluke*, to characterize the seeming chicanery of a good stroke of luck]

fluky or **flukey** *adj* Uncertain, unpredictable, and often unexpected: *It would have been a very fluky shot, even if he happened to have the camera in his hand* (1867 +)

flummadiddle *n* Nonsense; foolishness; BOSH (1854 +)

flummox *n* A failure; disaster; FUCK-UP: *The solemn commemoration was a total flummox* (1851 +) *v* To spoil; upset; confound: *Fu-Manchu tries to abduct a missionary who has flummoxed his plans in China* (1837 +) [fr British dialect, “maul, bewilder”]

flummoxed *adj* Confused and turbulent; baffling or baffled: “*One never knows, do one,*” *I said, and left him flummoxed* (1837 +)

flunk *n*: *I’ve got three passes and two flunks* **v** **1** To fail; make a botch of: *I tried selling, but flunked at that* **2** To fail an examination, a course, etc; BUST: *He flunked the final but passed the course* **3** To give a student a failing grade [1823 + College; origin unknown; perhaps a blend of *fail* with *funk*, perhaps echoic of a dull collapse]

flunk out **v phr** **1** To fail; make a botch **2** To be dismissed from school for failing work: *The great man had flunked out of Wittenberg* (1838 +)

flush *adj* Having plenty of money; affluent, esp temporarily; rich: *It took money, and the jazzman wasn’t ever too flush* (1603 +) **v** **1** To stay away from class; CUT (1940s + College students) **2** FLUNK (1960s + College students) **3** To reject or ignore someone socially (1960s +)
See FOUR-FLUSH, IN A FLUSH

flusher *n* A toilet: *right in the old flusher* (1970s +) **See** FOUR-FLUSHER

flush it *interj* An exclamation of contempt and disbelief: *I started to explain, but the cop told me to flush it* (1970s +) **v phr** To fail a course, examination, etc; FLUNK (1960s + College students)

◁**flute** or **fluter**▷ *n* A male homosexual [1940s +; fr metaphor of *flute* as “penis,” and a homosexual as one who *plays the skin flute*]
See PLAY THE SKIN FLUTE, SKIN FLUTE

fly *adj* **1** Clever; knowing; alert; shrewd (1811 +) **2** Stylish; very attractive; SHARP, SUPERFLY: *driving a Cadillac that’s fly/ They tell each other they’re fly when they look sharp* (1900 + Black) **v** **1** To act in a

strange or bizarre way: *The broad must be flying on something* (1960s + *Narcotics*) 2 To feel the effects of narcotic intoxication: *About a minute after the fix he was flying* (1960s + *Narcotics*) 3 To succeed; persuade; GO OVER • Often in the negative: *They're experts on what will fly and what won't/ He glanced at Keenan to see if that statement was going to fly* (1970s +) 4 To run or travel very fast [the first adjective sense, “clever, alert, etc,” is of unknown origin, though it is conjectured that it may refer to the difficulty of catching a fly in midair, that it may be cognate with *fledge* and hence mean “accomplished, proven, seasoned,” and that it is a corruption of *fla*, a shortening of *flash*; the third verb sense, “succeed, persuade, etc,” is fr a cluster of jokes and phrases having to do with the Wright Brothers’ and others’ efforts to get something off the ground and make it fly; the two adjective senses involve either a survival or a revival of an early 19th-century British underworld term of unknown origin] **See** BARFLY, CATCH FLIES, FRUIT FLY, LET FLY, NO FLIES ON, ON THE FLY, SHOO-FLY

fly a kite v phr To smuggle a letter into or out of prison (1940s + *Underworld*) **See** GO FLY A KITE

fly blind v phr To proceed or make decisions without enough information: *Like most benefits executives, she is largely flying blind when it comes to comparing the performances of health plans* (1920s + *Aviation use*)

fly-boy n An aircraft pilot, esp an intrepid one in the US Air Force: *The generals are no full-throttle “fly-boys” (WWII armed forces)*

flyby n A ceremonial or demonstrational passage overhead by an

airplane or a group of airplanes: *They saluted the President with a flyby of the newest jets (1950s +)*

fly-by-night *adj* Undependable and dishonest: *fly-by-night correspondence school*

fly by the seat of one's pants *v phr* **1** To pilot an airplane by feel and instinct rather than by instruments: *The old-time barnstormers had to fly by the seat of their pants (1930s + Aviators)* **2** To proceed or work by instinct and improvisation, without formal guides or instructive experience: *The teachers are not trained to recognize it. They're flying by the seat of their pants/ Every case is different, and every investigator ends up flying by the seat of his (or her) pants (1970s +)* **See** SEAT-OF-THE-PANTS

fly-chaser *n* An outfielder (1930s + *Baseball*)

flychick *n* HIP CHICK (1940s + *Black*)

flyer or **flier** *n* A trapeze performer (1890s + *Circus*) **See** TAKE A FLYER

fly high *v phr* To live in an affluent fashion; live as a successful person (1906 +)

flying *adj* Useless; worthless • Used to emphasize terms meaning “something of little value,” all probably variations and euphemisms of a *flying fuck* (1940s +) **See** HAVE THE RAG ON

flying boxcar *n* An airplane, esp military (1918 +)

flying colors **See** WITH FLYING COLORS

◁**flying frig**▷ **See** TAKE A FLYING FUCK

◀**a flying fuck**▶ *n phr* Something of very little value; a DAMN, DIDDLY, a FUCK, a SHIT: *Your take on this isn't worth a flying fuck* [1800+; the dated instance, describing a sex act done on horseback, occurs in a broadside ballad called *New Feats of Horsemanship*; the semantics are no more nor less clear than those of simple *fuck*] **See** NOT GIVE A DAMN, TAKE A FLYING FUCK

flying time *n phr* Sleep (*WWII armed forces*)

fly in the ointment *n phr* Sticky problem; major inconvenience [1833; after Ecclesiastes 10:1, "Dead flies cause the ointment of the apothecary to send forth a stinking savor"]

fly off the handle *v phr* To lose one's temper; LOSE one's COOL (1825+)

fly on the wall, a *n phr* An unseen observer; inconspicuous witness: *A lot of people in NATO would have given a lot to be a fly on the wall at the Warsaw Pact discussions* (1949+)

fly out *v phr* To hit a fly ball that is caught for an out (1893+ *Baseball*)

fly right *v phr* To be honest, dependable, etc: *He's my son. I want him to fly right* (1940s+)

fly the coop *v phr* To leave, esp to escape from confinement: *He had flown the coop via a fire-escape/ Our Dubie done flew the coop* (1910+)

fly trap *n phr* The mouth (1795+)

fly under the radar *v phr* KEEP A LOW PROFILE: *We do our best to fly under the radar of the media and professions so they don't know what hit*

them until it's too late, Reed told them (1990s +)

FOAF (FOHF) *n*: *These colorful experiences always seem to happen to a FOAF (friend of a friend), hardly ever a person with a name, address, and telephone number (1990s +)*

fodder *See* BUNG FODDER, CANNON FODDER

foe one one *n phr* Information; facts; the 411, the SCOOP, the SKINNY
[1990s + Black; fr 411, the telephone number called for customers' telephone listings]

fofarraw *See* FOOFOORAW

fog *v* 1 (also **fog it**) To run; speed; hurry (1914+ *Western*) **2** To throw with great force: *Ole Diz was in his prime then, fogging a fastball (1930s + Baseball)* **3** To attack; shoot • Also recorded as 1920s racketeer talk: *I takes me heat an'fogs 'em (1920s + Western)*
[origin unknown; probably a substitution for *smoke* in all senses]

See IN A FOG

fog-cutter *n* A drink of liquor taken in the morning [1833 + ; supposed to protect one against the danger of the morning *fog*]

Fogeyville *n* Old age; senility: *I mean we are talking Fogeyville here! (1990s +)*

fogged out *adj phr* Befuddled and deluded by narcotics: *A lot of people were fogged out and super-egotistic in that drugged-out way (1970s + Narcotics)*

foggiest, the *See* NOT HAVE THE FOGGIEST

Foggy Bottom *n phr* The US Department of State: *little affinity for the*

“career boys” of *Foggy Bottom* [1950 + ; fr the name of a marshy region in Washington, DC, where the State Department and other federal buildings are located; also an allusion to the murkiness of some policies and pronouncements]

fogy or fogey *n* **1** An old person; any very conservative, outdated person; DODO: *College students today are young fogies (1785 +)* **2** A military longevity allowance, awarded for units of service: *He got his pension and eight fogies (1881 + Armed forces)* [origin uncertain; perhaps fr French *fougeux*, “fierce, fiery,” referring to the doughty spirit of an invalid soldier, whence *fogy*, “fierce, fiery,” found by the 1860s; veteran soldiers were called *foggies* in the late 1700s, perhaps because they were regarded as moss-covered with age, *fog* being Scots dialect for “moss”]

foil *n* A small packet of narcotics; BAG (1960s + *Narcotics*)

fold *v* **1** To fail or close, esp in business or show business • The usual term earlier was *fold up*: *If the club folds (1930s +)* **2** To collapse; surrender; give way; CAVE: *After the President jawboned him unmercifully, the Senator folded (1250 +)* **3** To drop out of a poker game, indicated by putting all one’s cards face down on the table (1940s + *Poker*)

folding *n* Money; FOLDING MONEY: *The socialites lose a handsome wallet stuffed with a liberal supply of folding (1930s +)* **See** GREEN FOLDING

folding money *n phr* (Variations: **cabbage** or **green** or **lettuce** may replace **money**) Paper money; banknotes, esp in large quantities: *They leave their folding money at home/ lacks the folding green to pick*

up a nightclub tab (1920s +)

fold out v phr To abdicate responsibilities; slough off; COP OUT: *He was not a guy who would just fold out [1980s +; fr the act of folding, dropping out of a poker game]*

folkie n A folk singer or folk-music devotee: *The precious youth audience was lost to the folkies and the rockers (1960s +)*

folkiehood n The milieu, attitudes, etc, of folk-music performers and devotees: *as sure as she rejects that of ether-dwelling, confessional folkiehood (1990s +)*

folknik n A folk-music devotee or enthusiast (1960s +) **See** -NIK

folks n 1 A band of hoodlums (1880s + *Underworld*) **2** A gang; one's own gang: *"What does 'folks' mean now?" Grober asks. In unison: "Gangs" (1990s + Street gangs)* **3** Parents • Usu used affectionately: *I want to introduce her to my folks (1940s +)* **4** Ordinary people; common people; JUST FOLKS (1619 +)

follow one's nose v phr To go in the most obvious direction; go straight along (1620 +)

follow something straight out the window v phr To go to the extreme; follow obsessively: *When she gets hold of an idea, she'll follow it straight out the window (1980s +)*

follow through (or up) n: *What's the logical follow-through to what he said? v phr* To carry on with the next useful action; finish an action completely; pursue: *Follow up these hints, and you'll find the answer (1940s +)*

follow something **up v phr** 1 To carry one's investigation further; pursue a lead 2 (also **follow**) To do something appropriate subsequent to something else, or better than something already done: *How will she follow up her bestseller?/ I can't follow that line* (1940s +)

fonk *See* FUNK

fonky *See* FUNKY

food *See* BUNNY FOOD, FAST FOOD, JUNK FOOD, SOUL FOOD, SQUIRREL-FOOD

foodaholic *n* A compulsive eater; glutton (1980s +) *See* -AHOLIC

food coma *n phr* A state of uncomfortableness and drowsiness caused by overeating, esp of unhealthy food: *Most of us go into a food coma after Thanksgiving dinner*

food fight *n phr* A messy and childish fight among people who smear and spatter each other with food: *It makes for the kind of nice, political food fight that television politics specializes in serving up* [1970s +; -aholic]

food for the squirrels *n phr* SQUIRREL-FOOD (1940s +)

foodie *adj*: *San Francisco, foodie capital of the USA* *n* A person who pays unusual attention to food, cuisine, etc; devotee of healthy gourmet cooking and eating: *To be a proper foodie, it little matters where you live as long as you own a "serious" vegetable knife* [1980s +; perhaps modeled on *groupie*]

foeey *See* PHOOEY

fooforaw or **fofarraw** or **foo-foo-rah** or **foofaraw** (F^{oo} fə raw) *n* 1

A loud disturbance; uproar: *Ivar, what's all the foofaraw about the Ellerbee case?* 2 Gaudy clothing and accessories, esp the latter 3 Ostentation; proud show: *The refreshing thing about it is the lack of drumbeating and foo-foo-rah* [1848 + Western; origin uncertain; perhaps fr Spanish *fanfarrón*, “braggart”; perhaps fr French *frou-frous*, “frills”]

fool *n* An adept or enthusiast in what is indicated: *Lindy was a flying fool* [1920s + ; perhaps because the person is devoted to the extent of foolishness] **See** TOMFOOL

fool around *v phr* 1 To pass one's time idly; putter about; loaf (1875 +) 2 To joke and tease; KID AROUND: *Mark, stop fooling around and get to work* (1875 +) 3 To adventure sexually, esp adulterously; PLAY AROUND, SLEEP AROUND: *He had never fooled around or seen a prostitute until he came to us/ As I told Lipranzer a long time ago, Carolyn did not fool around* (1970s +)

fool around with *v phr* To play or tamper with; coquette with; Fiddle With: *I told you not to fool around with that gun; now you've shot Aunt Bessie/ Better not fool around with him, he's a karate black belt* (1875 +)

foolish powder *n phr* Heroin (1930s + *Underworld*)

◁**foop**▷ *v* To do homosexual sex acts [1970s + College students; probably a backward version of British *poof*, “male homosexual, effeminate male,” fr early 1900s Australian; perhaps fr the exclamation *poof* or *pooh*, regarded as effeminate]

◁**fooper**▷ *n* A homosexual (1970s + *College students*)

foot *See* BIG FOOT, DOUGHFOOT, FLATFOOT, GIVE **someone** THE FOOT, HAVE ONE FOOT IN THE GRAVE, HEAVY-FOOT, HOTFOOT, PUT **one's** FOOT IN IT, PUT **one's** FOOT IN **one's** MOUTH, SHOOT **oneself** IN THE FOOT, TANGLE-FOOT, TENDERFOOT, WEB-FOOT

footed *See* LEAD-FOOTED, LIGHT-FOOTED

foot-in-mouth disease *n phr* The uttering of embarrassing, stupid, or indiscreet speech: *Pat Robertson, who regularly displays symptoms of foot-in-mouth disease* [1960s+; blend of the veterinary term *hoof-and-mouth disease* and the idiom *put one's foot in one's mouth*; *put one's foot in it*, "blunder foolishly," is found by 1858]

foot it *v phr* **1** To walk: *A bus is OK during non-rush-hours if you've been footing it too long* **2** To escape by running; BEAT IT: *He stopped all of a sudden and said, "Foot it, Sonny! Foot it!"* (1831+)

footprint *n* **1** A history of activity; record; TRACK RECORD: *Reporters were wondering about the Justice's footprint* (1990s+) **2** The horizontal space needed for a machine, appliance, etc: *The new computers have a very small footprint* (1990s+)

footshot *n* An act, choice, utterance, etc, that damages one's reputation or standing: *Saying "stuff it" out loud was a real footshot* [1970s+ Army; fr *shoot oneself in the foot*]

foot soldier *n* A lower-ranking member of a corporation, regime, etc: *Goth's role as an SS officer and faithful foot soldier of the Third Reich is preserved/ filtered through the hazy surmises of the Cleveland footsoldiers* (1990s+)

foot the bill *v phr* To pay the charges; PICK UP THE TAB (1819+)

footwork *See* FANCY FOOTWORK

fooy *See* PHOOEY

foozle *n* **1** An error; BONER (1890s +) **2** A conservative, out-of-date person, esp an old man; DODO, FOGY (1855 +) **v** To blunder; spoil by bungling; botch: *I rather fozzled my first attempt at acting (1890s +)*
[Noun sense 2 is perhaps a humorous pronunciation of *fossil*]

for all it (or one) is worth *adv phr* To the utmost; with all one's might: *She's playing the wronged woman game for all she's worth/ Push that idea for all it's worth (1899 +)*

for a loop *See* THROW SOMEONE FOR A LOOP

for a song *modifier* For very little money; cheap: *got the Beetle for a song*

for crying out loud (or in a bucket) *interj* An exclamation of emphasis, surprise, disbelief, impatience, etc; FOR THE LOVE OF PETE: *For crying out loud, what half-assed thing has he done now?* [1920s +; a euphemism for *for Christ's sake*]

for free *adv phr* Without charge; gratis; FREE GRATIS: *They gave him a sandwich absolutely for free* [1940s +; based on Yiddish *far gornisht*, "for nothing"]

forget about it *interj* (also **fuhgedaboudit**, **fuh-geddabaudit**) An exclamation of dismissal and scorn • The variants represent New York City pronunciations: *Omerta. The code of silence for a sacred brotherhood. Well, fuhgedaboudit. Every time you turn around lately, a member of the Mafia is testifying at a trial/ The latest on Joey*

Buttafuoco's comedic debut: Fuggeddabautit [1940s + ; said to be also a euphemism for *fuck it*]

forget it *interj* **1** An injunction to put something out of one's hopes, concern, etc, esp because it is impossible: *If you thought you were next in line around here, forget it/ Forget it, she never did intend to go/ I can get up there most of the time, but in winter, forget it* **2** An exclamation of pardon; a token of forgiveness; DON'T GIVE IT A SECOND THOUGHT: *Hell no, I didn't mind. Forget it* (1900 +)

forget you *interj* **1** An invitation or command to leave; BUG OFF **2** An exclamation of rejection or refusal; NO WAY (1970s + Teenagers)

for one's health *adv phr* Lightly or frivolously; for one's delightful good • Always used ironically and in the negative: *I didn't make this damn stupid trip for my health, you know* (1900 +)

for (or fer) instance *n phr* An example; an instance: *I'd understand the point better if you gave me a couple of concrete for instances* [1940s + ; fr a Yiddish pattern]

◁**fork**▷ *v* To cheat; maltreat; take advantage of; FUCK, SHAFT: *I hoped he'd take care of us, but we got forked* [1940s + ; a euphemism for *fuck*]

forkball *n* **1** A pitch thrown from a forklike finger grip that drops sharply as it comes to the plate **2** (also **forked ball**) A spitball; SPITTER (1920s + Baseball)

forked-eight or **bent-eight** *n* A V-8 engine or a car having such an engine (1950s + Hot rodders)

for keeps *adv phr* Forever; permanently: *They put him away for*

keeps/ She wanted to be married for keeps (1884+) **See** PLAY FOR KEEPS

forkhander *n* A left-handed pitcher; SOUTHPAW (1950s+ *Baseball*)

◁**forking**▷ **adj** Wretched; disgusting: *I won't eat this forking stuff* **adv**
Very; extremely: *He sounded forking mad* [1940s+; a euphemism
for *fucking*]

fork over (or **up** or **out**) **v phr** To pay; give; contribute: *Fork up the cash/ I imagine he used a picture to make you fork over the dough (first form 1835+)*

forks *n* **Fingers:** *Get your forks off that (1848+)* **See** RAIN CATS AND DOGS

◁**fork you**▷ **interj** FUCK YOU (1940s+)

for laughs (or **kicks**) **adv phr** For simple pleasure, usu a wicked pleasure: *Girl mobsters beating up other girls simply for laughs (1940s+)*

form *n* The record of past performances by a horse, team, competitor, etc; the BOOK, TRACK RECORD: *What's the form on General Electric this quarter?/ The form on the little gelding is super* [1940s+
Horse racing; fr *form*, "the fitness or condition of a racehorse," which is found by 1760]

form sheet *n phr* A printed record of past performance; CHART, DOPE SHEET (1940s+ *Horse racing*)

for openers (or **starters**) **adv phr** As a beginning; as a first move or suggestion: *For openers, there's the approach via the Staten Island ferry/ So, try this for openers/ expensive, for starters* [1960s+; fr the *openers*, "cards of a certain value," required in draw poker for

beginning the betting]

for peanuts (or **chicken feed**) **modifier** For very little money; cheap:
a new dress for peanuts

for Pete's sake (also **pity's sake** or **the love of Mike**) **interj** An exclamation of emphasis, surprise, impatience, disbelief, dismay, etc; FOR CRYING OUT LOUD: *For Pete's sake, get moving!* [1903 + ; euphemisms for *for God's sake, for Christ's sake, for fuck's sake*]

for real **adj phr** Believably existent; as good or bad as seems; authentic: *But if you ask if they are for real, the answer is right there/ I often wondered if the bastard was for real* **adv phr** Really; truly: *I'm gonna for real do it, right now* [1940s + ; based on Yiddish *far emmes*, "for true?"]

for serious **adj phr**: *He was for serious but she wasn't* **adv phr** Seriously; with a sober intent: *The Yanks took the field for serious* [1950s + ; perhaps based on *for real*]

◁**for shit**▷ **adv phr** At all; in the least degree; TO SAVE one's NECK, Worth a Damn: *They can't drive for shit* (1940s +)

for starters **modifier** To start or begin with (1873 +), **See** FOR OPENERS

for (or **fer**) **sure** (or **shure** or **shurr**) **adv phr** Definitely; certainly • This old phrase was briefly resurrected in the California Valley Girls talk of the 1980s: *He is for sure a nerd* **affirmation** Yes: *When he asked if I'd do it I said fer sure I would* (1553 +)

for the birds **adj phr** Inferior; undesirable; of small worth; LOUSY: *I won't buy it. It's for the birds/ A single bed is for single men, it's for the*

birds [WWII armed forces; a euphemistic shortening of *shit for the birds*; because some birds eat animal feces, it is the equivalent of *bullshit* or *horseshit*]

for (or just for) the hell of it *adv phr* For no definite or useful reason; for fun; casually: *He does it, apparently, just for the adrenaline hell of it* (1934+)

for the long ball *See* GO FOR THE LONG BALL

for (or over) the long haul *adv phr* For a long while; for a period of difficulty and strain: *The slump in sales of women's apparel is here for the long haul* [1930s+; *the long haul*, "a transcontinental run," is found in bus drivers' talk by 1938]

for the love of Pete (or Mike) *interj* An exclamation of emphasis, surprise, impatience, disbelief, dismay, etc; FOR CRYING OUT LOUD: *I already did it, for the love of Pete!* (1910+)

forthwith *n* An order to report immediately (1950s+ *Police*)

forty-deuce *n* Forty-second Street in New York City: *Forty-deuce is what its seamy inhabitants call 42d Street* (1970s+)

forty-eight *n* A weekend pass (WWII Navy)

forty-four *n* A prostitute [1950s+; fr the rhyme with *whore*]

forty-'leven *modifier: about forty-'leven times* *n* An indefinite large number (1860+)

fortysomething *modifier: the fortysomething generation/*

fortysomething self-indulgence *n* A person between forty and fifty years old; BABY BOOMER: *The fortysomething reminisced about seeing them*

on the same bill with Sonny and Cher [late 1980s + ; based on *Thirtysomething*, the title of a television series]

forty (or six) ways to Sunday *adv phr* In every possible manner, direction, etc; comprehensively: *She had him beat forty ways to Sunday* [1840 + ; origin unknown]

forty winks *n phr* A short sleep; nap: *He caught forty winks and perked right up* (1828 +)

forwards *n* Pills of amphetamine or its derivatives [1960s + Narcotics; probably an allusion to *speed* in the same sense, with perhaps a by-reference to the *fast forward* control of a tape player]

FOS (pronounced as separate letters) *n* A patient whose symptoms are psychosomatic [1980s + Medical; abbreviation of *full of shit*]

fossil *n* An old or very conservative person; ALTER KOCKER, FOGY: *If I got to kiss old fossils to hold this job I'm underpaid* (1850s +)

fotog *See* PHOTOG

foul ball *n phr* **1** An inferior fighter; PALOOKA (1920s + *Prizefight*) **2** A useless and inadequate person; DULL TOOL, LOSER: *It is Scotty's boast that he hasn't sent a sponsor a foul ball yet* (1920s +) **3** A person having deviant convictions and attitudes; outsider; ODDBALL (1930s +) [fr baseball]

fouled up *adj phr* **1** Spoiled by bungling; confused; hopelessly tangled; FUCKED UP: *never seen anything more fouled up than what happened yesterday at the White House* **2** Damaged; impaired: *The kids were fouled up, came from bad homes, went to bad schools*

[1940s + ; a euphemism for *fucked up*]

foulmouth *n* A person inclined to utter obscenities, profanity, etc
(1640 +)

foulmouthed *adj* Obscene and profane in speech; filthy: *a foulmouthed retort* (1596 +)

foul out *v phr* To be removed from a game after committing too many fouls (1980s + *Basketball*)

foul-up *n* **1** A confused, tangled, hopeless situation; botch: *It's supposed to be a concert series, but it's a total foul-up* **2** A person who consistently blunders; bungler; FUCK-UP: *Why put that notorious foul-up in charge?* [1940s + ; a euphemism for *fuck-up*]

foul up *v phr* To ruin and confuse a project, assignments, etc; display one's ineptitude and futility; FUCK UP, SNAFU: *I fouled up my very first chance to be a reporter* [1940s + ; a euphemism for *fuck up*; possibly of naval origin, since *foul* is used of ropes, lines, anchors, sea bottoms, etc, in ways not characteristic of non-nautical speech]

foundry *See* NUTHOUSE

four *See* TEN FOUR

four-and-one *n* **1** Friday, the fifth day of the week **2** Payday
(1950s + *Black*)

four-bagger *n* A home run: *It was Bobby's 31st four-bagger and his fourth at Ebbets Field* (1883 + *Baseball*)

four-banger *n* A four-cylinder motor or car (1950s + *Hot rodders*)

four-bit *adj* Costing 50 cents; half-dollar: *to smoke four-bit cigars*
(1840s +)

four bits *n phr* Half a dollar; 50 cents [1840s +; originally a *bit* was a Mexican or Spanish *real*, worth 12 1/2 cents, or a part of a more valuable coin, such that eight would make a dollar; ultimately fr 18th-century British slang *bit*, “a small piece of money”]

four-by-four *n* A four-wheel-drive vehicle having four forward gears
(1940s + *Army & truckers*)

four-corner town *n phr* A very small town; a crossroads: *We were flabbergasted by these four-corner towns with four bars* (1980s +)

four-eyes *n* A person who wears eyeglasses (1874 +)

four-flush *modifier*: *Four-flushing hustlers who really knew how to gamble* *v* 1 To live by sponging off others, or by pretense and fraud
2 To cheat; swindle; victimize [1896 +; fr a poker player’s attempt to bluff when he has *four* cards of one suit showing and one of another suit not showing]

four-flusher *n* A bluffer or fraud; cheat; swindler (1904 +)

four hundred, the *n phr* The set of socially prominent people, esp in a given place; the social elite [1890 +; fr the list, attributed to Ward McAllister, of *four hundred* socially desirable people]

four-letter man *n phr* 1 A stupid man • From the four letters of *dumb*
2 A detestable man; a contemptible wretch; PRICK, SHIT • From the four letters of *shit* (1920s +)

four-letter word *n phr* Any of several short English words generally

regarded as obscene or offensive (1920s +)

four nines *n phr* Something pure or very nearly pure: *That is four nines, or 99.99 pure gold* (1970s +)

four-O *adj* Perfect; splendid; A-OK [WWII Navy; fr the point system used in Navy efficiency ratings, where 4.0 is the top rating; it is also the numerical equivalent of the grade A in most colleges]

411, the *n phr* The facts; the information; FOE ONE ONE, the SCOOP, the SKINNY: *The 4-1-1 on Urban Cool* [1990s + Black; fr 411, the telephone number called for information on customers' telephone listings]

four on the floor *n phr* A gearshift lever emerging from the floor of a car and controlling four speeds; hence standard as distinct from automatic shift: *This little baby's got four on the floor and leather bucket seats* (1970s +)

four-pointer *n 1* A grade of A for an examination or course **2** A superior student [1960s + College students; fr the grade-point system where an A rates at four points]

four sheets to the wind *See* THREE SHEETS TO THE WIND

four-striper *n* A naval captain, wearing four stripes as insignia (WWI Navy)

four-time loser *See* THREE-TIME LOSER

four-topper *n* A restaurant table for four people: *four-topper by the window*

four-wheeler *n* An automobile; CAGE (1960s + *Truckers*)

four wide ones n phr A base on balls; a walk, esp an intentional pass
(1970s+ Baseball)

fox n A beautiful, sexually attractive woman or, in teenage use, man
(1940s+ Teenagers & black) **v** To deceive; mislead; outwit; OUTFOX:
He tried to fox me with that phony accent, and did (1631 +) [fr foxy]

foxhole n A hole in which one conceals oneself, esp one dug for that
purpose by a soldier (WWII armed forces)

fox paw n phr A faux pas (1785 +)

foxy adj Attractive; stylish; sexually desirable: *She was 22 years old, a
real foxy little chick with auburn hair/ She must be one foxy lady*
(1895+ College students)

fracture v 1 To elicit loud laughter from; LAY THEM IN THE AISLES: *We're a
riot, hey. We play all kinds of funny stuff. We fracture the people* **2** To
evoke a strong reaction: *That flips me out and fractures me, man*
(1940s +)

fractured adj Drunk (1940s +)

frag v 1 To kill or wound someone, esp a detested officer of one's
own unit, typically by throwing a fragmentation grenade at him **2**
To kill; ICE, WASTE: *If I hadn't've done it, he would've fragged me*
(Vietnam War armed forces)

fragged adj Ruined; blown-out: *countless fragged Ferrari engines,
including two that disintegrated under a CD tester's heavy foot*
(1970s+ Car racing)

fraidy (or 'fraidy) cat n phr A timorous person, esp a boy; coward

(1910+)

frail *n* A woman, esp a young woman: *in persuading frailts to divulge what they know* (1905+)

frame *n* **1** The human body; physique; build, esp that of a woman (1600+) **2** A heterosexual man attractive to homosexuals; hunk (1950s+ *Homosexuals*) **3** A unit of a game or other contest; STANZA: *Mel Queen lined a single to right field to open that frame* (1910+) **4** The incrimination of an innocent person with false evidence; FRAME-UP: *just the victim of a frame* (1914+) *v*: *I was framed*

frame-up *n* **1** The incrimination of an innocent person with false evidence: *I'll prove to you it's a frame-up* (1913+) **2** A display of goods for sale (1940s+ *Pitchmen*)

frame up *v phr* To concoct; fabricate: *What lie are you going to frame up for your father* [1899+; perhaps fr the carpenter's term for erecting the *frame* of a new building]

frame someone *up v phr* To incriminate an innocent person with false evidence: *They couldn't get him legally, so they framed him up with a phony burglary charge* (1900+)

franchise, the *n phr* A superstar athlete who constitutes the drawing and earning power of a team: *He's not just the front runner, he's the franchise/ There goes the franchise* (1980s+ *Sports*)

frank *n* A frankfurter; WEENIE (1920s+)

Franken- *combining word* Designating what is indicated as being genetically engineered or otherwise strangely produced:

Frankenchips/ Frankenfood/ Frankentomato [1990s + ; shortening of *Frankenstein*, name of the scientist in Mary Shelley's novel]

Franklin *n* A hundred-dollar bill; C-NOTE: *He peels off another five Franklins* [1990s + ; fr its portrait of Benjamin Franklin]

frantic *adj* **1** Excellent; wonderful; COOL **2** Conventional; bourgeois; UNCOOL: *The man who cares is now derided for being "frantic" (1940 + Jazz musicians)*

frapping *adj* Wretched; accursed; DAMN, FUCKING: *I need a frapping medic like a hole in the head* [1960s + ; a euphemism for *fucking*]

frat *n* **1** A college fraternity (1895 + *College students*) **2** (also **frat rat**) A fraternity member (1895 + *College students*) **3** A male student who conforms to middle-class norms of conduct and dress: *A "frat" is a youth who dresses neatly and conforms to the accepted patterns (1960s + Teenagers)*

fraternize *v* To associate closely with inhabitants of an enemy country, esp to consort sexually with the women (*WWII armed forces*)

frau (FROU) *n* One's wife: *and escort your incomparable frau to a tea dance/ his reward from the frau* [1902 + ; fr German]

fraud, a *n phr* A deceptive person; one posing as what he is not; PHONY (1850 +)

frazzle, to a *adv phr* Completely; totally; to a ruined condition: *After the marathon I was beat to a frazzle* [1865 + ; fr dialect *frazzle*, "frayed end of a rope"]

frazzled *adj* **1** (also **on the frazz**) Exhausted; tired in nerve and flesh; PLAYED OUT: *He was frazzled after three weeks without a break* (1872 +) **2** Drunk (1940s +)

freak *n* ◀**1**▶ A strange or eccentric person (1891 +) **2** An expert; specialist; very good student (1895 + *College students*) **3** A devotee or enthusiast; BUFF, FAN (1908 +) ◀**4**▶ A male homosexual: “*Freak*” is a homosexual (1940s + *Jazz musicians*) **5** HIPPIE (1960s +) **6** An attractive person (1990s + *Teenagers*) **v** **1** To behave strangely and disorientedly as if intoxicated by a psychedelic drug; FREAK our: *His publisher for the last two books “sort of freaked” when they got a look at this one* (1960s +) **2** (also **freak off**) To do violent and deviant sex acts (1960s + *Prostitutes*)

-freak combining word A devotee or enthusiast; addict; BUG, BUFF, NUT: *plant freak/ radio freak/ porn-freak* **See** ACID FREAK, ECOFREAK, HARD-ROAD FREAK, JESUS FREAK, METH HEAD, PEEK FREAK, SPEED-FREAK

freak-ass *adj* Strange; freakish: *Some freak-ass accident* (1990s +)

freaker *n* PHONE PHREAK (1990s +)

freaking *adj* Wretched; accursed; DAMN, FUCKING: *who’s got so much freaking talent it just turns your stomach/ all the freaking way to the bank* **adv**: *The ball just freaking found its way through* **n** Violent and deviant sex acts: *And there were numerous reports of lewd behavior; “freaking,” after all, is a slang term for adventuresome sex* (1960s +) [1920s +; a euphemism for *fucking*]

freakout *n* **1** An instance of freaking out: *a period which one feminist writer has called one of “mass freakouts all over the place”/ the same*

freakouts, the same strange clothes **2** A person who is freaked out **3** A frightening or nightmarish drug experience; BAD TRIP, BUMMER **4** A congregation of hippies (1960s + *Narcotics*)

freak out (or up) v phr **1** To have intense and disturbing hallucinations and other reactions from psychedelic drugs **2** To go out of touch with reality, with or without narcotics; become irrational, esp frantically so; be intoxicated; FLIP OUT: *plus the chance to freak out, speak in tongues or talk nonsense/ I saw those golden arches and I freaked out, because I'd just seen the buttes and all that great stuff* **3** To become very excited and exhilarated, as if intoxicated with narcotics **4** To abandon conventional values and attitudes; DROP OUT (1960s + *Narcotics*)

freak someone out v phr To cause someone to show the irrationality, lethargy, excitement, withdrawal, etc, of a psychedelic experience: *The heavy metal sound freaked him out* (1960s + *Narcotics*)

freak show n Any show or event that is in bad taste; also, a person who behaves in a ludicrous, bizarre, or dehumanizing way: *Britney, the freak show*

freak trick n phr A man who demands very exotic or brutal sexual activity: *the victim of a "freak trick," a customer who gets his kicks from brutally beating girls* (1970s + *Prostitutes*)

freaky adj Having the qualities of a freak or a freakout; FAR OUT: *I think it would be freaky to have an affair with my barber/ There is nothing bohemian, or beat, or hippie, or freaky about them. They are straights, uptight* (1960s + *Narcotics*)

◁**fred**▷ **n** A despised person; GEEK, JERK: *When Mark missed an easy shot, his friends called him a fred* [1980s+ Students; fr the name of a character in the television show and movie *The Flintstones*]

Freddie Mac **n phr** The Federal Home Loan Mortgage Corporation, which buys mortgages from lenders (1980s+)

Freddy **n** An employee of the National Forest Service: “*Not much to hunt around here with that type of ammo except Freddies.*” “*Freddies?*” “*Employees of the Forest Service, that’s what the eco-terrorists call us*” (1990s+)

free **See** FOR FREE, HOME FREE

free-and-easy **n** A saloon or other bibulous social center (*late 1700s+*)

freeball **adj** Of a male, not wearing underwear

freebase or **free base** **it v** or **v phr** To use cocaine by heating it and inhaling the smoke, its most powerful essence: *The addiction problem seems to be compounded by the fact that so many cokeheads are freebasing it* (1970s+ *Narcotics*)

freebie or **freebee** or **freeby** **n** Anything given or enjoyed free of charge: *That meal was a freebie and it didn’t cost me anything/ Holiday Inn bartenders are enjoined from giving freebies to customers, no matter how much they spend* (1900+ *Black*)

free fall **n phr** An extremely rapid and unhindered descent • First used of a rocket returning to earth; then mainly of a parachutist who had not yet opened the parachute: *the bank is trying to slow the*

free fall of the Mexican peso/ the Russian economy is in free fall
(1919+)

free gratis (GRA təs) **adj phr**: *a free-gratis perk/ free-gratis tickets* **adv phr** Without charge; FOR FREE • In earliest form *free, gratis, and for nothing*: *The Congressmen traveled free gratis* (1883+) [fr combination of *free* with Latin *gratis*, “free”]

freeload n: *During the depression women free loads were rare* **v** To be fed, entertained, supported, etc, without charge; live parasitically; SPONGE: *They will successfully free load the rest of their lives/ who gives freeloading off a famous father a bad name* (1940s+)

freeloader n 1 A person who freeloads; MOOCHER, SPONGER: *Congressmen are great freeloaders* **2** A gathering or party with free refreshments: *Somebody was tossing a freeloader over on Park Avenue* (1930s+)

freeloading modifier: *my freeloading cousins/ your freeloading pals* **v** Eating, drinking, etc, without paying: *Free loading has diminished* (1940s+)

free lunch n phr Something had without paying for it; an uncompensated pleasure; a perquisite or gratuity • The date shows the first occurrence of the saloon-food sense mentioned in the etymology: *pushing the free lunch* [1854+; fr the former custom of giving customers free food called *free lunch* in saloons] **See** THERE'S NO FREE LUNCH

free-O n Something received without charge; FREEBIE: *So he picks up a few free-o's here and there* (1980s+)

free (or freeworld) people n phr People who are not prison inmates,

esp guards, wardens, etc (1970s + *Prison*)

free-range *adj* Unconfined; free to roam: *The Mall of America is not just one more amalgam of frozen-yogurt stands and packs of free-range adolescents in Guess jeans* [1960s + ; fr the distinction between *free-range* chickens and battery chickens, which are raised in confinement]

free ride *n phr* **1** A base on balls; a walk (1980s + *Baseball*) **2** A card received without betting, because no one wished to start the betting on the previous round (1940s + *Poker*) **3** Something received without paying (1899 +) **See** GET A FREE RIDE

free-rider *n* A nonunion worker who benefits from the pay and advantages gained by a union (1950s + *Labor union*)

freeside *adv* Outside the walls of a prison: *He yearns to live freeside again* (1950s + *Prison*)

free skate *n phr* Something simple and easy; PICNIC, PIECE OF CAKE: *This lawsuit isn't a free skate* [1990s + ; fr the skating-rink custom of occasionally allowing an unpaid period of skating]

free ticket *n phr* **1** General freedom of action, esp of forbidden action; license; carte blanche: *He thinks the uniform gives him a free ticket to be a shitheel* (1940s +) **2** (also **free ride**, **free transit**, **free transportation**) A base on balls; walk (1917 + *Baseball*)

freewheeling *modifier* **1**: *Jonathan himself tries opium, hash, freewheeling sex, gliders* **2**: *the freewheeling out-of-towner* *n* **1** Independence of action and initiative; blithe and unconstrained indulgence: *No freewheeling here, you do things strictly our way* **2**

Liberal spending; easy munificence: *the freewheeling of the new rich* [fr the feature of certain 1930s cars permitting them to coast freely without being slowed by the engine]

freeworld modifier: *what they called freeworld punks, guys who'd been queer even before they got sent up* **n** Life outside prison; unincarcerated living (1950s + *Prison*)

freeze n A stopping of change, esp in various monetary matters: *a freeze on profits/ nuclear freeze (1930s +)* **v 1:** *The government denies it wants to freeze interest rates* **2** To stay or become motionless: *The cop hollered to him to freeze right there/ Your best bet is to freeze and wait. You can't get away (1848 +)* **3** To treat someone with deliberate hauteur; snub; cut; PUT THE FREEZE ON someone: *Next time she froze me mercilessly (1861 +)* **4** To inspire terror: *His scream froze me (1607 +)* **5** (also **freeze up**) To become immobile and ineffective from fear; CLANK, PANIC: *The lifeguard should have dived in for the boy, but she froze (1970s +)* **See** IN COLD STORAGE

freeze one's ass v phr To become cold; freeze: *Get into your winter coat, before you freeze your ass (1940s +)*

freeze frame n phr A stopped or suspended condition: *Secret police files provide the historian of intelligence with a freeze frame from the secret world/ The L.A. riots put the mayoral campaign into freeze frame [1990s +; fr the stopping of a movie, videocassette, etc, on one image]*

freeze-out n The absence of cooperation, information, etc; a blank: *this total freeze-out on details for big Ray (1883 +)*

freeze someone out v phr To exclude someone; discriminate against someone: *When I wanted to get into the game they froze me out (1891 +)*

freight See PAY THE FREIGHT

◁**French**▷ **n** Cunnilingus or fellatio; the FRENCH WAY **v**: *Then the perverse chap actually Frenched her! (1917 +)* **See** PARDON MY FRENCH

French-inhale modifier: *He continued to smoke in this “French inhale” style n* The trick of exhaling smoke by mouth and immediately reinhaling it by nose (1940s +)

French kiss n phr A kiss in which the tongue of one person explores the oral cavity of another, and vice versa; mouth-to-mouth resuscitation, SOUL KISS **v**: *They French-kissed and perhaps more (1920s +)*

French leave n phr Departure without notice or permission, esp going AWOL from a military post (1771 +)

French letter (or safe) n phr A condom; RUBBER: *He was too shy to go in and buy a French letter (1856 +)*

French postcard n phr A pornographic photograph, such as was fancied to be sold by furtive characters pulling at one’s sleeve in the streets of Paris [1920s +; found by 1849 in the form *French print*]

French tickler n phr A condom with added variegated surfaces, spirals, fins, etc, to increase vaginal stimulation (1916 +)

French (or Spanish) walk n phr A painful and humiliating means of

hurrying one by holding his seat and neck and forcing him to walk; the BUM'S RUSH **v** (also **walk Spanish**): *Mike Spanish-walked him swiftly across the little space/ Smith was an expert at walking 'em Spanish • walk Spanish* is attested from the early 1800s [1940s+; said to be fr the custom of pirates, in the *Spanish Main*, of forcing prisoners to *walk* while holding them by the neck so that their toes barely touched the deck]

◁**French way, the**▷ **n phr** Cunnilingus or fellatio [fr the conviction expressed in the classic couplet: The French they are a funny race/ They fight with their feet and fuck with their face]

fresh adj 1 Impudent; disrespectful; saucy; CHEEKY: *Don't be fresh to your Momma or I'll belt you one (1848+)* 2 Flirtatious; sexually bold; FAST: *I'm not that kind of girl, so don't be fresh (1870s+)* 3 Aloof and uninvolved; COOL • In 1990s use increasingly modified: *funky fresh, stupid fresh*, etc: “We hang out with him because he's fresh,” said Jesse/ *Word up, fool. We be fresh tonight (1980s+ Black and teenage)* [first two senses perhaps related to German *frech*, “impudent”; third sense said to have originated with a 1970s rock group called the Fantastic Romantic Five MCs, who said “We're *fresh* out of the pack, you gotta stand back, we got one Puerto Rican and the rest are black”]

fresh as a daisy adj phr Brisk; vigorous; unfatigued: *He arrived back fresh as a daisy before their fax came through (1815+)*

freshie n A first-year college student [1847+ College students; fr *freshman*]

fresh meat *n phr* **1** New inmates (1930s + *Prison*) **2** A new homosexual partner (1970s + *Homosexuals*)

fresh one *n phr* **1** A new prisoner (1930s + *Prison*) **2** FRESH MEAT (1970s + *Homosexuals*)

fresh out *adv phr* Without; recently not available; OUT: *We're fresh out of bananas, Missus* (1830s +)

fribble *n* A trifle; a piece of inanity: *For every zappow fribble, there were equal servings of socially redeeming food for thought* (1832 +)

fricking (also **frickin'** or **frigging**) *adj* Fucking; damn • Euphemistic: *what a fricking mess you made*

Friday *See* GAL FRIDAY, TGIF

fridge *n* A refrigerator

fried *adj* **1** Drunk (1926 +) **2** Electrocuted (1930 + *Underworld*) **3** Exhausted; BURNED OUT; FRAZZLED: *Apparently, Maurice White's voice is fried/ Yeah, I know that fix destroyed the file system, but I was fried when I put it in* (1980s + *Teenagers*)

fried egg *n phr* **1** A showy brass military hat decoration (1908 + *West Point*) **2** The Japanese flag: *sunk about everything the Japs owned with a fried egg on its masthead* (WWII armed forces)

friendly *n* **1** In wartime, a plane, ship, soldier, civilian, etc, of one's own side: *Friendlys, sometimes used to designate townspeople who cooperate with the Americans* (WWII armed forces) **2** An exhibition game: *Even if some current 18-year-old blossoms in the so-called friendlys, exhibition games* (1980s + *Sports*)

-friendly combining word Easy, convenient, or amenable for what is specified: *The new PCs are quite user-friendly/ Works of art like these are more viewer-friendly than post-modernist art of 10 years ago/ The Saudi desert is not exactly visitor-friendly* [1980 + Computer; based on *user-friendly*]

friend with benefits n phr A friend with whom you have sexual relations, without a commitment or dating arrangement: *They started out as a couple, but ended up friends with benefits*

◁**frig**▷ **v** 1 To masturbate (1785 +) 2 To do the sex act; **FUCK** (1598 +) 3 To cheat or trick someone; take advantage of someone; **DIDDLE**, **FUCK**, **SHAFT** (1920s +) [ultimately fr Latin *fricare*, “rub”] **See** TAKE A FLYING FUCK

◁**frigging**▷ or **fricking** **adj** Wretched; accursed; **DAMN**, **FUCKING**: *if we could find the frigging truck/ You’re a walkin’, friggin’ combat zone* **adv**: *They friggin’ loved it* (1930 +)

fright mail n phr Mail designed to resemble official government documents in order to fool the receiver into opening it: *You threw out today’s fright mail, scanned a magalog, then picked up some trash cash* (1990s +)

frill n A woman, esp a young woman; **FRAIL** (1920s +)

fringe n A benefit, like insurance coverage, added to one’s pay; fringe benefit (1960 +)

Frisco n San Francisco, California: *Ever been to Frisco?* (1854 +)

frisk n: *They did a quick frisk and let him go* **v** 1 (also **frisk down**) To search, esp for firearms or contraband, by patting or rubbing the

person in places where these might be concealed: *Raise your hands high, frisk him/ without getting taken-off, frisked-down or punched out*

2 To inspect a building, apartment, etc, for evidence or loot: *Let's go up and frisk the apartment (1781 +)*

frit *n* A male homosexual; FLIT (1960s +)

fritter away v phr To squander and dissipate, esp little by little:

These politicians are frittering away whatever credit they still possess with the public [1728 +; fr earlier sense of *fritter*, “to break into small pieces”]

fritz v To make something inoperative; put out of working order:

Lightning hit some wires and fritzed the generator (1903 +) **See** ON THE BLINK

◁**Fritz**▷ **n** A German, esp a German soldier; KRAUT (1883 +)

fritz out v phr To become inoperative; break down; GO DOWN (1960 +)

frivol v To behave frivolously; jape and frolic: *I wish I could frivol away my summer* (1866 +)

‘**fro** or **fro** **n** A frizzy style of coiffure; AFRO: *the curly ‘fro which has found particular favor among the men* (1960s +)

frobnitz n An unspecified or unspecifiable object; something one does not know the name of or does not wish to name; GADGET, GIZMO (1980s + *Computer*)

frog modifier <1>: *frog wine/ a Frog chick* (1778 +) **n** <1> (also

Frog or **froggy** or **Froggy** or **frog-eater**) A Frenchman or -woman: *My dad was in France during the last war. He knows those Frogs*

(1778 +) <2> The French language: *He asked me in Frog* (1778 +)

3 A dull and conventional person: *Anybody who still wears saddle shoes is a “frog”* (1950s + *Teenagers*) [senses referring to the French fr their eating of *frog legs*] **See** BIG FISH, BIG FISH IN A LITTLE POND, KNEE-HIGH TO A GRASSHOPPER

frogman n A scuba diver, esp a professional or military diver (WWII

Navy)

frogskin *n* **1** A one-dollar bill; one dollar: *I'll give you five hundred frogskins for the good will and fixtures* **2** Any piece of paper money; FOLDING MONEY: *He not only got his quail, but a handful of frogskins as well* [1902 + ; fr the green color]

frogsticker *n* **1** A long-bladed knife, esp a pocket knife: *Out comes your liver on the end o' this frogsticker* (1836 +) **2** A bayonet (WWII Army)

from Adam *See* NOT KNOW SOMEONE FROM ADAM

from hell *adj phr* Accursed; wretched; infernal: *they struck on the title "Zarda, Cow from Hell"/ a certified, notarized, top-of-the-line day from hell* [1980s + ; popularized by a comedian named Richard Lewis]

from hell to breakfast *adv phr* Thoroughly and vehemently; violently: *Police clubbed the Gophers from hell to breakfast* (1920s +)

from hunger *adj phr* Inferior; unpleasant; contemptible: *I started giving the three witches at the next table the eye again. That is, the blonde one. The other two were strictly from hunger* *adv phr*: *playing from hunger in a style to please the uneducated masses* [1930s + Musicians; fr Yiddish *fun hoonger*]

from jump street *adv phr* FROM THE GIT-GO: *He was lying from jump street* (1970s +)

from nothing *See* KNOW FROM NOTHING

from scratch *adj phr*: *his first from-scratch musical venture* *adv phr* **1**

From the earliest stages; from the very beginning: *We had to do it all again, from scratch* (1876 +) **2** Using the separate basic ingredients or parts: *I never tired of watching my grandmother make the bread “from scratch” to feed the whole family* (1950s +) [fr the mark or *scratch* indicating the starting line of a race]

from the git-go (or **get-go**) **adv phr** From the very beginning: *It was his bust from the git-go/ Right from the get-go he came out smoking. It all went down in milliseconds* [fr black; perhaps based on *from the word go*, found by 1883]

from the hip **See** SHOOT FROM THE HIP

from (or **out of** or **straight from**) **the horse’s mouth** **adv phr** From the most authentic source: *I got the tip straight from the horse’s mouth* [1930 +; perhaps fr the fact that a *horse’s* age can be determined most precisely and directly by examining its teeth]

from the shoulder **See** STRAIGHT FROM THE SHOULDER

from the top **adv phr** From the beginning: *Let’s hear it again from the top* [1950s + Musicians; perhaps fr the musical instruction *da capo*, “from the beginning,” literally, “from the head”]

from the word go **adv phr** From the very beginning; ab ovo: *He was lying from the word go* (1883 +)

from way back **adj phr** Genuinely; entirely; from a long time ago: *My Dad is a Yankee fan from way back* (1887 +)

from where I sit **adv phr** From my point of view; according to my notion: *Contrary to what Bernstein says, it is not clear that the idiot*

culture is taking over. From where I sit, we call the things he is fretting about “change” (1980s +)

front *n* **1** The appearance and impression one presents publicly; facade: *This and his stickpin, his two diamond rings, and his shirts and the gabardine suit composed his “front”/ He’s a real coon type. But that’s just front (1896 +)* **2** (also **front man**) A respectable and impressive person who represents or publicly supports persons lacking social approval: *Inability to hire a professional bondsman and “good front” results in a quick trial/ Ian Anderson, the band’s flute-playing front man (1920s +)* **3** An ordinary and unexceptionable business used as a cover for gambling, extortion, etc, esp as a way of decontaminating ill-gotten money: *The candy store was a front for his bookie business (1920s +)* **v** **1:** *If you ask them to front for you, they know you’re going to do something* **2** (also **front man**) To be the leading figure of: *Terry Frank, who fronted the blues outfit Bone Deluxe since 1980 (1990s +)* **3** To give something, esp narcotics, on promise of payment: *I’ll front you some of this shit if you pay me by Thursday (1960s + Narcotics)* **4** To behave in a hostile manner; confront (1990s +) **5** To lie; renege on an agreement; COP OUT (1990s + *Teenagers*) **See** OUT-FRONT, UP FRONT

frontal *adj* **1** Candid; direct; open: *He’s a very direct and forceful guy, a very frontal person* *adj* **2** Exhibiting the front view of the naked human body [1980s +; *fr up front*] **See** FULL FRONTAL

front and center *adv phr* To the position of maximum prominence: *Because of political instability and a lack of moral leadership, race has once again moved front and center in the American mind [1940s + fr*

armed forces; fr the position in *front* of a military formation where a singled-out soldier presents himself or herself]

front money *n phr* An initial and impressive amount of money; cash as an earnest: *He had agreed to help the manufacturer get the \$1.2 million loan in return for 7 percent of the total, plus “green” or “front money”/ in the drive for \$4.5 million in “front money” by Labor Day (1920s +)* **See** FLASH ROLL

front office *adj phr: front-office memos n phr* 1 The chief administrative offices of a company (1930s +) 2 Managers; executives: *What’s the front office think? (1930s +)* 3 A police station (1900 + *Underworld*)

front runner *n phr* The leader in a contest, election, etc: *That left as front runners Runcie and England’s second-ranking churchman (1914 + fr racing)*

front-running *adj* Leading; first in a competition: *universally considered to be the GOP’s front-running candidate (1940s + fr racing)*
n A type of fraud in which a trader withholds a large customer order so that he can personally profit from its effect on the market: *found David E Sitzmann guilty on eight counts of “front-running” in the live cattle and live hog futures markets (1980s + Commodities market)*

frood *n* An admirable person [1980s + College students; fr the book *A Hitchhiker’s Guide to the Galaxy*]

froody *adj* Admirable; COOL: *He’s really froody (1980s + College students)*

frosh *n* A first-year student, or such students collectively (1915 +

Students)

frost *n* **1** A total failure; something not well received: *My idea was a dismal frost (1885 +)* **2** Social hauteur; chill; COLD SHOULDER: *He smiled at her and got frost (1635 +)* **v** **1**: *For nifty Mame has frosted me complete (1896 +)* **2** To anger; irritate: *That tone of voice really frosts me (1940s +)*

frostback *n* An illegal immigrant from Canada [1980s +; modeled on *wetback*]

frosted over *adj phr* Irritated; annoyed (1970s +)

frosty *adj* **1** Unperturbed; COOL: *Stay frosty. Relax (1970s +)* **2** In a reserved manner; haughty: *her frosty glance (1833 +)* *n* A cold beer: *how about a nice frosty*

frottage *n* The inducement of sexual pleasure by rubbing up against another person; masturbation by rubbing against another person (as in a crowd)

frou-frou *n* Frilly dress and adornment; frivolous be-dizenment: *Is that what you want in a girl, chi-chi, frou-frou, fancy clothes, permanent waves?* [1870 +; fr French, imitative of the rustling of silk]

frowsy *n* A slovenly, unkempt woman: *a few frowsies in skirts (1900 +)*

froyo *n* Frozen yogurt: *froyo's not the same as the real deal*

frozen limit *n phr* Behavior, an event, etc, that is more than one can tolerate (1916 +)

frozen rope *n phr* A hard line drive: *A hard line drive is a blue darter, frozen rope, or an ungodly shot (1960s + Baseball)*

frug, the *n phr* A discotheque dance derived from the twist: *The dignified dances include the Frug (the movement is in the hips, the derivation of the name is shady) [1960s + ; origin unknown; perhaps a blend of frig and fuck]*

fruit *n* **1** An eccentric person; FRUITCAKE, ODDBALL: *I'll bet we get a lot of fruits (1910 +)* <2> A male homosexual; FAIRY (1935 +) [first sense short for *fruitcake*, as in "nutty as a fruitcake"] **See** HEN-FRUIT

fruitbar **See** FLAMER

fruitbasket *n* An insane person; FRUITCAKE, NUT, WACK: *Touched the wound, rubbed the blood on his cheeks and his forehead. Total fruitcake (1990s +)*

fruitcake *modifier* **1:** *those fruitcake sandal makers in the tractor-gear factory* **2:** *his fruitcake mannerisms* *n* **1** An insane person; NUT: *The shrink himself is a certified fruitcake (1950s +)* **2** An eccentric person; FRUIT, ODDBALL (1950s +) <3> A male homosexual; FRUIT (1960s +) **See** NUTTY AS A FRUITCAKE

<fruit fly> *n phr* FAG HAG (1970s + *Homosexuals*)

fruit-picker *n* A basically heterosexual man who occasionally seeks out homosexual partners (1970s + *Homosexuals*)

fruit salad *n phr* **1** Ribbons and other badges worn on the breast of a military jacket: *You can recognize the boys from Korea by the new decoration added to the war "fruit salad" (WWII armed forces)* **2** A

mixture of tranquilizers, painkillers, and other drugs from the family medicine cabinet used secretly by adolescents (1960s + Narcotics) <3> (Variations: **potato patch** or **rose garden** or **vegetable garden**) A group of stroke victims or otherwise totally disabled patients (1980s + Medical)

fruit-salad party *n phr* A party at which adolescents experiment with drugs garnered from the family medicine cabinet (1960s + Narcotics)

fruity *adj* 1 Eccentric; odd; NUTTY, WEIRD (1930s + Teenagers) <2> Homosexual; GAY (1930s +)

frump *n* A dowdy woman: *that floppy-looking frump he left you for* (1817+)

frumpy *adj* Dowdy; run-down; unattractive: *The message is that soft frumpy fellows are not only lovable but sexually attractive* (1845+)

fry *v* 1 To be executed in the electric chair, or to execute someone in the electric chair: *I built up a case against Sandmark. You probably could have fried him with it, too/ Apparently everybody in Texas thinks everybody should be fried* (1929+) 2 To punish severely; KICK ASS, ROUGH UP: *I'll call the CFTC, the FBI, George Bush, and I'll beg them to fry your ass* (1920+) 3 To upset; anger; PISS OFF (1960s+) 4 To fail; GO DOWN (1980s+ Computer) 5 To remove the kinks from hair with a hot comb or curling iron (1950s+ Black) 6 To take LSD; DROP (1980s+ Teenagers) *See* BIGGER FISH TO FRY, SMALL FRY

FTA (pronounced as separate letters) *sentence* Fuck the Army; also, fuck them all (1950s+ Army)

FTL (pronounced as separate letters) **sentence** Fuck the law: *The graffiti on the walls everywhere said “FTL”; I was told that it stood for “Fuck the Law”*

F2F or **f2f** **modifier** Face-to-face; in actual personal contact rather than computer network contact: *Cyberspace reader has been involved in serious romances, which culminated in F2F experiences (1990s + Computer)*

fu n Marijuana [1940s + Narcotics; perhaps a shortening of Portuguese *fumo d’Angola*, “Angola smoke,” referring to marijuana and the smoking habit brought by slaves from Angola to Brazil]

fubar **adj** Totally botched and confused; SNAFU [WWII armed forces; fr *fucked up beyond all recognition*]

fubb **adj** FUBAR, SNAFU [WWII armed forces; fr *fucked up beyond belief*]

fubis (F \overline{oo} bis) **sentence** An irritated or defiant comment [1950s + Army; fr *fuck you, buddy, I’m shipping*]

◀**fuck**▶ **interj** An exclamation of disgust, disappointment, dismay, etc: *and yelled against the moan of the wind as loud as he could, “Fuck!” (1940s +)* **n** **1** An instance of the sex act: *a quick fuck (1680 +)* **2** A sex partner: *She said he’s not a bad fuck (1874 +)* **3** A despicable person; BASTARD, PRICK: *Why don’t you fucks find a cure for that already?/ “Oh yes, of course,” said the fuck (1920s +)* **v** **1** To do the sex act with or to someone (1200s +) **2** To cheat; swindle; maltreat; take advantage of; FUCK OVER, SCREW: *I was with them twenty years, but they fucked me anyhow (1860s +)* **3** To curse and vilify; revile extremely; DAMN • Strongest of the cursing terms that

include wishing the person or thing to eternal damnation: “damn,” “to hell with,” and mentally subjecting the person or thing to an act of sodomy: “fuck, screw,” and British “bugger” and “sod”; has the elaborate variant *fuck them all but six and save them for pallbearers: Fuck the money, I’m gone go on this ride/ Ah, fuck that noise (1920s+)* **4** To botch and confuse; ruin; FUCK UP: *My God, if the doctor sent out a bill, it might fuck the whole thing (1920s+)* [origin unknown; perhaps fr or related to German *ficken*, “strike, copulate with”] **See** DRY FUCK, FINGERFUCK, a FLYING FUCK, GOAT FUCK, GO FUCK **oneself**, HONEY-FUCK, MIND-FUCK, NOT GIVE A DAMN, RAT FUCK, TAKE A FLYING FUCK, THROW A FUCK INTO SOMEONE

◀**fuck, a**▶ **See** NOT GIVE A DAMN

◀**fuck, the**▶ **See** the HELL

◀**fuckable**▶ **adj** **1** Ready and willing to have sexual relations: *fuckable after three beers* **2** Highly desirable as a sexual partner: *fuckable dudes at the bar*

◀**fuck a duck**▶ **interj** An exclamation of surprise and incredulity: *He did? Well, fuck a duck! (1940s+)*

◀**fuck-all**▶ **n** Nothing; ZILCH • Chiefly British: *A good extra can pull in good money to not do fuck-all (1960+)*

◀**fuck around**▶ **v phr** **1** To idle and loaf about; MESS AROUND: *Although I do fuck around in home studios and things like that, I think that it’s of no importance* **2** To tease; fool around annoyingly; HORSE AROUND (1929+) **See** FUCK WITH

◀**fuck someone’s brains out**▶ **v phr** To do the sex act busily and for a long time: *We can spend the whole night together, fuck our brains*

out/ two people who'd just fucked each other's brains out (1970s +)

◀**fuck buddy**▶ (or **puppet**) *n phr* A partner for sex only; a nonromantic sexual partner: *fuck buddies at college*

◀**fuck bunny**▶ *n* A female who is willing and ready to copulate: *a whole sorority of fuck bunnies*

◀**fucked**▶ *adj* Confounded; victimized; BUGGERED, DAMNED: *I'll be fucked if he's not right! (1940s +)*

◀**fucked out**▶ *adj phr* Exhausted; PLAYED OUT, POOPED (1940 +)

◀**fucked up**▶ *adj phr* **1** Confused; botched; ruined; BALLED UP: *Now isn't that as fucked up as a Chinese fire drill?* **2** Mentally and emotionally disturbed; neurotic: *I was so fucked up I couldn't talk sense* **3** Intoxicated, esp by narcotics: *I was so drunk and fucked up and shaken with tenderness (1940s +)*

◀**fucker**▶ *n* **1** A detestable person; BASTARD, PRICK: *And the fuckers are really, really twisting us up/ The fucker stole my money* **2** Any person or thing • Often used affectionately: *Look at that little fucker go!/ Jiggs doesn't like to have anything to do with boats, "I don't want no parts of them fuckers" (1893 +)* **See** FATHER-FUCKER, MIND-FUCKER, MOTHERFUCKER

◀**fuckery or fuck-house**▶ *n* A house of prostitution; brothel

◀**fuckface**▶ *n* A despicable person: *Screw you, fuckface*

◀**fuck film**▶ *n phr* A pornographic movie; SKIN FLICK: *Calling it an erotic film festival made it possible for people to dig a good fuck film (1960s +)*

◀**fuckhead**▶ *n* A despicable person; JERK: *some back-country fuckhead*

with a stethoscope (1960s +)

◀**fuckin**▶ **adj** 1 Wretched; rotten; accursed; DAMN: *hectic fuckin' business* 2 Genuine; absolute; COCKEYED: *Ain't that a fucking shame?* **adv** Extremely; very: *It's fucking difficult to get a raise these days*
intensifier: *Why don't we go downtown and fucking get it done?*
(1893 +) **See** MOTHERFUCKING, A ROYAL FUCKING

◀**-fuckin-**▶ **infix** Used for emphasis • Often printed as a separate word without hyphens: *non compos fuckin' mentis/ in-fucking-credible/ "Un-fucking-believable," they say in the booth*

◀**fuckin a (or ay)**▶ **adv phr**: *Fucking ay right I did* **affirmation**
Absolutely; definitely: *Fucking a, no one's gonna shoot Keith* **interj**
An exclamation of pleasure, triumph, joy, etc; GREAT: *We won?*
Fucking a! [1940s + fr British; fr an affirmatory phrase *your fucking arse*]

◀**fuckin well**▶ **intensifier** Absolutely: *not afraid of fuckin well anything (1920s +)*

◀**fuckin well told**▶ **adv phr** Absolutely right; FUCKING A: *"You're fuckin well told," he replied (1940s +)*

◀**fuck like a mink**▶ **v phr** To copulate readily and vigorously • Said only of women (1930s +)

◀**fuck-me or do-me**▶ **adj** Blatantly seductive: *a brand-new pair of rhinestone fuck-me shoes (1980s +)*

◀**fuck nut(s)**▶ **n** An idiot; a despised person: *who's the fucknuts who turned out the light*

◀**fuck-off**▶ *n* A habitual shirker; sluggard; GOOF-OFF: *I mean, everybody's a fuck-off (WWII armed forces)*

◀**fuck off**▶ *v phr* **1** FUCK AROUND (1940s +) **2** FUCK UP (1940s +) **3** To leave; depart • Often an irritated command: *Tell 'em to fuck off, I don't want anything to do with them (1929 +)*

◀**fuck over**▶ *v phr* To victimize and maltreat, sexually or otherwise; FUCK: *so accustomed to being used and fucked over that they probably would do nothing/ let people know who might be fucking them over (1960s +)*

◀**fuck-stick**▶ *n* A despised person; ASSHOLE, JERK: *real pompous little fuck-stick (1950s +)*

◀**fuck the dog**▶ *v phr* To waste time; idle about; temporize: *We better quit fucking the dog and get cracking (1930s +)*

◀**fuck-up**▶ *n* **1** A bungler, esp a chronic one: *The sergeant was a confirmed fuck-up* **2** A confused situation; botch; MESS: *The operation was a royal fuck-up* **3** A blunder; GOOF: *These things are my ideas. They've all got the same fuck-ups (1940s +)*

◀**fuck up**▶ *v phr* **1** To fail by blundering; ruin one's prospects: *They are the prime reasons that people fuck up in bands* **2** To confuse; botch; BALL UP: *I had it right, but he fucked it up (1940s +)*

◀**fuck someone up**▶ *v phr* To injure or maltreat someone; FUCK OVER: *If anybody was to mess with your sister, you had to really fuck him up/ They didn't do it, so they fucked me up (1960s +)*

◀**fuck up (or screw up) a two-car funeral**▶ *v phr* To mismanage

completely; botch: *D'Amato says Federal banking regulators could screw up a two-car funeral (1990s+)*

◀**fuck (or fuck around) with**▶ **v phr** **1** To play or toy with; meddle with: *Floyd was a little crazy and just liked to fuck with people by talking a lot of nonsense/ Every harebrain east of the Mississippi River will be fucking around with this thing* **2** To defy or challenge; provoke; MESS AROUND WITH: *"They don't fuck with me," the old man said/ to see if Buck Rogers was real and had come down here to fuck with Texas (1940s+)*

◀**fuck-witted**▶ **adj** Stupid; moronic; DUMB: *It's a pretty fuck-witted thing to do (1990s+)*

◀**fuck you**▶ **interj** An exclamation of very strong defiance and contempt: *Fuck you, friend, if that's your attitude (1940s+)*

fuddy-duddy or **fuddy-dud** **adj**: *There were a few fuddy-duddy requests for documentation* **n** An old-fashioned, esp a meticulous, person; an outdated conservative: *To this little squab, I evidently rated as a fuddy-duddy (1900+)*

fudge **interj** A mild exclamation of surprise, disappointment, etc; DARN (1766+) **v** **1** To cheat or misrepresent slightly; deviate somewhat: *so I could fudge three or four inches on my height/ if you're fudging on your income tax return (1660s+)* **2** To rub someone to orgasm; FRIG (1950s+) [first verb sense said to be fr the name of a Royal Navy Captain *Fudge*, "by some called Lying Fudge"; sailors, hearing a lie told, exclaimed "You fudge it!"]

fudge factor **n phr** An arbitrary percentage added to a proposed

contract or estimate to allow for adverse contingencies: *How many will die? Current projections are pure darts at a board, an enormous extrapolation coupled with a fudge factor (1962 +)*

fudge one's pants (or undies) v phr To become frightened; SHIT one's PANTS (1970s +)

fuggle *See* HONEY-FUCK

fugly adj Very ugly; BUTT-UGLY: *That ski suit Mary has on is not just ugly, it's fugly [1980s + ; fr *fucking ugly*]*

fuie *See* PHOOEY

full adj Drunk (1872 +)

full blast adj: *a full-blast campaign for mayor* **adv phr** To the limit of capacity; with no restraint; ALL-OUT (1839 +)

full-bore adj Large; fully developed: *And this track here, big, a full-bore male (1936 +)*

full bore adv phr 1 At maximum speed and power; ALL-OUT, FULL BLAST: *We're going full bore Sheriff Wells says 2* Absolutely; totally: *And I already full-bore suspected old Ronny [1936 + ; fr the condition of an unchoked carburetor in an engine, where the *full bore* of the gas line is being used; influenced by the unchoked condition of a shotgun]*

full Cleveland adj phr Of a man, dressed in white shoes and a white suit (1991 +)

full-court press n phr Very great or maximum pressure: *an inclination not to resume a full court press for the peace plan [fr an*

aggressive *pressing* defense in basketball, using both halves of the *court*]

full fig *n phr* Full official or ceremonial attire; full dress • Chiefly British: *Arrivals from a Swissair flight: two lushly draped, satiny ladies, a squire in noisy tweeds, a bishop in full fig* [1838 + ; origin uncertain; perhaps fr *full figure*, used of fashion illustrations showing the full front of the wearer]

full frontal *adj phr* Total; complete; unrestricted: *a variety of forms including iambic pentameter, full frontal rhyme and ballads* [1970s + ; fr the phrase “*full frontal nudity*” used to describe the ultimate grade of nakedness, as seen in art, moving pictures, television, etc]

full hank *n phr* A tedious, contemptible person; DORK, DWEEB, JERK (1980s + *teenagers*)

full monty (or **monte**) *n* A completely unclothed human body [1986 + ; in Montague Burton, a British firm of gentlemen’s outfitters, the expression applied to a full suit of clothes]

full-moon day *n phr* A day when many disturbed patrons visit (1990s + *Librarians*)

full-mooner *n* An insane or very eccentric person; LOONY, NUT: *in San Francisco, where there are full-mooners on every street corner/ This issue goes beyond the full-mooners* [1980s + ; fr the belief that some people go crazy at the time of the *full moon*]

full of beans *adj phr* 1 Vibrant with energy; peppy: *The old guy was still full of beans* (1854 +) 2 (also **full of hops**) Wrong; mistaken, esp chronically so; FULL OF SHIT: *maybe Ted Williams was full of beans*

(1940s +) [first sense fr the belief that a *bean*-fed horse is particularly frisky and strong; second sense fr a connection with *beans*, hops, prunes, etc, as promoting excretion]

full of hot air *adj phr* Wrong; mistaken; pompously in error: *If she says that, she's full of hot air* (1940s +)

◁**full of piss and vinegar**▷ *adj phr* Brimming with energy; very peppy and assertive; FULL OF BEANS: *full of the piss and vinegar her mother lacks/ full of piss and vinegar and occasionally now, a little weed* (1940s +)

full of prunes *adj phr* 1 Vibrant with energy; peppy: *The old guy was still full of prunes* (1887 +) 2 Wrong; mistaken, esp chronically so; FULL OF SHIT (1894 +) **See** FULL OF BEANS

◁**full of shit**▷ *adj phr* (Variations: *crap* or **bull** or **it** may replace **shit**) Wrong; mistaken; not to be credited: *Oh, he's so full of shit, that self-seeking schmuck/ Anyone who says it doesn't matter is full of it/ They're all fulla shit anyway, all them goddam politicians* (1940s +)

◁**full of shit as a Christmas goose, as**▷ *adj phr* FULL OF SHIT • An intensive use (1940s +)

full of the devil (or **Old Nick**) *modifier* Always causing trouble or getting into mischief: *full of the devil, and not just when he's had sugar*

full ride *modifier*: *accused of receiving a full ride scholarship from Michigan* **n phr** A full college scholarship: *seven of them got full rides to Division 1 schools* (1950s +)

full steam ahead *adj phr* Eager and energetic; GUNG HO: *BJ's rehab has gone well. He's full steam ahead (1960s +)*

full-tilt-boogie *adv* At full speed; headlong; FULL BORE: *I would rather that my state run full-tilt-boogie into gambling proprietorship (1980s +)*

full up *adj phr* Completely full: *The plane was full up by then (1892 +)*

fully *adv* Really; certainly: *That was fully the best movie I've ever seen/ He was fully flailing on the guitar. You were fully doggin' him about his hair (1990s +)*

fumble-fingered *adj* Clumsy; BUTTERFINGERED: *directions for the fumble-fingered (1980s +)*

fumblerooski *n* A play in which the quarterback leaves the ball between the center's legs and fakes a hand-off, whereupon a guard takes the ball and runs with it: *and make the guard-around or "fumblerooski" play illegal/ I got you on the fumblerooski, didn't I? (1980s + Football)*

fumfer or **fumper** *v* To temporize and mumble; dither; WAFFLE: *Orrin Hatch with his quotes from The Exorcist, Howard Metzenbaum fumfering on about leaks/ When questioned, they fumpered around [1980s +; fr Yiddish]*

fumtu (FUHM t̄oo) *adj phr* Totally confused; botched; SNAFU [WWII armed forces; fr *fucked up more than usual*]

fun *adj* With which, with whom, in which, etc, one can have fun: *Mickey and his chums introduce each other as "a real fun guy" (1950s +) See LIKE HELL, POKE FUN*

fun and games *n phr* Pleasure; delightful diversion; amatory dalliance • Most often ironic: *We had some fun and games a few months ago/ What happens to Romanov after that is fun and games for you, Hardy* [1920 + ; based on the talk and attitude used toward children by hearty people, and analogous with *show and tell*]

Fun City or **fun city** *n phr* Any city, esp New York City, fancied to be a venue for pleasure, often ironically [late 1960s + ; first used as a public relations motto for the administration of New York City mayor John Lindsay, and felt to be in ironic contrast with increasing urban shabbiness, poverty, crime, etc]

fund *See* SLUSH FUND

fun fur *n phr* Cheap synthetic fur for casual use (1962 +)

fungo *n* 1 A ball hit to give practice to fielders, usu by tossing it up and swinging 2 (or **fungo stick**) A long, light bat used to hit practice balls to fielders *v*: *They used to fungo that ball over your head* [1867 + Baseball; origin unknown; perhaps fr dialect *fonge*, “catch,” fr Old English *fon*, “seize, catch,” or fr the German cognate *fangen*, in the same sense; the -o ending might indicate a shouted warning, the whole meaning “Now catch!”; Paul Dickson, the baseball lexicographer, describes five theories of origin]

fungo stick *n phr* A bat used to hit balls for fielding practice (1860s + *Baseball*)

fungus-faced *adj* Repulsive; GROSS: *The kids call Baker a fungus-faced toadsucker* (1980s + *Teenagers*)

funk¹ *n* Depression; moroseness; the BLUES: *This levelheaded man of*

logic, however, is also a creature of moods and funks/ You guys are in a funk (1743+) **v** To fail through panic; be frightened to immobility • Chiefly British: *She would have won, but suddenly funk-ed (1737+)* [perhaps fr Flemish *fonck*, “perturbation”] **See** BLUE
FUNK, IN A FUNK

funk² or **funk** *n* A style of urban black music that relies heavily on bass guitar and exhibits elements like African rhythms, the blues, early rock and roll, jazz, etc: *There is no denying the influence of Instant Funk/ the Minister of Super Heavy Funk, the legendary James Brown/ He is New Orleans “funk”* **v** To play or move to an urban black music that features a dominant bass guitar: *I think it’s all right to funk all night* [1950s+ Musicians; fr *funky*]

funkadelic *adj* Musically hard-edged and urban while also reminiscent of the effects of hallucinogenic drugs; FUNKY: *breaks into his best funkadelic solo as the mood changes* [1980s+; fr a blend of *funky* and *psychedelic*]

funk hole *n phr* A hiding place when one is frightened (1900+)

funkified *adj* Tending toward a hard-edged, urban, black 1970s style in music: *Ornette Coleman, whose current funkified direction (1970s+)*

funkiness *n* The excited, hard-edged, soulful, or rhythmically compelling mood associated with funk: *Cannonball’s alto sax has lost its old zesty funkiness (1980s+)*

funky (also **fonky** or **funky-butt** or **funkyass**) *adj* **1** Repulsive; malodorous; stinking: *What a stinking, dirty, funky bitch she was/*

The Baths, though, are funky enough without booze (1784+) **2** In the style of the blues; earthy; simple yet compelling, with a strong beat and powerful bass guitar: *He has combined a basically funky sound with experimentation/ the funky-butt tune high wide an' lonesome (1954+ Black musicians)* **3** Excellent; effective; COOL: *He wanted to get down and get funky/ There's a funkyass biker after my own heart (late 1960s+)* **4** Old-fashioned; quaintly out-of-date; having a nostalgic appeal: *for those of you who are not familiar with its funky splendor/ my love for funky Forties clothes (1960s+)* **5** Pleasantly eccentric or unconventional; OFFBEAT (1960s+) **6** Deviant; KINKY: *That guy's a little too funky for my taste* **7** Highly emotional; lacking affective restraint: *He hints that it may have its funky moments (1960s+)*

funky fresh *adj phr* Superb; the very greatest; way rad: *Funky fresh describes something that is super, exceptional, superior to fresh (late-1980s+)*

funnies (or **comics**), the *n phr* Comic strips; section or page of a newspaper with comic strips (1928+)

funny *adj* **1** Eccentric; odd; WEIRD **2** Insane; NUTS **adv** In a strange way: *He looked at her real funny (1806+)*

funny, a *n* A joke; wisecrack; witty remark (1950s+) **See** DOODAD

funny business **See** MONKEY BUSINESS

funny car *n phr* A dramatically modified car, usu having a powerful engine, oversized wheels, a raised rear suspension, etc, esp a drag racer so modified: *The "funny" car, built for speed (1980s+)*

funny farm (or house) *n phr* A mental hospital, rest home for alcoholics, etc; LAUGHING ACADEMY: *Who put me in your private funny house?/ They must all have died in flop-houses or on state funny-farms (1963 +)*

funny ha-ha or funny peculiar *question* Do you mean something funny that's amusing, or something funny that's strange?: Gore Vidal: *You can see it in the career of Woody Allen, who was wildly funny. Kopkind: Funny ha-ha or funny peculiar? (1938 +)*

funny money *n phr* Worthless, counterfeit, or play money (1938 +)

funsies *n* Fun; FUN AND GAMES: *The driver said they must not leave the parking area. "Oh, funsies!" said Boots (1960s +)*

funster *n* A person who has or makes fun: *The facade drops, revealing them as the faux funsters they really are (1784 +)*

◁**fur**▷ ***n*** The vulva; pubic hair (1893 +)

◁**furburger**▷ ***n*** 1 The vulva 2 A very attractive woman; EATIN' STUFF (1960s + *College students*)

◁**fur pie**▷ ***n phr*** 1 The vulva 2 Cunnilingus (1940s +)

fuse *See* BLOW A GASKET, HAVE A SHORT FUSE

fuss *See* KICK UP A FUSS

fusspot *n* A very meticulous and finicky person; fuss-budget (1921 +)

fustest with the mostest *See* FIRSTEST WITH THE MOSTEST

◁**futy**▷ (F^{oo} dee) ***n*** The vulva ***v*** 1 To do the sex act; FUCK 2 FUTZ AROUND 3 To fuss; grumble; BITCH (1940s +)

◁**futz**▷ (FUTS) **n** **1** The vulva **2** A repulsive man, esp an old one; ALTER
KOCKER: *Inside of every American is a scrawny, twanging old futz like me*
v **1** FUCK **2** (also **futz with**) To meddle or alter wrongfully; damage;
FUCK UP: *What is clear is that this movie has been futzed with* [1930s + ;
origin uncertain; perhaps fr Yiddish *arumfartzen*; mainly perceived
as a euphemism for *fuck*]

futz around v phr **1** To loaf and idle; FUCK OFF: *Stop futzing around and
get to work* **2** To experiment; try tricks; play; MESS AROUND: *The
foundation folk may get to futzing around with their computers/ You
never really had time to sort of futz around in the sets* **3** To defy or
challenge; provoke; FUCK WITH: *I am nobody to futz around with*
(1932 +)

futzed up adj phr Confused; botched; ruined; FUCKED UP: *I've got her all
futzed up. She does everything I tell her* (1940s +)

fuzz n A police officer; the police: *Cops must be annihilated. Kill the
Fascist fuzz* [1930 + ; origin unknown; the form *fuzey* is found at
about the same time]

fuzzbuster n A device that detects police radar signals: *Rauch
discovered that I had a Fuzzbuster, designed to warn me of radar traps*
[mid-1970s + ; fr a trademark name]

fuzz-face n A bearded or semibearded man: *get the shaver, fuzz-face*

fuzzled adj Drunk (1621 +)

◁**fuzznuts**▷ **n** A contemptible person; JERK (1940s +)

fuzz nitted adj phr Inexperienced; callow; green: *a fuzz nitted rookie*

[1970s + ; fr *fuzznuts*]

fuzzy *n* **1** (also **fuzzie**) A police officer; FUZZ (1940s +) **2** A certainty, esp a horse sure to win; SURE THING (1950s + *Gambling*)

F-word, the *n* A euphemized version of the taboo word “fuck” (1980s +)

F/X or FX *n* Visual and other special effects • Best known after the 1986 movie *F/X: The FX were tops, the tone tender* [1980s + Movies; fr *effects* pronounced *a FX*]

G

G n A member of a gang; GANGBANGER, GANGSTA: *In a world of so much hate, another white “G”* (1990s+ *Street gangs*)

gab v Talk, esp of a long, prattling sort [1786+; fr Scots or Northern English dialect; perhaps related to the Old French *gab*, “mockery, boasting”]

gabber n A talkative person; GASBAG, MOTOR-MOUTH (1793+)

gabby adj Talkative; noisily garrulous; gossipy: *They have spoken of any gabby party* (1719+)

gabfest n A session of conversation; a loquacious occasion; CHINFEST (1897+)

gab (or talk) line n phr A telephone service allowing one to talk with someone in a designated subject area, for a considerable charge per minute • A sort of forerunner of the “interest groups” or “chat groups” of the computer Internet (1980s+)

gabs *See* GOB¹

gack interj An exclamation of disgust; YUCK [1990s+; perhaps imitating vomiting]

gacky adj Disgusting; BLETCHEROUS, CRUDDY, SHITTY: *The milk is gacky; throw it*

out! (1990s +)

gadgetry *n* Ingenious or impressive devices, esp electronic or mechanical: *an age in love with gadgetry* (1920 +)

gaff *n* A concealed device or operation that makes it impossible for the customer to win; GIMMICK: *People started looking for a gaff* (1893 + *Carnival & hawkers*) **v** 1 To cheat; swindle; trick, esp by shortchanging (1893 + *Carnival & hawkers*) 2 To use a concealed device, esp for an illusion: *The volcano was “gaffed” with steampipes* (1893 + *Carnival & hawkers*) 3 To reprimand; rebuke severely (1950s + *Navy*) [fr *gaff*, “a hook”] **See** BLOW THE GAFF, STAND THE GAFF

gaffer *n* 1 One’s father; OLD MAN: *Studs felt that Mr O’Brien was different from his own gaffer* (1659 +) 2 An old man: *Look at that gaffer trying to stand on his head* (1575 +) 3 A foreman or boss, such as the manager of a circus, head glassblower, chief electrician on a movie set, etc (1841 +) [fr British dialect, “grandfather, godfather”; the dated meaning of the first sense is actually “master, governor,” often synonyms of “father”] **See** OLD COCKER

gag *n* 1 A joke; wisecrack; trick: *I’ll tell you gags, I’ll sing you songs* (1823 +) 2 To deceive; hoax; SCAM, TAKE IN: *his skills at what is called “social engineering” by some and “gagging” by others* (1777 +) [perhaps fr obsolete *geck*, “dupe,” related to German *geck*, “fool”; in the late 19th century a gag was “a line interpolated into a play”]

gaga *adj* Crazy; silly; irrational: *When prohibition comes up, the wets go gaga/ not to mention a ga-ga French gamine in Mickey Mouse ears* [1905 +; fr French, “fool”]

gag a maggot *See* ENOUGH TO GAG A MAGGOT

gage or **gauge** (GAYJ) *adj* (also **gaged**) Intoxicated with marijuana (1950s+ *Narcotics*) *n* 1 Cheap whiskey (1940s+) 2 Tobacco • Also “a pipeful of tobacco,” since *gage* meant “pipe” (1676+) 3 Marijuana • Perhaps related to the old meaning, “pipe”: *I could not see how they were more justified in drinking than I was in blowing the gage* (1950s+ *Narcotics*) *See* STICK OF GAGE

gage (or **gauge**) **butt** *n phr* A marijuana cigarette; JOINT (1930s+ *Narcotics*)

gaged (GAYJD) *adj* Drunk (1940s+) *See* GAGE

gagers (GAY jærz) *n* The eyes (1859+)

gaggy *adj* Funny; cleverly amusing; JOKEY: *MediHEAT's A Little Comfort* (*gaggy name, oh well*) (1990s+)

gag me with a spoon *sentence* I am disgusted; I am about to retch (1980s+ *Teenagers*)

gak *v* To speak, esp to babble on; YAK: *The pet lady then gakked on about the merits of ferrets* (1990s+)

gal *n* A woman • The female equivalent of *guy*: *She's a good gal, don't you think?/ a tough old gal* (1795+)

gal (or *girl*) *Friday* *n phr* A woman assistant or secretary, esp in an office; female factotum; GOFER [1940+; fr Daniel Defoe's novel *Robinson Crusoe*, where the servant and companion was named *Friday*]

gallery *See* PEANUT GALLERY, ROGUE'S GALLERY, SHOOTING GALLERY

galley-west *See* KNOCK SOMEONE GALLEY-WEST

galloping dominoes *n phr* Dice (1920 +)

galoot (gə LŌŌT) *n* A person, esp an awkward or boorish man • Very often in the phrase *big galoot: large enough for the galoots to fit through and take over/* “I really love that galoot,” said Harry [1864 +; fr early 1800s British, “soldier,” of unknown origin; perhaps fr the Sierra Leone Creole language Krio *galut* fr Spanish *galeoto*, “galley slave”]

galumph *v* To move or cavort ungracefully; crash heavily about: *Linda Evans galumphing around the edges like a wounded rhino/ who had seen him practically every day of his life galumphing around the house naked* [1872 +; coined by Lewis Carroll in *Through the Looking Glass*]

galumphing *adj* Ungraceful; heavy and cumbersome: *his dead eyes, croaky voice, and large galumphing body* (1891 +)

gam¹ *n* A social visit; party (1893 +) *v* **1** To boast; show off (1950s + *Black*) **2** To flirt (1950s + *Black*) **3** To gossip; visit (1893 +) [origin unknown; perhaps fr nautical use, “a meeting of whaling ships at sea, with attendant talk and exchange of news” found by 1850; perhaps fr 18th-century *gammon*, “talk, chatter”; probably ultimately fr Middle English *gamon*, “to play, frolic”]

gam² *n* A leg, esp a woman’s leg • Most often in the plural: *regarding her superb gams with affection/ Gavilan has spindly gams, a thin neck, and a wasp waist* [1781 + ; perhaps fr Northern French *gambe*, “leg”]

gambler *See* TINHORN

game *n* One's occupation; business; RACKET: *He's in the computer game these days (1860s +)* *See* AHEAD OF THE GAME, BADGER GAME, BALL GAME, CON GAME, FLOATING CRAP GAME, **the** NAME OF THE GAME, ON **one's** GAME, PLAY GAMES, SKIN GAME, **a** WHOLE NEW BALL GAME, **a** WHOLE 'NOTHER THING

game face *n phr* The determined face one adopts in a contest; a mask of hardihood: *Just keep your game face. We've come this far/ The advancing Knicks needed to wear their game faces in a hurry, and they did (1980s +)*

game over *interj* Something has ended unsuccessfully: *Our relationship? Game over* [fr the ending text of many video games]

game plan *n phr* A strategy for winning; plan for conducting some project or affair: *That type of a game plan gave us the option to point out how badly we need a responsible press (1940s + Football)*

gamer *n* A brave and enterprising player, esp one who works with pain or against the odds: *what is known in the business as a gamer, a guy who pitches with pain, who wants the ball/ When Jean Fuggett played for the Dallas Cowboys, his teammates called him a gamer* [1980s + Baseball & football; probably fr *game*, "brave, determined"; in the 1620s the word meant "an athlete," and the current sense is conceivably though improbably a survival]

game, set, and match *adv phr* Thoroughly; completely: *Major announced that Britain had won game, set and match, achieving everything it wanted/ Game, Anne thought, and I think probably set and match* [1990s +; fr tennis]

game time or **showtime** *n phr* Time to play or work or accomplish what needs to be done: *It's game time*

gamy *adj* Daring; racy; slightly risqué: *shown in its gamy uncut version* [1843+; based on the taste and odor of game that has slightly decayed]

gander *n* A look; close scrutiny; glance: *I'll have a gander at the prices* (1887+) *v*: *Want to gander at TV for a while?* (1914+) [fr the stretched, gooselike neck of someone gazing intently] **See** TAKE A GANDER

gandy dancer *n phr* **1** A railroad track worker (1915+ *Hoboes, railroad & lumberjacks*) **2** Any manual laborer, esp a pick-and-shovel digger (1940s+ *Loggers*) **3** A seller of novelties (1930s+ *Carnival*) [origin unknown; a 1935 source says that the third sense was “mentioned by George Borrow in his descriptions of early nineteenth-century street fairs”]

ganef or **ganof** **See** GONIFF

gang **See** BLACK GANG

gangbang *v* To belong to a street gang: *What would you be doing if you wasn't gangbanging?/ To Mr Shakur, gangbanging (engaging in gang activities) was a career* [1960s+ Street gang; an adaptation of *gang bang*, changing the meaning of *bang* from the sexual to the generally violent]

◁**gang bang**▷ (Variations: **shag** or **shay** may replace **bang**) *n phr* **1** An occasion when several males do the sex act serially with one woman; TRAIN **2** A groupsex orgy: *We all ended up in a big profitable*

gangbang v phr: tear the place apart, leave the owner for dead, gangbang the waitress (1953+; the variant gang shag 1927+)

gangbanger n A member of a street gang; BANGER: *He lives where the city's most violent gangs live, where gangbangers cover walls, houses, even trees with arcane graffiti (1960s+ Street gang)*

gangbusters adv: *The big investigation still going gangbusters?/ Dad is still alive and going great gangbusters n* Superlative; very successful: *"Breakfast Time" does that well. I think it's going to be gangbusters [1970s+; fr the name of a radio series that lasted from 1936 to 1957] See LIKE GANGBUSTERS*

gangland modifier: *a gangland-style slaying/ gangland gorillas n* The world of organized crime; the gangster milieu (1908+)

gangsta (GANG stuh) modifier Showing the rapacious, violent, and misogynistic values of street gangs: *The group was one of the first to record "gangsta" lyrics, which focus on crime and violence [1980s+; fr gangster]*

gangsta (or gangster) rap n phr A kind of "rap," speaking words to a strong rhythmic beat, marked by rapacity, violence, and misogyny: *flirtation with gangsta rap, a style known for its profanity, violence and derogatory treatment of women/ clean up violent "gangsta rap" lyrics that they said demean and threaten women/ The stars of gangster rap have become dangerous emblems for an immensely popular, primarily black musical genre (1990s+)*

gangster modifier: *gangster movie/ the gangster menace n 1* A member of a criminal gang; an organized-crime figure; MOBSTER, WISEGUY

(1908 +) **2** A marijuana cigarette: *Just go on and smoke that gangster and be real cool* (1950s + *Narcotics*)

gangster glide or **pimp roll** *n phr* A style of walking used by street-gang members: *Sometimes it's called "the pimp roll," sometimes it's called the "gangster glide." It's a very exaggerated walk that some street gang members affect* (1990s +)

gang up on someone or something *v phr* To combine against a single opponent: *The nonaligned nations ganged up on Sri Lanka* (1925 +)

ganja or **ganga** (GAHN jə) *n* A strong type of marijuana obtained from a cultivated strain of Indian hemp: *He remembers an uncle getting "so mean on ganja, he kills his girlfriend"* [1800 + *Narcotics*; fr Hindi; adopted from West Indian use]

ganking *n* The armed and violent stealing of a car from its driver;
CARJACKING: *Teens engaged in "ganking" spree* (1990 + *Teenagers*)

gaper *n* A mirror (1930s + *Jive talk*)

gapers' block or **gawkers' block** *n phr* Traffic congestion caused by drivers slowing down to inspect an accident or other matter of interest; RUBBERNECKING (1960s +)

garage *n* A kind of house music (1980s +)

garage-sale *v phr* In skiing or snowboarding, to wipe out fantastically, often with equipment flying off

garbage (GAR bəj, gar BAHZH) *modifier:* *She uses a lot of tricky garbage shots to win games and sets/ I call it a garbage movie **n 1** Food or meals (1940s + *Hoboes & loggers*) **2** Anything inferior and*

worthless, esp a literary text or other artistic work; CRAP, JUNK: *You call that piece of garbage a sonnet? (1592 +)*

garbage down v phr To eat; have a meal; CHOW DOWN (WWII Navy)

garbage furniture See STREET FURNITURE

garbage habit n phr The taking of narcotics in medleys and mixes: *an increase in the garbage habit, where people mix a variety of drugs to achieve a high (1970s + Narcotics)*

garbage head n phr A person who mixes various narcotics (1970s + Narcotics)

garbage time n phr The last few minutes of a game whose outcome has already been decided, and when players try individually for scores to increase their averages: *Baker also played the final 2:26 of garbage time (1980s + Basketball)*

garbology n The study of the refuse of a modern society [1946 +; coined by W Rathje]

◁**garbonzas or garbanzos**▷ **n** A woman's breasts; BAZONGAS, HOOTERS, TITS [1980s +; perhaps fr Spanish *garbanzo*, "chickpea"]

gardener n 1 An outfielder (1902 + Baseball) **2** A person who plants narcotics on an airplane for smuggling (1970s + Narcotics)

garden-variety adj Of the usual kind; ordinary; RUN-OF-THE-MILL (1928 +)

gargle n A drink, esp of liquor (1864 +) **v** To drain and flush the radiator of a truck (1930s + Truckers)

garlic-burner n A motorcycle made in Italy (1980s + Motorcyclists)

garmento *n* A person in the business of designing and manufacturing garments • A deprecating term for old-fashioned practitioners, and a self-deprecating term, like *the rag trade*, for the whole industry (1980s +)

gas *n* 1 Empty and idle talk; mendacious and exaggerated claims; BULLSHIT: *Most of what I say is pure gas, my friend* (1847 +) 2 Talk of any sort, esp conversation: *Let's get together for a good gas* (1852 +) 3 Denatured alcohol or some other substitute for liquor (1940s + *Hoboes*) 4 A fastball: *He got him out on the high gas* (1980s + *Baseball*) 5 GASSER: *"What a gas!" she cried on the way from the courthouse* (1957 +) 6 Anabolic steroids, used to increase body bulk: *He said about 60 percent of the wrestlers he knew during the 1980s used steroids, commonly known as "juice" or "gas" (1980s + Athletes)* **v** 1 Talked: *I haven't gassed this long for a year* 2 To impress one's hearers very favorably; overcome with admiration: *Bird gassed them/ She gassed me, she was that good* (1940s + *Cool talk*) 3 To impress an audience very unfavorably; fail with: *Our show appears to have gassed both the critics and the public* (1970s +)
See COOK WITH GAS, RUN OUT OF GAS, STEP ON IT

gas, a *n phr* Something very impressive, pleasurable, effective, etc: *Therefore it's a gas for me to be the scribe of this weekly space/ She told me she'd been functionally fulfilled dispensing data, and it'd been a gas interfacing me* (1940s + *Cool talk*)

gasbag *n* An energetic and persevering talker; WINDBAG **v** To talk energetically and perseveringly: *although we have of course plenty of gasbagging about morality* (1888 +)

gas-guzzler *n* A car, esp a large American model, that uses a great deal of gasoline [1970s+; *gas eater* and *gas hound* are found by the 1940s]

◀**gash**¹▶ *n* **1** The vulva: *Plus ball the gash off a real foxy chick?* (mid-1700s+) **2** Women regarded as sex partners: *that high-school gash/all that fine gash, just wasted* (1914+) **3** The sex act; ASS: *Don't you ever think of anything but gash?* (1918+) **v** To do the sex act: *We gashed* (1980s+ *Students*)

gash² *n* Extra or unexpected portions, bits of luck, etc; dividends; bonuses [WWII Army fr 1900s+ British Navy; origin unknown; perhaps fr French *gaché*, “spoiled,” since it occurs in *gash bucket*, “garbage bin”]

gas hound *n phr* **1** A person who drinks denatured alcohol or other substitutes for liquor (1940s+ *Hoboes*) **2** A big car; GAS-GUZZLER (1940s+)

gasket *See* BLOW A GASKET

gaslight *v* To deceive someone systematically: *He set me up and has been gaslighting me* [1950s+; fr the 1944 movie *Gaslight*, in which a man attempts to drive his wife mad by causing her to mistrust her senses]

gasper *n* A cigarette: *handed him a nice, fresh marijuana gasper* (1914+)

gassed *adj* **1** Drunk: *I begged them not to get gassed or start any fights* **2** Overcome with admiration: *After her speech the crowd was gassed* (1940s+)

gasser *n* **1** GASBAG (1912+) **2** Anything or anyone exceptionally amusing, effective, memorable, etc; a GAS: *Examine this gasser* (1930s+ *Cool talk*) **3** Anything or anyone exceptionally dull, mediocre, inept, etc; CORNBALL, BOMB: *We planned a blast, and got a gasser* (1940s+ *Cool talk*) **4** GAS-GUZZLER: *She beats the gassers and the rail jobs* (1960s+ *Rock and roll*)

gassy *adj* Garrulous; loudly self-important and pretentious (1863+)

gas something up *v phr* To make more interesting, exciting, etc; gin something up, JAZZ something UP: *Warner Brothers has been around to gas things up a little* (1950s+)

gat *n* A pistol: *poking his gat your way* [1904+ *Underworld*; probably fr *Gatling gun*]

gate *n* **1** The money collected from selling tickets to a sporting or other entertainment event: *the winner to take seventy-five and the loser twenty-five percent of the gate* (1886+) **2** A performing engagement; GIG (1940s+ *Jazz musicians*) **3** A musician, a musical devotee, or any man; CAT (1920s+ *Jazz musicians*) *v* GIVE someone THE GATE (1940s+) [musicians' senses fr the simile *swing like a gate*, "play or respond to swing music well and readily," with some influence of 'gator and alligator; or perhaps fr *gatemouth*, a nickname for Louis Armstrong; first musical sense said to have been coined by Louis Armstrong] **See** CRASH, GET ONE'S TAIL IN A GATE

-gate *combining word* An exposed affair of corruption, venality, etc, of the sort indicated: *Allengate/ Billygate/ Koreagate/ Lancegate/ Irangate* [1970s+; fr the *Watergate* scandal of the early 1970s]

gate-crasher *n* A person who attends a party, entertainment, etc, without invitation or ticket; uninvited guest: *“There are bound to be gate-crashers,” Mike said (1927+)*

gatoring or **gator** *n* A sort of divertissement in which the participants writhe about among one another on the floor: *Gatoring is over (1970s+)*

gat-up *n* An armed robbery; holdup (1920s+ *Underworld*)

gat up *v phr* To arm oneself with a pistol (1930s+ *Underworld*)

gauge¹ *n* A shotgun: *a shotgun is called “the gauge,” explained Officer Phil Lee/ This man took a gauge (Armond pantomimes holding a gun, then bends over to dodge from it) and two people end up dead*
[1970s+ *Underworld* & police; fr the use of *gauge* to designate the caliber of a shotgun]

gauge² or **gage** *n* Marijuana; GRASS, POT, WEED [1930s+ *Narcotics*; origin unknown; perhaps from *gaged*, “drunk”]

gauge butt *See* GAGE BUTT

gawk *v* To stare; gape stupidly: *locals gathered to gawk at strange lights/ They went in and out of the garage to gawk at the body*
[1785+; fr dialect *gawk*, *gouk*, “fool, idiot,” literally “cuckoo”]

gawky *adj* Awkward; ill-coordinated (1759+)

gay *adj* **1** Homosexual; homoerotic: *gay men and women/ gay attitudes (1920s+ Homosexuals)* **2** Intended for or used by homosexuals: *gay bar/ gay movies (1920+ Homosexuals)* **3** Ugly; CORNY, WEIRD: *The clarinet player looked totally gay in his USC band uniform (1980s+*

Students) **n** A male homosexual or a lesbian • Widely used by heterosexuals in preference to pejorative terms: *a hideaway for live-together couples and middle-aged gays (1920s + Homosexuals)* [perhaps by extension fr earlier British *gay*, “leading a whore’s life”]

gay-bashing modifier: *after his arrest in a gay-bashing case* **n** The harassment of homosexuals (1980s +)

gay boy modifier: *Raoul, 24, is a cute gayboy filmmaker* **n phr** A young male homosexual; **GAY:** *Those of you who have friendships with sweet gay boys will certainly relate (1990s +)*

gay-cat **n** **1** A hobo, esp a novice: *Were not these other tramps mere dubs and “gay-cats”?* (1893 + *Hoboes*) **2** (also **gey-cat**) A homosexual boy; catamite (1902 +) **3** A novice criminal who acts as lookout, decoy, etc (1916 + *Underworld*)

gaydar **n** An internal detector of gay people; a sense of whether someone is gay or not: *gaydar on high alert in Provincetown*

gay deceivers **See** FALSIES

gay (or Gay) lib modifier: *gay-lib banners/ a gay lib alliance* **n** The movement that advocates the rights and protection of homosexual persons: *the presence of Gay Lib and advocates for legalization of abortion/ Your reporter needs to open his closet a little wider to find out how great gay lib is* [1960s + ; modeled on *women’s lib*]

gayola **adj** Homosexual; **GAY:** *There have to be some fulfilling alternatives to the gayola fun fair* **n** Bribery, blackmail, and extortion paid by homosexuals and homosexual businesses, esp to police: *for*

blackmail and for shakedowns by real or phony cops, a practice known as “gayola”/ Homosexual bars pay “gayola” to crime syndicates and to law enforcement agencies [1950s + ; noun sense modeled on payola]

gazabo (gə ZAY boh) *n* A man; fellow; GUY: *The gazabos they put on the jury’ll know all about me [1896 + ; fr Mexican Spanish gazapo, “smart fellow”]*

gazer *n* A federal narcotics agent; NARC (1930s + *Narcotics*)

gazillion *n* A very large number; JILLION, ZILLION: *This is a movie adaptation of John Grisham’s gazillion-copy bestseller/ some supermodel making gazillions of dollars each year (1990s +)*

◁**gazongas** or **guzungas**▷ *n* A woman’s breasts; GARBONZAS, HOOTERS, TITS: *I don’t get these women to sweat their gazongas off*

gazoo or **gazool** *See* KAZOO

gazooney or **gazoonie** *n* **1** A catamite; PUNK (1915 +) **2** A young and callow tramp (1920 + *Hoboes*) **3** An ignorant man (1940s + *Merchant marine*) **4** A recruit; ROOKIE (1940s + *Baseball*) [said to be a variant of *gunsel*] *See* GUNSEL¹

GB or **gb** (pronounced as separate letters) *n* GOOFBALL (1940s + *Narcotics*)

gd or **g-d** (pronounced as separate letters) *adj* Goddamned: *The biggest gd engine in the West (1920s +)*

g’day or **gooday** or **gidday** *interj* Good day: *g’day, mate (1928 + Australian)*

GDI *n* A person who is not a member of a fraternity or sorority •

Stands for “goddamned independent”: *I’m a GDI! (1980s + Students)*

gear *adj* Excellent; wonderful; superb: *The opposite of “gear” is “grotty” [1950s + British; fr the WWI British Army phrase that’s the gear, “that’s right”]* **See** IN HIGH GEAR, SHIFT INTO HIGH GEAR

gearbox *n* A stupid person; idiot; DIMWIT: *only gearboxes greet strangers (1970s +)*

geared *adj* 1 Excited; ecstatic; HIGH: *a sexy rock star, and he got the audience so geared/ So I was cranked. I was geared* 2 Homosexual (1930s + *Prison*)

gearhead *n* A devotee of cars, car racing, etc: *translating that into monosyllables for you gearheads/ Robin Yount has always been a gearhead (1970s +)*

gear-jammer (or **-bonger** or **-grinder** or **-fighter**) *n* A truck or bus driver (1930s + *Truckers*)

gear up *v phr* To prepare; equip oneself: *seem ready to gear up realistically for the very tough political fight ahead/ Geriatric Gearing Up [1890 + ; fr gear up, “to put the harness on a horse,” found by 1886]*

gedunk (gee DUNK) *n* Ice cream, pudding, and the like (WWII Navy)

gee¹ or **g** (JEE) *n* A fellow; man; GUY: *He was the mayor, and he was one smart gee [1907 + ; abbreviation of guy]* **See** WRONG GEE

gee² or **g** (JEE) *n* A gallon of liquor [1940s + Hoboes; abbreviation of gallon]

gee³ or g (JEE) n 1 A thousand dollars; GRAND (1928 +) **2** Money (1940s +) [abbreviation of *grand*]

gee⁴ (JEE) interj An exclamation of surprise, pleasure, sheepishness, etc; GEE WHIZ [1895 + ; a euphemism for *Jesus*]

gee⁵ adj Disgusting; rebarbative; GROSS [1970s + Teenagers; abbreviation of *gross*]

◀**geechee or geechie**▶ (GEE chee) **n 1** A black person, esp a Southern rural black: *obsessed with hatred for the “geechees,” those he feels are holding back the race* **2** The dialect, culture, etc, of Southern rural or seacoast blacks **3** A low-country South Carolinian, esp one from the Charleston area [1905 + Black; origin uncertain or mixed; perhaps fr the *Ogeechee* River in northern Georgia or another place name and ultimately fr a Native American language; perhaps fr *geejee*, “the Gullah dialect or a speaker of that dialect,” and ultimately fr the name of a language and tribe in the Kissy region of Liberia]

◀**geechie**▶ (GEE chee) **n** A woman of the South Pacific region, esp of the islands occupied by US forces in World War II [WWII armed forces; fr *geisha girl*, perhaps influenced by *geechee*]

geed (or g’d) up¹ (JEED) adj phr 1 Crippled **2** Battered and bent [Hoboes 1940s + ; perhaps from *gimp*, “limp”]

geed (or g’d) up² (JEED) adj phr Intoxicated with narcotics, esp stimulants [1940s + Narcotics; perhaps fr *geared up*]

gee-gee (JEE jee) n A horse, esp a mediocre racehorse • British children’s word for *horse*: *I like to follow the gee-gees/ You can go to*

bet the gee-gees at Hialeah or Gulfstream [1869 + ; perhaps fr the command *gee* given to a horse]

geek *n* 1 A sideshow freak, esp one who does revolting things like biting the heads off live chickens (1920s + *Carnival & circus*) 2 A snake charmer (1920s + *Carnival & circus*) 3 A pervert or degenerate, esp one who will do disgusting things to slake deviant appetites; CREEP, WEIRDO (1920s + *Carnival & circus*) 4 (also **geekoid**) A devotee; fan; FREAK, NERD: *and assorted science-fiction geeks around the world who actually call themselves cyberpunk* (1990s +) [origin unknown; perhaps related to British dialect *geck*, *geke*, “fool”; according to David Maurer, “said to have originated with a man named Wagner of Charleston, WV, whose hideous snake-eating act made him famous”] **See** GINK

geek-chic *adj* Fashionable for the socially inept: *geek-chic earth shoes*

geekdom *n* The world or domain of geeks and nerds: *the geekdom of Silicon Valley*

geek out *v phr* 1 To speak about computers in specialized technical language, esp among noninitiates: *Go hang around a mouse potato and see if you can get him to geek out and do a brain dump* 2 To do programming with obsessive intensity: *Not infrequently, Michael locks himself inside and geeks out on code* (1990s + *Computer*)

geekspeak *n* The jargon and slang of computer users: *The lingo: Geekspeak on the information highway* (1990s + *Computer*)

geeky or **geekazoid** *adj* Eccentric and repulsive; WEIRD, CREEPY, NERDLY: *Kia sets her up with geeky granola-type Ely/ the geeky game played at*

company picnics/ *Maybe you have a geekazoid freshman brother who is the designated wedgie-victim of the entire 11th grade (1980s +)*

gee string *See* G-STRING

geetus or **geetis** or **geets** or **geedus** (GEE təs) *n* Money: *Pitchman must give the store a 40 percent cut on the “geedus”/ I’m spendin’ my hard-earned geets (1930s + Underworld & hawkers)*

geewhillikins or **gewhillikins** *interj* An exclamation of astonishment (1850s +)

gee whiz¹ *adj* **1** Enthusiastic; very much impressed; youthfully optimistic: *With a very gee-whiz kid, you’re not talking about a very long period/ Finch’s willed naiveté frequently leads to gee-whiz insights (1980s +)* **2** Very impressive, esp in a gaudy way: *a windowless conference room that felt gee-whiz, a little Big Brother, filled with television sets (1990s +)* *interj* (also **Gee whiz**, **gee whillikins**, **gee willikers**) An exclamation of approval, surprise, mild disapproval, emphasis, etc; GOSH: *But gee willikers, he does arithmetic like lightning (main entry 1885 +; others somewhat earlier)* *n phr* An armed pickpocket [1950s + Underworld; fr *gee*, “gun,” and *whiz*, “pickpocket”]

geez or **geeze** (GEEZ) *v* To have or give a dose of narcotics, esp an injection: *They drop acid, go up on DMT and “geeze” (mainline meth)/ I need to geez now, Bumper. Real bad/ I geezed that scum (1940s + Narcotics)*

geezed or **geezed up** *adj* or *adj phr* **1** Drunk **2** Intoxicated with narcotics; GEED UP², HIGH (1940s +)

geezer¹ modifier: *Van Dyke's comeback is part of a multinetwork trend toward what could be called geezer mysteries/ "Geezer rock" goes on tour* **n** A man, esp an old man; DUFFER, GAFFER, GUY: *It gave him all kinds of confidence just to hear the big geezer spout/ He is a tall geezer with chin whiskers* [1885 + ; fr earlier and possibly Cockney *giser*, "mummer, one who puts on a guise or mask," hence a quaint figure; the origin resembles that of *guy*]

geezer² n **1** A drink of liquor; SNORT (1920s + *Prison*) **2** A dose or injection of a narcotic (1940s + *Narcotics*)

geezer-bashing adj Denigrating and blaming old people: *major media have provided ample amplification for Lead or Leave's geezer-bashing message* (1990s +)

geezo n An inmate, esp an experienced one [1920s + *Prison*; probably fr *geezer*¹]

gel or jell v **1** To come to a firm and useful form; WORK: *In this highly partisan county, it just didn't gel/ If this doesn't gel, the local people will be stuck/ Frost's saga fails to jell either as compelling drama or convincing social portraiture* (1950s +) **2** (also **jell out**) To relax; CHILL OUT, KICK BACK: *After having five hours of class today I think I'll just go home and gel* (1980s + *Students*) [second sense perhaps fr the notion of productively sitting still as a *gelatin* pudding does]

gelt (GELT) **n** Money: *To let you guys get away with the gelt?* [1529 + ; fr German and Yiddish, literally "gold"]

gender-bender modifier: *a two-day search for Boy George, the 25-year-old "gender-bender" pop star* **n phr** A person who tends to reverse or

alter traditional notions of sex roles, dress, etc (1980 +)

gender-bending modifier: *Madonna is known for her gender-bending*

antics **n** The reversal or alteration of sex roles, dress, etc;

androgyny: *A decade or so ago, cinematic gender-bending reached unprecedented levels (1980s +)*

general *See* ARMCHAIR GENERAL, BUCK GENERAL

generic adj Inferior; CHEESY, GROTTY: *Larry King doesn't appear to be*

generic: he has a distinctive voice, and he doesn't look like anybody else (1980s + Students)

gent (JENT) **n** A man; fellow; GUY: *A hefty, tough-talking gent of not quite 50 (1564 +)*

gents, the n phr The men's toilet • Chiefly British (1938 +)

genuine article or real deal n The real thing, not a substitute or imitation: *that ring's the genuine article/ his artwork is the real deal*

Gen-X or twentysomethings n Generation-X, the set of white middle-class people born after the baby-boom generation: *He has a bunch of the Gen-X jargon in there [1990s + ; fr the tide of a 1991 book by Douglas Coupland]*

george v To invite to sexual activity; PROPOSITION: *One of the girls georged him, just for kicks (1950s + Black)*

George adj (also **george**) Excellent; great; superb: *She's real George all the way (1951 + Teenagers)* **interj** BY GEORGE (1731 +) **n 1** The automatic pilot of an aircraft (1931 + *British aviators*) **2** A theater usher (1950s + *Rock and roll*) [aviation sense because George

became the term for any airman in the British forces, like “Jack” for a sailor and “Tommy” for a soldier] **See** LET GEORGE DO IT

George Washington *n phr* A dollar; a dollar bill [1990s +; fr the portrait on the bill]

get *n* 1 Offspring; progeny • Used contemptuously, as if of an animal (1320 +) 2 GATE, TAKE (1950s + *Show business*) 3 The route taken by criminals in fleeing the scene of their efforts: *The get, or getaway route* (1940s + *Underworld*) *v* 1 To seize mentally; grasp; understand: *Do you get me?* (1892 +) 2 To take note of; pay attention to: *Get him, acting like such a big shot* (1950s +) 3 To kill or capture; take vengeance; retaliate destructively against: *He can't say that. I'll get him* (1853 +)

get one's *v phr* 1 To get the punishment one deserves: *Don't worry, he'll get his before this is all over* (1910 +) 2 To become rich; get one's large share of worldly goods: *She went into this business determined to get hers by the time she was thirty* (1940s +) [probably fr the notion of *getting one's deserts*]

get a bag on **See** TIE A BAG ON

get a bang (or charge) out of someone or something *v phr* To enjoy especially; get a thrill out of: *The younger set is not “getting a bang” out of things anymore* (1930 +)

get (or draw) a bead on something or someone *v phr* To take very careful aim at something or someone; concentrate successfully; ZERO IN: *She has, however, got a bead on her five original characters* [1841 +; fr the *beadlike* appearance of the front sight of a rifle; the date

is for the *draw* form]

get a broom up one's ass *See* HAVE A BROOM UP one's ASS

get (or have) a can on v phr To get drunk: *A gal used to throw herself out the window every time she got a can on (1920s +)*

get a clue v phr To understand; grasp; become aware; DIG, WISE UP •
Often in the imperative: *Get a Clue Dept: AT&T has revolutionized telecommunications (1980s + Teenagers)*

get something across (or over) v phr To explain successfully; PUT something ACROSS: *He decided to devote all his energy to getting his own platform across [1894 +; fr a stage term for success, to get it across the footlights]*

get a crush on someone *See* HAVE A CRUSH ON someone

get one's act (or <shit>) together *See* GET IT TOGETHER

get (or have) a free ride v phr 1 To enjoy something without paying; get something gratis (1927 +) **2** To get the next card without betting, because no one in the game wishes to start the betting (1940s + *Poker*) **3** To get a base on balls (1980s + *Baseball*)

get a handle on someone v phr To begin to understand someone; have a clue as to someone's character, behavior, etc: *That's right. I can't get a handle on him (1972 +)*

get a handle on something or someone v phr To find a way of coping; discover how to proceed: *Sometimes I think I haven't got a handle on things anymore/ They've just got to get a handle on this thing (1972 +)*

get (or take) a hinge at v phr To look at; glance at: *I only write you letters instead of getting a hinge at your kisser/ a fast hinge at the sodden courtyard* [1930s +; perhaps fr the action of turning the head, as if on a *hinge*]

get a hump on v phr To speed up; hurry; get busy; GET A MOVE ON: *Get a hump on with that assignment, OK?* (1890s +)

get a hustle on See GET A MOVE ON

get a kick out of someone or something v phr To enjoy immensely; take great pleasure in: *I sure get a kick out of the way you guys kid each other along/ I get a kick out of you* (1903 +)

get a life interj An exclamation of disgust and impatience • The exhortation is very much like “Get out of my face” or “Get lost” or “Stop bugging me!”: *Upon reading Donald Trump’s response to the article, I have but three words for him: Get A Life!* **v phr** To do something significant; stop wasting time on trivia: *When someone calls the NBA office and says “What are you going to do about Calvin Murphy putting voodoo on that man?” that person needs to get a life/ “Get a life,” Captain Kirk once told some Trekkies* (mid-1980s + Teenagers and students)

get (or have) a little on the side v phr To be sexually unfaithful; CHEAT (1940s +)

get a load of v phr To examine; attend to; GET: *Let him get a load of the new suit of clothes* (1929 +)

get along (or on) v phr 1 To live without any great joy nor grief; pass through life more or less adequately; cope; GET BY (1888 +) 2 To be

compatible; associate easily: *He didn't get along with the boss*
(1856+)

get a move on v phr (Variations: **hump** or **hustle** or **wiggle** may replace **move**) To hurry; speed up: *Tell him to damn well get a wiggle on* (entry form 1891+; *hump* 1892+; *wiggle* 1896+)

get an attitude v phr To become hostile and resentful: *At first I got an attitude about it. I thought it had to do with race* (1960s+ *Black*)

get an eyeball on v phr To spot or catch sight of someone or something: *got an eyeball of her on the recording*

get an offer one can't refuse See MAKE AN OFFER **one can't refuse**

get another kick at the cat v phr To have another chance: *an attorney could lose one trial strategy, then present a new one to "get another kick at the cat"* (1980s+)

get a rise out of someone v phr To get a response from someone, esp a warm or angry one: *His limp joke got a rise and some projectiles out of the crowd* [1886+; fr the *rising*, the appearance, of a fish or other quarry]

get a room sentence A request for a public display of affection to be taken to a private location: *Quit making out and get a room*

get around v phr To be socially active and desirable • often with a hint of sexual promiscuity: *she was a beautiful woman and one of modern temperament. Carolyn, we know, got around* (1928+)

get around someone v phr To persuade or fool someone, often with an illicit motive: *Somehow she managed to get around the jury*

(1891 +)

◁get (or have) one's ashes hauled▷ **v phr** To do the sex act: *that spider climbin' up that wall, goin' up there to get her ashes hauled* [1910 +; *ashes* is probably a euphemism for *ass*]

◁get one's ass in a sling▷ **See** HAVE one's ASS IN A SLING

◁get one's ass in gear▷ **v phr** To get into action; stop loafing and wasting time; PUT A VERB IN IT: *I'd best get my ass in gear and pull this case out of sewer city* (1940s +)

get at someone **v phr** To influence someone illicitly: *They found there was no way to get at the judge* (1865 +)

get (or have) a toehold v phr To get or have a precarious grip on something; get or have an uncertain command: *You've got a good toehold on the job; now let's see you take over* [1940s +; fr the sort of unsure footing one has when only the *toes* are planted and the precarious seizure one has made when only the *toe* of the quarry is in one's grip]

getaway modifier: *our getaway car/ getaway route/ getaway vacation package* **n** The act of fleeing, esp from the scene of a crime: *How about a quiet getaway from this mad scene?* (1890s +) **See** MAKE one's GETAWAY

get away with something **v phr** **1** (also **get by with** something) To go uncaught and unpunished after doing something illegal or indiscreet: *I didn't get away with hassling the committee* **2** To steal or run off with something: *He came for a friendly visit and got away with my stereo* (1878 +)

get away with murder v phr To go unpunished or unharmed after some risk or impudence: *bitter complaints that Bush was getting away with murder in the press (1920+)*

get one's or someone's back up v phr To become angry or make someone angry, esp in a way to cause one to resist: *When they said he was lying, that got his back up (1887+)*

◁**get one's balls in an uproar, not**▷ **See** NOT GET ONE'S BALLS IN AN UPROAR

get one's banana peeled See HAVE ONE'S BANANA PEELED

get (or groove) behind v phr 1 To have a pleasurable narcotic intoxication (*1960s+ Narcotics*) **2** To enjoy something: *I can't get behind this, I keep trying to tell you (1970s+)*

get behind something or someone v phr To support or advocate a person, cause, etc; PUSH: *If we all get behind the amendment, it'll pass (1903+)*

get one's bell rung v phr To be injured; esp to get a head injury: *Conlon got his bell rung Tuesday night when he was accidentally kicked in the head (1960s+ Sports)*

get bent interj An exclamation of scorn and dismissal; DROP DEAD, GET A LIFE, go fuck yourself, GO TO HELL (*1980s+ Students*)

get one's bones v phr To earn the tattoo of an underworld gang (*1980s+ Prison*)

get busy (or down) v phr To do the sex act; SCREW: *Let's get busy [1980s+ Students; fr get down to business]*

get by v phr 1 To do just acceptably well; neither succeed nor fail,

but survive; MAKE OUT: *We were barely getting by on two salaries (1918 +)* **2** To barely escape failure; scrape by (1904 +) **3** To pass inspection; stand up to scrutiny: *His work didn't get by the manager (1914 +)*

get someone by the short hairs (or curlies or knickers) *See* HAVE SOMEONE BY THE SHORT HAIRS

get by with something *See* GET AWAY WITH something

get (or have) one's card punched v phr To have one's credentials, merit, etc, verified: *I'm not here to get my civil-rights card punched [1960s + ; fr the periodic punching of one's union card to show that one has paid one's dues]*

get one's clock cleaned v phr To be assaulted and injured; be pummeled: *You could get your clock cleaned by a Boy Scout if you started chasing him incautiously (1960s +)*

get cold feet *See* HAVE COLD FEET

get cracking (or cutting) v phr **1** To commence: *made a mental note to get cracking on Kenneth Bodin* **2** To go or work faster: *and if we don't get cracking, get serious, and get leadership (1925 + Royal Air Force)*

get crosswise with someone v phr To be in conflict with someone: *He had got himself crosswise with the boss (1990s +)*

get one's dander (or Irish) up v phr **1** To cause anger; infuriate; piss someone OFF: *That law gets my dander up* **2** To become angry; BLOW one's TOP: *They got their dander up and decided to fight the case in*

court [*dander* 1831 +; *Irish* 1834 +; *origin of dander* form unknown; the form *rise my dandee up* is found in a nautical context in 1839 and is probably related]

get digits *See* PULL NUMBERS

get down *modifier*: a *get down player* for those who enjoy that *thumping sound* **v phr** 1 To stake one's money or chips; bet: *All right, get down on this card* (1901 + *Gambling*) 2 To make an effort; get serious; attend to the task: *so I get down now and then to try to block a couple of shots/ She's gonna get down. She just plans for it* (1960s + *Black musicians*) 3 To let oneself be natural and unrestrained: *to really get down and relate/ It's really egalitarian that you can come here and just get down with regular people* (1970s + *Black*) 4 To enjoy oneself; have fun: *Shoot yo' cuffs, boy, jack-knife yo' legs. Get down* (1970s + *Teenagers*) 5 To use a narcotic, esp heroin (1950s + *Narcotics*) 6 (also **get busy**) To do the sex act; BOFF, SCREW: *a chapter on sex straightforwardly called "All About Getting Down"* (1960s +) 7 To join oneself to; get in the good graces of • Used by jazz musicians in the 1930s and revived by teenagers in the 1990s: *Groups of amateur performers can "get down with God" by recording a rap song based on the Ten Commandments* (1990s + *Teenagers*) [perhaps fr *get down to it* and *get down to business*, "begin to work seriously"; perhaps from an unattested *get down and dirty*] *See* DOWN

get someone down **v phr** To depress or annoy; MIFF: *That constant whine gets me down* (1930 +)

get down and boogie **v phr** To enjoy oneself; HAVE A BALL, PARTY: *That said, we're ready to get down and boogie* (1980s +)

get down on someone v phr To show strong disapproval or lack of trust; rebuke; upbraid: *Mama used to get down on me about hanging out with Reno (1875 +)* **See** GO DOWN ON someone

get down to brass tacks See DOWN TO BRASS TACKS

get down to cases v phr To talk seriously; TALK TURKEY (1930s +)

get (or have) one's ducks in a row See HAVE one'S DUCKS IN A ROW

get even v phr To take revenge; EVEN THE SCORE: *His motto was "Don't get mad, get even" (1858 +)*

get face v phr To gain respect; also, to raise one's status • Opposite of *lose face: doing her best to get face after she was acquitted*

get one's feet wet v phr To initiate oneself or be initiated into something; have a first and testing experience of something: *Try one or two, just to get your feet wet [1960s +; fr the image of a person who goes into the water very carefully rather than plunging in]*

get one's finger out v phr To get moving and quit being lazy [1940s +; fr the notion of idleness characterized by having one's finger inserted in a bodily orifice]

◀**get fucked**▶ *interj* A rude utterance of rejection, scorn, dismissal, etc: *And Robbie said, "Get fucked, Tony," and hung up [1970s +; possibly modeled on British get stuffed, found by 1952]*

get someone's goat (or nanny) v phr To annoy: *His bitching gets my goat sometimes [1910 +; perhaps fr depriving a racehorse of its goat mascot; perhaps fr French prendre sa chèvre, "take one's source of*

milk or nourishment”]

◁**get one’s head out of one’s ass**▷ (or **tuckus**) **v phr** To start paying attention; become aware and active; GET ON THE BALL: *Make the system work. Get your head out of your Hollywood ass/ Now get your head outta your tuckus!*

get hep v phr To become aware; become up-to-date; GET WISE, WISE UP
(1906 +)

get one’s hooks into v phr To get possession of, esp in a predatory way; get hold of: *If they get their hooks into you, you’re a goner*
(1926 +)

get one’s hooks into (or on) v phr To get a firm grasp of • Often used of a woman who has pursued and caught a man: *Once I got my hooks into those books I kept them* [1926 +; fr *hooks*, “hands, fingers”]

get horizontal v phr To do the sex act; BOFF, SCREW: *I’ll remember this when it’s time to get horizontal* (1980s +)

get hot v phr 1 To start getting lucky, esp in gambling 2 To become busier, with a more hectic life

◁**get in (or it in)**▷ **v phr** To succeed in penetrating someone sexually; GET INTO someone’s DRAWERS (OR PANTS) (1888 +)

get in (or into) a jam v phr (also **get jammed up**) To encounter trouble; GET INTO HOT WATER: *Call me if you get into a jam/ Stay away from those guys. You’re only going to get jammed up* (1914 +)

get in bad with v phr To get into trouble with someone: *got in bad*

with the law

get something in edgewise (or edgeways) v phr To succeed in saying or interjecting something: *You can't even get a "Yeah, I'm still alive" in edgewise (1824+)*

get in someone's face v phr To confront someone; be present and provocative: *Don't you get in my face no more. I'll kill you/ The perpetrators bumped off someone who was apparently getting in their faces (1970s+)*

get in someone's hair v phr To annoy someone; nag at someone: *But with him always being away, we don't have time to get into each other's hair [1851+; the dated instance is *have in one's hair*]*

get in on the ground floor v phr To be an original participant, esp in something profitable: *Sign up today if you want to get in on the ground floor [1904+ Business & finance; *ground floor* meaning "the very basis or beginning" is found by 1864]*

get in the groove v phr To get in tune with someone or something: *getting in the groove of this schedule*

get into v phr To become deeply involved with something: *getting into yoga every day*

get into someone's drawers (or pants) v phr Get into the venue of venereal delight; enjoying sex with someone; GET IN: *You wouldn't believe how easy it is to get into her drawers (1960s+)*

get into hot water v phr To encounter trouble; incite hostility to oneself: *which reportedly got van Zuylen into hot water with the*

designer (1848 +)

get into (or in on) the act v phr To join in; participate; esp to intrude where one is not wanted [1940s +; popularized by Jimmy Durante's lament, "Everybody wants to get into the act"]

get in wrong adv phr In trouble; in disfavor: *I don't get in wrong with no fuzz/ He must have done something horrible to get that much in wrong* (1910 +)

get one's Irish up See GET ONE'S DANDER UP

get it v phr 1 GET IT IN THE NECK (1851 +) <2> To do the sex act; BOFF, SCREW (1889 +) **3** To understand; DIG: *I read it to him twice before he got it* (1892 +)

get (or catch) it in the neck v phr To be severely punished or injured: *The poor wimp got it in the neck again* [1887 +; probably an allusion to hanging]

<get it off> **v phr 1** To have an orgasm; ejaculate semen; COME OFF **2** To do the sex act **3** To masturbate (1960s +)

get it on v phr <1> To become sexually excited; get an erection: *Or, in the words of the young, they can get it on* <2> To do the sex act; GET IT OFF: *If Eric Valdez had gotten it on with Mrs Esteva, he was a major leaguer* **3** (also **get it off**) To enjoy something greatly; have a good time; JAM: *three, five, fifteen guys in a studio just get it off/ And they overlay their daring with pure joy. They're getting it on* (1960s +)

get it out v phr To get something off one's chest, esp tell about a problem: *we helped him get it out about his ex-girlfriend*

get it together (or **all together**) **v phr** (Variations: one's **act** or one's **head** or one's **shit** or one's **stuff** may replace **it**) To arrange one's life or affairs properly; integrate and focus oneself: *Get your shit together, said Junior Jones/ why the executive departments of government don't get their act together/ Congress has to get its shit together (1960s+ Counterculture fr black)*

◁**get it up**▷ **v phr** To achieve and retain an erection; GET IT ON: *I couldn't get it up in the State of Israel/ He was so bashful he could not get it up (1950s+)*

get jiggy v phr To have sexual relations with someone: *After much flirting, they got jiggy last night*

get one's jollies (or **kicks** or **cookies**) **v phr** To enjoy one's keenest pleasure; indulge oneself; GET OFF • Usually with a hint of perversion: *The owner gets his jollies by walking around in a Sioux war bonnet/ This how you get your cookies? (1950s+)* **See** GET one's COOKIES

get one's knickers in a twist v phr (Variations: one's **panties in a bunch** or one's **pants in a wad** or one's **shorts in a knot** may replace **knickers in a twist**) To become very agitated and angry: *It's the right-wingery of the Ayatollah's death sentence that gets people's knickers in a twist/ This kind of crap really gets my pants in a wad (entry form 1971+)* **See** NOT GET one's BALLS IN AN UPROAR

get lost interj An exclamation of severe and abrupt rejection; DROP DEAD **v phr** To leave; depart; SCRAM • Usually an exasperated command: *If the cops or I ask her a direct question, she'll tell us to get lost (1940s+)*

get one's lumps v phr To be severely beaten, punished, rebuked, etc:

Their greatest fun is to see a cop getting his lumps (1935 +)

get my drift? sentence Do you understand me?: *in your room, get my drift*

get naked v phr To have a good time; really enjoy oneself; JAM, PARTY (1980s +)

get next to someone v phr To become familiar with someone, esp in view of sexual favors: *I'm telling you, you were liable to get next to that broad (1896 +)*

get nowhere fast v phr To make no progress whatever; be stuck: *He was getting nowhere fast and was more depressed (1920s +)*

get someone's number v phr To understand or realize the meaning of something, esp someone's real motives, character, etc: *I think I've got her number (1850s +)*

◁**get one's nuts**▷ **v phr** (Variations: **cracked** or **off** may be added) To have an orgasm; ejaculate semen: *He'd get his nuts just looking at her/ When I'd gotten my nuts off about six times, we got hungry (1940s + or earlier)*

get off v phr 1 To get relief and pleasure from a dose of narcotics:

How we s'posed to get off with no water to mix the stuff with?

(1950s + Narcotics) ▷**2**▷ To do the sex act; have an orgasm; GET IT

OFF: *It is led by trendy bisexual types, who love to get off amidst the chic accouterments of a big smack-and-coke party (1860s +)*

3 To play an improvised solo (1930s + Musicians)

4 To avoid the consequences of; GET AWAY WITH something: *He thinks he might get off with probation*

(1835 +) **See** TELL someone WHERE TO GET OFF

get someone off v phr <1> To bring someone to sexual climax: *She was really eager and it didn't take long to get her off* (1860s +) **2** To please greatly; move and excite: *Ron sings so fast because it gets us off/ I've got to write stuff that will get people off* (1960s +)

<**get off one's ass**> **v phr** (Variations: **butt** or **dead ass** or **duff** may replace **ass**) To stop being lazy and inert; GET CRACKING: *He wasn't able to get his class off their dead ass* (1940s +)

get off someone's back (or neck) v phr To leave alone; stop nagging or annoying: *All they need is for Government to get off their backs/ Get this clown off my back* [1880 +; the date is very imprecise; the notion of being a burden, *on one's back*, is found by 1677]

get off someone's case v phr To leave alone; GET OFF someone's BACK: *I hope you will tell your mother to get off your case/ Get off my case, O.K., Dad?* (1960s + *Black*)

get off one's high horse v phr To stop being haughty and superior; deal informally; COME OFF one's PERCH [1928 +; the notion of *high horse*, "pretentious arrogance," is found by 1716]

get off on v phr To enjoy greatly; like very much: *You get the impression she got off on it, like she wanted to roll a little in the dirt/ She really got off on Eddings* [1950s +; fr earlier *get off*, and less frankly sexual] **See** TELL someone WHERE TO GET OFF

get off the block v phr To start, esp to start quickly: *My game plan was to get off the block first and stay out there* [1980s +; fr the *starting blocks* used by runners for initial impetus]

get off the dime v phr To start; stop wasting time; GET OFF THE BLOCK: *How do we get off the dime we're on?/ with word from the Mayor to get off the dime* [1925 +; alteration of the expression *stop on a dime*, used to praise the brakes of a car]

get off the ground v phr To succeed, esp to do so initially: *Those projects misfired or didn't get off the ground at all* [1940s +; fr the takeoff of a plane]

get something off the ground v phr To make a successful start: *As Wilbur said to Orville, "You'll never get it off the ground" (1940s +)*

get someone off the hook v phr To aid someone in evading or preventing punishment, responsibility, etc: *He falls for Ilona and winds up trying to get her off the hook (1864 +)*

get on (or along) v phr To grow old; age (1885 +) **See** GET ALONG

get on someone v phr To deride; harass; HASSLE, RAG: *It helps them stay cool when their boss gets on them (1940s +)*

get on one's bicycle v phr To keep retreating from one's opponent in the boxing ring; fight defensively (1920s + *Prizefight*)

get on someone's case v phr To meddle in someone's affairs; pay unwanted, annoying attention to someone; criticize; BUG, HASSLE: *There are times when I get on his case pretty hard* [1960s + Black; fr early 1900s black expression *sit on someone's case*, "make a quasi-judicial study and judgment"]

get on one's high horse v phr To become dignified and formal; assume a haughty and arrogant mien: *As soon as I said a little slang*

to her she got on her high horse [1856 + ; *ride the high horse* is found by 1716]

get on one's horse v phr To hurry; start at once: *You better get on your horse if you're going to make that plane* (1940s +)

get on someone's nerves v phr To be an irritant; annoy: *This word processor's humming gets on my nerves* (1903 +)

get on the ball v phr To pay closer attention to doing something right; improve one's performance • Often an exasperated command [1940s + ; fr *keep your eye on the ball*, fr baseball or other ball sports]

get on the bandwagon v phr (Variations: **climb** or **hop** or **leap** or **jump** may replace **get**) To join a person, party, cause, etc, esp one that is currently popular [1899 + ; fr the large circus *wagon* that carried the *band*]

get on the stick (or wood) v phr To get busy; get to work; GET OFF one's ASS: *She said he'd better get on the stick or she'd dump him* (1940s +)

get on to someone or something v phr To learn the truth about; come to understand; GET WISE: *Be careful they don't get on to your little tricks* (1880 +)

get out (or out of here) interj An exclamation of disbelief; GO ON: *He really said that? Get out!/ Didn't we feel just wunderbar? Get out of here* (1940s +) **See** ALL GET OUT

get out from under v phr To extricate oneself from troubles, esp

financial troubles: *They'll never get out from under that debt (1875 +)*

get out of Dodge v phr To depart a location: *Hurricane's coming. I'm getting out of Dodge* [fr Dodge City, Kansas, part of a cliché from old westerns about the town]

get out of someone's face v phr To leave alone; stop annoying; GET OFF someone's CASE: *Get out of my face, Jelly! (1942 + Black)*

get out of the gate v phr To start; get under way; GET OFF THE BLOCK: *I think it was important to get out of the gate quickly* [1980s + fr horse racing; fr the starting gate of a horse track]

get outside of v phr To eat or drink heartily: *as he got outside of a bowl of chili (1888 +)*

get over something v phr To recover or rebound from something; be restored to the previous norm; surmount: *the 1954 equivalent of "you lost, now get over it"/ My suggestion is: GET OVER IT! and conduct a decent interview (1687 +)*

get something over See GET something ACROSS

get (or have) someone over a barrel v phr To have someone in a helpless position: *Okay, you got me over a barrel/ It may look like you got me over a barrel now (1930s +)*

get something over with v phr To finish or end something without procrastination; come to the stopping point: *It was a very tough job, but we had to get it over with* [1765 +; the date refers to the phrase *over with*]

get physical v phr To use the body and body contact, esp roughly or

amorously: *The type who might want to get physical early in a relationship, like during the first five minutes (1970s +)*

get psyched v phr To get excited; become enthusiastic (1950s +
Teenagers)

get (or be) real interj An exhortation to be sensible, to eschew illusion: *“I’ll trade them for your Reuben Kincaid sleep goggles.” “Get real, pal”/ Be real, Smitty, I have to study for a test/ What other city has both a large number of Quaker activists and a dreadlocked black cult whose house the city has bombed? Get real (1970s +)*

get religion v phr To be chastened; learn proper behavior at last; become a convert: *It appears that Mr. Reagan has got religion on the subject of environmentalism [1884 +; in the strict sense of religious conversion, found by 1772]*

◁**get one’s rocks (or one’s rocks off)**▷ **v phr 1** To have an orgasm; GET one’s NUTS: *Go out, have a few drinks, and if you’re lucky, maybe even get your rocks off/ people who’d never be caught dead at a 42d Street skinflick to get their rocks off and feel intellectual about it (1930s +)* **2** To enjoy very much; GET one’s COOKIES: *while everyone else was getting their rocks off at the Muse concerts/ I think she gets her rocks off turning squid inside out (1948 +)*

◁**get one’s shit together**▷ **v phr** To organize and manage one’s affairs and life properly; HAVE one’s DUCKS IN AROW (1960s +) **See** GET one’s ACT TOGETHER

get one’s shorts in a knot, not See NOT GET one’s SHORTS IN A KNOT

get small v phr To disappear; disperse and vanish; MAKE oneself SCARCE:

Those suspects got small in a hurry (1980s + Police)

get smart v phr To become wisely aware of one's situation, the possibilities, etc; WISE UP: *Tell him if he doesn't get smart he'll get clobbered (1940s +)*

◁**get some**▷ **v phr** To succeed in having sex or finding a sexual partner • Euphemistic: *get some once a week (1880s +)*

get somewhere v phr To attain some success: *getting somewhere with this proposal (1923 +)*

◁**get stuffed**▷ **interj** FUCK YOU (1953 + *British*)

get stupid v phr To have fun; enjoy oneself: *We got stupid at that picnic (1980s + Teenagers)*

get one's tail in a gate ◁(or **tit in a wringer**)▷ **v phr** To get into a perilous plight; be in a painful situation: *With the whole bunch against it you got your tail in a gate/ Katie Graham's gonna get her tit caught in a big fat wringer if that's published (1940s +)*

get taken off at the knees v phr To be severely injured; be destroyed: *That guy is just waiting to get taken off at the knees (1970s +)*

get (or sink) one's teeth into v phr To undertake an activity: *as soon as I sink my teeth into this proofreading*

getter See GO-GETTER

get one's testicles in a twist, not See NOT GET ONE'S TESTICLES IN A TWIST

get the ax v phr (Variations: **air** or **can** or **boot** or **chop** or **heave-ho**)

or **old heave-ho** may replace **air**) To be dismissed, esp to be jilted:
When she found out, he got the air/ Lefebvre got the can in Seattle after building the Mariners to their first over-.500 finish (air 1900+; ax 1883+, boot 1888+)

get the bird v phr To be greeted with catcalls, hisses, boos, etc [1922+ Vaudeville; fr the fancied attack by *big birds*, “hissing geese,” when a show is radically disliked, a notion found by 1825; the form *get the big bird* is found by 1886]

get the business v phr To be treated roughly; be punished or rebuked: *When they found out his record he got the business (1940s+)*

get the call v phr To be appointed or designated: *Boyce got the call. So it's his (1940s+)*

get the (or one's) drift v phr To see the tendency of discourse, esp what one is hinting at: *And it won't show up. Get my drift?* [1927+; *drift* in this sense is found by 1549]

get the drop on someone v phr To get someone in an inferior or threatened position; seize the advantage: *I got the drop on him with that question about oil (1869+)*

get the goods on someone v phr To find or collect decisive evidence against: *“Why did you ask me to hire a private detective?” ... “To get the goods on him” (1913+)*

get the hang of something v phr To master the particular skill needed: *If I could get the hang of it, I could live as well for \$2500 as in Boston for \$5000 (1847+)*

get the hook v phr To be dismissed, silenced, or rejected, esp suddenly: *Just when he thought he was doing so well, he got the hook* [1940s+ Show business; fr the notion that a wretched performer, esp at an amateur night, was pulled forcibly off the stage with a hook]

get the hungries v phr To become hungry: *I get the hungries for some breakfast* (1980s+)

get the jump on someone or something v phr To get the lead, or an advantage, esp by alert early moves: *Never let the other guy get the jump on you* (1912+)

get the last dance v phr To be the winner in the end; triumph finally: *But Dorsey got the last dance, telling jurors Mary had “died a noble death”* [1970s+; fr the awarding by the belle of the last dance at the ball to the favored suitor]

get the lead out v phr (Variations: **of one's ass** or **of one's pants** or **of one's feet** may be added) To stop loafing; GET ONE'S ASS IN GEAR, HUSTLE
• Often an irritated command: *Get the lead out and start writing* (1920s+)

get the monkey off (or off one's back) v phr To break a narcotics habit: *so hooked on morphine that there would be no getting the monkey off without another's help* (1860+ Narcotics)

get the munchies See HAVE THE MUNCHIES

get the nod v phr To be approved; be chosen: *There were a dozen other bids but McCulloch got the nod* (1940s+)

get the picture or message v phr **1** To understand; CAPEESH, DIG • Often a question: *After I told him about six times he got the picture/ Well, you won't ever be promoted here. Get the picture?* **2** To mentally grasp something injurious or repellent to oneself; GET WISE: *After she caught him with that whore she got the picture (1922 +)*

get the pink slip v phr To be dismissed or discharged: *When they discovered the shortage of funds he got the pink slip (1915 +)*

get there from here See YOU CANT GET THERE FROM HERE

get the sack v phr To be dismissed, with prejudice: *If they protested, they got the sack (1825 + British)*

get the shaft v phr To be ill treated; be abused, esp by cruel deception: *He thought he'd get promoted, but he got the shaft instead [1950s +; a euphemism for so-domization]*

◁**get the shitty end of the stick**▷ **v phr** (Variations: **crappy, cruddy, dirty, little, mucky, rough, shit, shitten, short, thick, or wrong** may replace **shitty**) To be badly and unfairly treated; have the worst of an arrangement or of luck: *Pastorini got the shit end of the stick, as usual (entry form 1846 +, others later)*

get the show on the road v phr To get started; get under way: *Good. Then I can get the show on the road (1940s +)*

get one's ticket punched v phr To be sent on one's way; be rejected or even killed: *Well, I thought my ticket had been punched/ a bus-station sit-com looking not to get your ticket punched (1970s +)*

get one's time v phr (Variations: **time** may be replaced by the

number of years: **20, 30**, etc) To reach retirement age: *You said you'd retire when you got your time (1980s + Police)*

◁**get one's tit in the wringer**▷ (or **tail in a gate**) *v phr* To get into great difficulty: *If you print that, Katie Graham's gonna get her tit caught in a big fat wringer [1930s + ; entry form refers to the old-fashioned washing machine with a hand-or machine-operated wringer having counterrotating cylinders]*

get to someone v phr **1** To bribe someone: *I think maybe we can get to the Governor's butler (1927 +)* **2** To distress or anger someone; BUG, HASSLE: *It's impossible to "get to" Oliver Barrett III/ I think it is starting to get to me (1950s +)* **3** To affect; make an impression: *The puppy really got to me; I couldn't send him to the shelter (1960s +)*

get to first base v phr **1** To begin well; take a successful first step • Usually in the negative: *I couldn't get to first base with the committee (1930s +)* **2** To initiate sexual activity successfully, esp by hugging, caressing, kissing, etc • In the same baseball analogy, get to third base means touching and toying with the genitals, and get to home plate means to do the sex act, that is, "score" (1970 + *Teenagers*)

get-together n A meeting or session, often social; party (1911 +)

get under someone's skin v phr To trouble or irritate; annoy; BUG: *That cackle of his soon got under my skin (1896 +)*

get-up n **1** The end of a prison term (1925 + *Underworld*) **2** Dress; costume and grooming: *Why the fancy get-up today? (1861 +)*

get someone up v phr To inspire and energize someone, esp for a game, examination, or other ordeal; PSYCH someone UP:

Steinbrenner thinks he can get the players up for games [1940s+ ; up in a similar sense, “excited, vivacious,” is found by 1815]

get-up-and-go *n* Energy and initiative; pep; PISS AND VINEGAR, PIZZAZZ: *My get-up-and-go has got up and went [1940s+ ; in the form get up and get found by 1884]*

get up someone's nose *v phr* To irritate someone; provoke hostility: *Put us together and we'd get up each other's noses in a minute (1940s+)*

get someone where one lives *v phr* To affect someone profoundly; clutch at the vitals: *The psychological reaction resulting was that it got this nut and this guy where they lived (1860+)*

get someone where the hair is short (or by the short hairs) *v phr* To have complete control over a person; have a painful advantage: *We've got them where the hair is short, and they can't squirm out (first form 1872+, second 1888+)*

get one's wings *v phr* To get into heavy drugs and become an addict

get wise *v phr* To become impudent or defiant; be saucy: *Get wise with me, punk, and you're dead [1890s+ ; the sense found in wiseass, wiseguy, and wiseacre]*

get wise to *v phr* To become aware of; discover: *Had you gotten wise to me, or was it an accident? (1896+)*

get with it *v phr* To pay active attention to what is happening or what needs doing; GET ON THE BALL: *We'll all have to get with it if we want this to turn out right (1940s+)*

get with the program *interj* Do what you are supposed or expected to do; follow the rules: *No matter how many times we explain it, he can't get with the program*

get Zs *See* COP ZS

gevalt (gə VAHLT) *interj* An exclamation of woe, distress, shock, etc: *He breaks open a mezuzah, nothing inside, gevalt! but a piece of paper that says "Made in Japan" [1960s +; fr Yiddish, "powers," hence an invocation of a higher force]*

gey-cat *See* GAY-CAT

GHB *See* GRIEVOUS BODILY HARM

◀**ghetto box**▶ *n phr* (Variations: **beat box** or **boogie box** or **box** or **ghetto blaster** or **jambox**) A large portable stereo radio and cassette player often carried and played loudly in public places: *Hey, man, don't mess with my box/ that guy in the streets with his ghetto blaster (1980s +)*

ghost *n* **1** A writer paid for a book or article published under someone else's name; professional anonymous author (1920s +) **2** The mythical paymaster of a theatrical company, who distributes pay as he walks (1833 +) *v:* *I "ghosted" my wife's cookbook (1922 +)* [theater sense said to be fr a line in *Hamlet*: "The ghost walks," implying that pay is at hand; analogous with "the eagle shits," referring to the source of pay]

◀**ghost turds**▶ *n phr* HOUSE MOSS (1970s + *Army*)

GI (pronounced as separate letters) *adj* **Of**, in, or from the US armed

forces, esp the Army; government issue: *GI shoes/ His officious ways are very GI (WWI armed forces)* **n** A member of the US armed forces, esp an enlisted Army soldier serving since or during World War II: *The GIs fought furiously to hold Taejon (Armed forces)* **v** To scrub and make trim: *They Gled the barracks every Friday night (WWII Army)* **See** Gi PARTY, the GIS

GIB (pronounced as separate letters) **adj** Sexually proficient
[1980s + ; fr *good in bed*]

gidget **n** A lithe and pert young woman [mid-1950s + ; fr *girl midget*]

gift **See** GOD'S GIFT

gift of gab (or **the gab**) **n phr** The ability to talk interestingly, colorfully, and/or persuasively (1650 +)

gig¹ **n 1** A party for jazz musicians and devotees; JAM SESSION: *Kid Ory had some of the finest gigs, especially for the rich white folks (1915 + Jazz musicians)* **2** A playing date or engagement, esp a one-night job: *on a gig, or one night stand/ We found some musicians and I was able to finish the gig (1905 + Jazz musicians)* **3** Any job or occupation: *It's better to take some kind of main gig for their sake (1950s +)* **4** A criminal act; swindle; JOB, SCAM: *It ain't no gig, lady, and I don't really care what you think/ On my first solo gig I was bagged, beaten shitless, and dumped in jail* **5** A demerit; report of deficiency or breach of rules (1940s + *Armed forces*) **v**: *their glam-rock band, Nancy Boy, which has already gigged on both coasts/ I forget whether we're gigging in Basin Street or Buenos Aires* [origin unknown; musicians' senses are extensions of earlier meanings, "spree, dance,

party,” found by 1777]

◁**gig²**▷ **n** GIGGY [1689 + ; origin unknown; perhaps fr Irish or Anglo-Irish, as attested by the name *sheila-na-gig* given to carved figures of women with grotesquely enlarged vulvae found in English churches; fr Irish *sile na gcioch*, “Julia of the breasts”] **See** UP YOURS

gig³ **n** An old car [1950 + ; fr *gig*, “one-horse carriage”]

gigabucks **n** Very much money • Much inflated from megabucks: *Silicon Valley, where the winners downloaded gigabucks (1990s +)*

giggle water or **juice** **n phr** Any alcoholic drink, esp champagne (1929 +)

◁**giggy** or **gigi**▷ **n** **1** The vulva **2** The anus (1950s +) **See** UP YOURS

GIGO or **gigo** (GĪ goh) **sentence** The output is no better than the input [1966 + Computer; fr *garbage in, garbage out*] **See** MEGOGIGO

GI Joe **n phr** A US soldier, esp an enlisted soldier of and since World War II; DOGFACE (*WWII armed forces*)

gilguy (GILL gĪ) **n** THINGAMAJIG [1886 + Nautical; origin uncertain; used in the mid-19th century to designate a *guy* rope or wire supporting a boom, and often applied to an inefficient *guy*]

gilhickey **n** THINGAMAJIG (1940s +)

gilhooley **n** **1** THINGAMAJIG: *I forgot to press the hickey-madoodle on the gilhooley (1940s +)* **2** A skid in which a car ends up facing in the reverse direction (1950s + *Car racing*)

gillion **See** JILLION

gills *See* GREEN AROUND THE GILLS, LIT TO THE GILLS, SOUSED, STEWED

gimcrack or **jimcrack** *n* A gaudy trifle; gewgaw; curiosity (1632 +)

gimme or **gimmie** *modifier*: *The extent to which the “gimme” spirit has banished rationality* *n* 1 An acquisitive tendency; greed: *With her it’s always gimme, gimme, gimme* (1927 +) 2 A short putt that is conceded as sunk without actually being tried (1920s + *Golf*) 3 A gift; something freely given (1970s +) 4 A sure win; an easy victory: *Not all that long ago, this was a gimme for the National League* (1980s + *Sports*) 5 A pistol: *A “gimme” is a pistol, because they’re often seen in the hands of somebody saying “gimme your money”* (1990s + *Police*) [*fr* give me] *See* GIVE ME A BREAK

gimme game *n phr* An easily won game; a sure victory; *LAUGHER*: *We don’t have any gimme games in our schedule/ We thought this was going to be a gimme game* (1980s + *Sports*)

gimmick *n* 1 A secret device or hidden trick that causes something to work and assures that the customer will not win; *GAFF*: *A new gimmick, infra-red contact lenses, which enabled a card player to read markings on the backs of cards* (1926 +) 2 Any device; *GADGET* (1930s +) 3 Apparatus used for preparing and injecting narcotics; *WORKS*: *A small red cloth bag with his spike needle and “gimmicks” fell out* (1960s + *Narcotics*) 4 A feature in a product, plan, presentation, etc, believed to increase appeal, although it is not necessarily useful or important; *GRABBER, HOOK*: *This promo isn’t bad, but we sorely need a gimmick* (1950s +) 5 One’s selfish and concealed motive; *ANGLE, PERCENTAGE*: *This looks fine, Mr Mayor. What’s your gimmick, anyhow?* (1950s +) *v*: *Get a fairly good item, then gimmick*

the hell out of it [origin unknown; perhaps fr *gimcrack*]

gimmickery or **gimmickry** *n* The use of gimmicks: *To juxtapose this is sheer gimmickry* (1950s +)

gimmie cap (or **hat**) *n phr* (also **feed cap**) A peaked cap like a baseball cap, bearing the trademark or name of a manufacturer and distributed as an advertising device: *She made him stop wearing his John Deere gimmie hat in public places/ a “macho” gimmie cap emblazoned with “Cat” (for Caterpillar Tractors)* [1970s + ; probably fr the request “*gimme* one of those!” heard when these were available free from dealers]

gimmies or **gimmes**, the *n phr* An acquisitive zeal; greed: *They got da gimmies, always take, never give/ What they all have in common is a galloping case of the gimmies* (1940s +)

gimp *n* **1** A limp (1920s +) <2> A lame person; CRIP: *He’d just kick a gimp in the good leg and leave him lay* (1920s +) **3** Vitality; ambition: *All he needs is a wife with some sense and some gimp* (1901 +) *v*: *The old guy was gimping across the street*

gimper *n* A competent and efficient airman [1940s + Air Force; see early 1900s British Army phrase *gimp up*, “dress oneself up smartly,” fr British dialect *gimp*, “neat”]

gimpy *adj* Having a limp or being lame (1920s +)

gin *n* A street fight; RUMBLE *v* To fight; scuffle [1950s + Black & street gang; origin unknown] **See** BATHTUB GIN

<ginch> *n* **1** A woman, esp solely as a sexual object; CHICK: *the fifth*

ginch I'd had on those eerie sand barrier islands/ cop can't afford that kind of ginch **2** The vulva, and sexual activity; ASS, CUNT: *all the free groupie ginch south of Bakersfield/ Hagen prowls the Stampede for ginch ahoof* [esp motorcyclists; origin uncertain; perhaps related to 1950s Australian and British sense, of surfer origin, "elegance, smartness, skill"]

ginchy *adj* Excellent; admirable; elegant; SEXY: *Annie and I were the cat's pajamas and ginchy beyond belief* (1960s +)

ginger *n* Energy; pep; PIZZAZZ: *the effervescent quality that used to be called "ginger"* [1843 + ; fr the practice of putting ginger under a horse's tail to increase its mettle and showiness, noted by 1785]

gingerbread *modifier:* *the gingerbread stacks of the old river steamers* *n*
1 Money (1700 +) **2** Fussy decoration, esp on a house; frillwork (1757 +)

ginger-peachy *adj* Excellent; splendid; NEAT (1940s + Teenagers)

ginhead *n* A drunkard; LUSH: *a busted romance that makes her become a ginhead* (1930s +)

gink (GINK) *n* **1** A man; fellow; GUY: *Does a gink in Minsk suffer less from an appendectomy?* **2** A tedious, mediocre person; JERK [1908 + ; origin unknown; perhaps somehow fr Turkish, "catamite, punk," found in early 1800s sources, both British and US]

gin mill *n phr* A saloon; barroom; tavern: *There still are some boobs, alas, who'd like the old-time gin-mill back/ In some gin mill where they know the bartender* [1860 + ; certainly influenced by gin mill, "cotton mill where a cotton gin is used"]

ginned or ginned up *adj* or *adj phr* Drunk: *Hold me up, kid; I'm ginned (1900+)*

◀**ginnee or ginney or ginee**▶ *See* GUINEA

Ginnie Mae *n phr* A government agency that buys Federal Housing Administration loans from lenders and sells shares to investors [1970+; formed from the initials *GNMA*, Government National Mortgage Association]

ginormous *adj* Simply huge; extremely large [1948+; blend of *giant* and *enormous*]

gin up v phr To enliven; make more exciting; *JAZZ UP: To gin up support for his embattled plan, the President went to Capitol Hill on Wednesday/ Numbers of voters ginned up by the revelations may throw the bums out* [1887+; probably fr earlier *ginger up*]

◀**ginzo or guinzo**▶ *adj: What ginzo broad didn't?* **n** 1 An Italian or person of Italian descent: *Gonna have at least eight hot ginzos looking for me* 2 Any apparently foreign person; *HUNKY: a Romanian or some kinda guinzo* [1931+; fr *Guinea*]

gip *See* GYP

GI party *n phr* A bout of scrubbing and cleaning, esp of the barracks (*WWII Army*)

girene *See* GYRENE

girl **n** 1 A male homosexual (1970s+ *Homosexuals*) 2 Cocaine: *They call cocaine girl because it gives 'em a sexual job when they take a shot (1950s+ Narcotics)* *See* BACHELOR GIRL, BAR-GIRL, BEST GIRL, B-GIRL, CALL GIRL, CHARITY

GIRL, GAL FRIDAY, GO-GO GIRL, IDIOT GIRL, PLAYGIRL, SWEATER GIRL, TOMBOY, V-GIRL, WORKING GIRL

girl Friday *See* GAL FRIDAY

girlfriend *n* A best girlfriend; also, a female lover: *come here, girlfriend/ look, girlfriend, stay away from him*

◁**girlie**▷ *adj* Featuring nude or otherwise sexually provocative women: *To some extent, "girlie" magazines are information-getting (1950s +)* *n* A girl: *this girlie and her mother (1860 +)*

girlie (or **girly**) **girl** *n* A female who dresses and behaves in a traditionally feminine style: *She doesn't fit in with the girlie girls who talk about decorating*

girlie (or **girly**) **man** *n* A male who is wimpy or soft; a male who likes to participate in activities or events thought to be mainly feminine: *That girly man loves chick flicks*

girl next door, the *n phr* A sweet and ordinary young woman, in romance regarded as preferable to a talented, sophisticated, seductive woman (1961 +)

girl thing *n phr* Something only understood, experienced, or done by females; something that appeals only to women: *Using a hairdryer is a girl thing*

GIs (or ◁**GI shits**▷), the *n phr* Diarrhea: *An all-night bout with the GIs left him weak and weary [WWII Army; so called because soldiers often got diarrhea after eating with unclean mess gear]*

gism *See* JISM

gismo *See* GIZMO

git *interj* A command to leave; BLOW, SCRAM (1864+)

git-box or **git-fiddle** *n* A guitar (1920s+ *Jazz musicians*)

git-go *See* FROM THE GIT-GO

give *interj* A command to speak, to explain, etc: *She said, "Give!" so I told all* (1956+) *See* WHAT GIVES

give (or **write**) someone a **blank check** *v phr* To give someone leave to do whatever he or she wishes; give carte blanche: *The man gave me a blank check to order whatever I needed* (1884+)

give someone a **buzz** *v phr* To call someone on the telephone: *Just give me a buzz* (1925+)

give a damn, not *See* NOT GIVE A DAMN

◀**give a fuck**, not▶ *See* NOT GIVE A DAMN

give someone a **grease job** *v phr* To flatter; butter up (1940s+)

give someone a **hand** *v phr* **1** To help: *Gimme a hand with this huge crate* (1860+) **2** To applaud someone by clapping the hands: *Give the little lady a big hand, folks!* (1890+)

give someone a **hard time** *v phr* **1** To scold or rebuke; quarrel with; GIVE SOMEONE GRIEF: *He was giving her a hard time about drinking too much* **2** To make difficulties for someone, esp needless ones; GIVE SOMEONE GRIEF, HASSLE: *Jesus, everybody was giving him a hard time* (1940s+)

give a holler *v phr* To inform, alert, or summon someone: *You need me, Mama, just give a holler* (1940s+)

give someone a hotfoot v phr 1 To do the practical joke of clandestinely sticking a match into the crevice between the heel or sole and upper of the victim's shoe, then lighting the match and watching the pained and startled reaction: *Kids give them hotfoots with kitchen matches* **2** To arouse someone from lethargy; stimulate someone sharply to activity: *The project's stalled and we'd better give Joe a hotfoot* (1930s+)

give someone a jump v phr To do the sex act to or with; BOFF, SCREW: *went in a bedroom there with the broad, gave her a jump* (1980s+)

give someone or something a miss (or the goby) v phr To avoid; not opt for • The go-by variant is attested from the mid-1600s: *Give these girls a miss/ become fed up with a slang phrase and resolve to give it the go-by in the future* [first form 1919+, second 1659+; miss form is fr billiards]

give someone a pain v phr (Variations: **in the neck** or **in the ass** may be added) To be distasteful, repellent, tedious, etc: *That guy gives me a royal pain in the neck/ one of those bragging polymath types who gave everybody a pain in the ass* (entry form 1891+, neck 1921+, ass 1940s+)

give someone a piece of one's mind v phr To rebuke someone severely (1865+)

give someone a ring v phr To call on the telephone (1940s+)

give something a shot v phr (Variations: **crack** or **go** or **rip** or **ripple** may replace **shot**) To have a try at; make an attempt: *He gave the exam a good shot, but flunked it/ Let's give it a rip. We've nothing to*

lose (entry form 1840+)

give someone a slap on the wrist *v phr* To give a light and insufficient punishment; RAP someone's KNUCKLES: *They caught a couple more Mafiosi and I'm sure they'll give them a real good slap on the wrist* (1914+)

give someone a tumble *v phr* To show a sign of recognition or approval; acknowledge: *The newspaper guys had the Bone Crusher pegged as a plant and wouldn't give him a tumble/ Both knew me, but neither gave me a tumble* [1921+ ; probably fr the earlier *take a tumble to oneself*, "examine oneself closely, esp with respect to one's faults," after which *tumble* was taken to mean "scrutiny, acknowledgment"]

giveaway modifier: *a giveaway show/ giveaway offer* *n* 1 Anything that reveals something concealed; clue; DEAD GIVEAWAY: *She talked harsh, but the smile was a giveaway* (1882+) 2 A gift, prize, etc, esp one given to attract business; FREEBIE (1872+)

give someone away *v phr* To expose oneself; show one's opinion, guilt, etc: *I tried to be serious, but a grin gave me away* (1862+)

give away the store (or shop) *v phr* (also **give away the keys to the store**) To concede too much; be overly generous: *His opponents complained that Dinkins would give away the store to his friends in labor/ to reinforce the president without giving away the shop/ the Republican Congressional leaders had given them "the keys to the store"* (1980s+)

giveback *n* Something previously granted, esp in a labor contract,

that must now be forfeited: *The new contract has no raises and several givebacks, especially in health-care benefits (1990s +)*

give something one's best shot v phr To try one's hardest; do the best one can; BUST one's ASS: *For three months, they had given it their best shot/ Anyway, I gave it my best shot/ The whole thing is not easy. But you must give it your best shot/ This house was built for himself by Bruant. Naturally enough, he gave it his best shot (1840 +)*

◁**give cone**▷ **v phr** GIVE HEAD (1970s + Teenagers)

give one's eyeteeth v phr (Variations: **left ball** or **left nut** may replace **eyeteeth**) To pay a very high price; sacrifice much; give anything: *She said she'd give her eyeteeth for the role/ I'd give my left nut to get into NET/ I'd give my left ball for a case like that (entry form 1905 +, variants 1940s +)*

give someone five v phr (Variation: **slap** can replace **give**) To shake hands with someone or slap someone's hand in greeting, congratulation, etc; GIVE someone SOME SKIN: *Reno put out his hand for me to give him five (1960s + Black) See HIGH FIVE, LOW FIVE*

give five fingers to v phr To thumb one's nose at: *Then you could give five fingers to every cop (1940s +)*

give good something v phr To be very effective at something; work well at or as something: *Zoe Baird gives good daughter/ Mozart gives good sound track [1990s +; based on give (good) head]*

give someone grief (or heat) v phr To make difficulties for someone; harass; HASSLE: *Don't let the prof give you any grief about this/ though she gave me heat about it not being "man's work" (1920s +)*

◁give head▷ **v phr** To do fellatio; BLOW, SUCK: *Not that Linda has anything against balling customers, but she just loves to give head/ She must give extra good head or something (1950s +)*

give someone hell (or merry hell or holy hell) v phr To rebuke or punish severely; chew out: *The skipper gave him merry hell for crud and drunkenness (1851 +)*

give (or read) someone his (or her) rights v phr To inform an arrested person formally of his or her legal rights, esp by reading him or her a “Miranda card” detailing them: *The judge threw it out because they hadn’t given the crook his rights [1960s + ; fr the requirement based on the Supreme Court decision in the *Miranda* case of 1966]*

give someone his (or her) walking papers v phr (Variation: **running shoes** or **walking ticket** may replace **walking papers**) To dismiss or discharge; reject: *If he doesn’t stop seeing other women she’ll give him his walking papers/ When he objected to the new policy they gave him his running shoes (entry form 1825 +)*

give it (or something) a rest (or a break) v phr 1 To stop; ease up on
• Often a firm command: *OK, give it a rest, huh, Joe?/ You won’t get anything tonight. Give it a break, okay? 2* To stop talking about something: *your damn family; give it a rest (first form 1882 +)*

give it a second thought, don’t See DONT GIVE IT A SECOND THOUGHT

give it the gun v phr To speed up an engine abruptly; accelerate to highest speed; FLOOR, PUT THE PEDAL TO THE METAL (1917 +)

give it to someone v phr 1 To rebuke harshly; punish: *He really gave*

it to me yesterday after I totaled his car (1864+) <2> To do the sex act with or to someone: *One minute he'd be giving it to her in his cousin's Buick (1940s+)*

give it up *interj* A request for applause or praise from the party wishing such or by a third party; clap your hands for: *Let's give it up for the drummer*

give someone leg v phr To deceive someone; fool someone; PULL someone's LEG: *Last time I saw you, you're giving me a little leg about there's nothing going on (1970s+)*

give someone lip v phr To speak to someone in an impertinent and offensive way: *People get on here all day long and all they do is give me lip/ Don't be giving me lip (1821+)*

give me (or gimme) a break *sentence* (Variations: **cut** may replace **give me**) That's enough of such foolishness; please stop it; ALL RIGHT ALREADY, GIVE IT A REST, PUT A SOCK IN IT: *Gimme a break here, Mr C/ Western journalists declare in a triumphant voice that capitalism has won. Gimme a break. I can see that socialism lost/ It's a religious sect whose secrets are known only to a few. Give me a break!/ Jamie, cut me a break. I've thought about it since (1980s+)*

give me five *See* SLIP ME FIVE

give me (or gimme) some skin *sentence* Let's shake hands: *Hi there, sweetie. Gimme some skin (1930s+ Black)*

give odds v phr To bet or speculate confidently, from a point of advantage: *It may not seem so, but I'd give odds those people are faking it (1591+)*

give out v phr To collapse; cease to function; fail: *His old ticker gave out/ The bus gave out halfway up the hill (1523 +)* **See** PUT OUT

gives See WHAT GIVES

give someone the air v phr To jilt or reject: *His last girl gave him the air (1904 +)*

give someone the ax v phr (Variations: **the boot** or **the chop** may replace **the ax**) To dismiss or discharge; CAN, CUT, FIRE: *The school gave six profs the ax yesterday/ The Oval Office should give him what he really deserves: the boot/ A vast trade and business complex was given the chop (ax form 1883 +; boot 1888 +; chop 1940s +)*

give someone the bird v phr 1 To greet someone with boos, hisses, catcalls, etc (1922 + *Vaudeville*) **2** (also **give someone the bone**) To show contempt and defiance by holding up the extended middle finger toward someone; FLIP THE BIRD: *Do you have to give everyone who cuts you off the bone? (1980s + Students)*

give someone the brush v phr To snub; treat icily and curtly; KISS OFF: *I got the brush in about two seconds in that fancy dump (1930s +)*

give someone the business v phr To give someone rough treatment; punish; rebuke: *I really gave him the business when I caught him cheating on my exam [1920s +; to do one's business for one, "to kill," is found by 1773]*

give someone the cold shoulder v phr To snub someone socially; be chilly toward someone (1840 +)

give someone the creeps v phr To cause a feeling that loathsome

things are creeping on one's skin; to cause nervous apprehension:
His smile gives me the creeps (1849+)

give something the deep six v phr To dispose definitively of;
jettison; throw overboard: *They gave those files the deep six [1940s+]*
Nautical; probably fr the six feet of a fathom, the unit for
measuring *depth*]

give someone the double cross v phr To betray or cheat one's own
colleagues; act treacherously: *if you feel tempted to give the old
gentleman the double cross (1834+)*

give someone the eye v phr 1 To look at in an insinuating and
seductive way: *I could see he was giving you the eye 2* To signal with
a look: *Get up when I give you the eye (1940s+)*

◁**give someone the finger (or middle finger)▷ v phr 1** To treat
unfairly, dishonestly, etc; SCREW, SHAFT: *Let me show you how to give
that guy the finger 2* To show contempt and defiance by holding up
the extended middle finger toward someone; FLIP THE BIRD: *leers into the
rear-view mirror and gives you the finger/ It's a sort of collective giving
of the finger to liberalism in all its forms/ gave me the middle finger
and stormed off the set [1940s+; fr the figurative insertion of a
finger punitively into the anus]*

give someone the fish-eye (or beady eye or hairy eyeball) v phr To
look or stare at someone in a cold, contemptuous, or menacing
way: *A well-fed man in tails opened the door, gave them the fish eye/
who gave me such hairy eyeballs that I want to slink back (fish-eye
form 1940s+, others 1960s+)*

give someone the fluff v phr To snub; dismiss; BRUSH OFF: *I gave him the fluff (1940s +)*

give someone the foot v phr To dismiss or eject someone (1940s +)

give someone the gate v phr To discharge, jilt, or eject someone:
After the last goof, they gave him the gate (1918 +)

give someone the glad eye v phr To look or glance at invitingly;
gaze enticingly at: *A tipsy actress gives her man, Donald, the glad eye (1903 +)*

give someone the glad hand v phr To greet and welcome effusively:
I gave 'em all the glad hand, but they voted for the other bum anyway (1895 +)

give someone or something the go-by See GIVE someone or something
A MISS

give someone the heave-ho v phr To dismiss or reject someone; GIVE
someone THE AIR: *It took Lisa two years to give her boyfriend the heave-ho (1940s +)*

give someone the hook v phr To dismiss, silence, or otherwise reject
someone, esp suddenly: *The teacher gave him the hook (1940s + Show business) See* GET THE HOOK

◁**give (or slip) someone the hot beef injection▷ v phr** To do the
sex act with or to someone (1980s + *Students*)

give someone the needle v phr To nag at someone; criticize
regularly and smartingly; HASSLE, NEEDLE: *The only needle she knows is the one she gives grandpa for stopping off at the bar on his way home*

(1940s +)

give the nod v phr To give approval; confer permission: *Detroit has tightened the reins on the boys in the sheet metal design department while giving the nod to the engineers (1940s +)*

give someone or something the once-over v phr To examine quickly; glance at, esp with a view to evaluation or identification; CHECK OUT: *That guy in the corner is giving us the once-over/ I gave her papers the once-over and figured she qualified (1915 +)*

give someone the pink slip v phr To discharge or dismiss; CAN, FIRE (1915 +)

give someone the raspberry v phr To make a noise expressing displeasure or contempt: *audience gave her the raspberry for such distasteful jokes*

give someone the runaround v phr To be deceptive and persistently evasive with someone: *Don't give me the runaround (1924 +)*

give someone the sack v phr To dismiss someone; terminate employment [1825 +; origin uncertain; the phrase *donner son sac*, "to give him his sack," has been current in French since the 1600s; *sack* may be "traveling bag, bundle"]

give someone the shaft v phr To swindle, maltreat, or otherwise deal punishingly with someone; FUCK, SHAFT: *He wasn't expecting much praise, but he sure didn't think they'd give him the shaft like that (1940s +)*

give someone the shake (or the shuck) v phr To rid oneself of

someone; get away from someone: *He gave the cops the shake a block or so away/ I've been expecting Tish to give you the shuck (1940s +)*

give someone the shakes (or shivers) v phr To instill fear and trembling; intimidate: *he's being paid \$5.4 million by the New York Yankees to give opposing batters the shakes [1940s + ; the shakes, "a fit of trembling fear," is found by 1837]*

give someone the shirt off one's back v phr To be extremely generous • Usual in a conditional statement: *Open-handed? Why he'd give you the shirt off his back if you needed it (1771 +)*

give someone the slip v phr To evade or escape someone: *They had him cornered, but he gave them the slip (1567 +)*

give someone the time of day, not See NOT GIVE SOMEONE THE TIME OF DAY

give someone the works v phr To mistreat or beat severely; CLOBBER, WORK SOMEONE OVER: *They took him into the adjoining room and gave him the works (1920 +) See the WORKS*

give someone up v phr To turn someone in to the authorities; to betray: *gave him up to the cops*

give someone what for v phr To beat or punish severely; drub either physically or verbally; CLOBBER, LET SOMEONE HAVE IT: *two or three of us would pitch on him and give him "what-for" (1873 + British)*

give with something v phr To give; impart: *He wouldn't give with the information/ gives with the big blue eyes as if to say: "He didn't mean to" [1940s + Jive talk; perhaps modeled on make with fr Yiddish*

machen mit]

gizmo or **gismo** or **giz** *n* **1** An unspecified or un-specifiable object; something one does not know the name of or does not wish to name; DINGUS, GADGET: “*Why weren’t you using the gizmo?*” “*I was. It didn’t work*”/ “*What’s this gizmo?*” I asked. “*The hand brake*”/ *Guy tried to shove a Pepsi bottle in his wife’s giz* **2** GIMMICK (*Gambling*) **3** A man; fellow; GUY: *What’s this gizmo have in mind?* [*WWII Navy & Marine Corps; origin unknown; it has been suggested that it is fr Moroccan Arabic ki smuh, learned during the invasion of North Africa in 1942*]

GKW (pronounced as separate letters) *n* Something unknown or unidentifiable: *The water contains GKW, God knows what/ known to paleontologists as GKWs or God knows whats*

glad-hand modifier Effusive and warm; cordial: *He gave me that glad-hand business v: After glad-handing the local dignitaries, he heads for the fence (1903 +)* **See** GIVE someone THE GLAD HAND

glad-hander *n* A person who evinces a warmth and heartiness that is probably insincere; one who is designedly cordial: *He is what is known as a glad-hander, meaning that he merely shakes hands and talks (1929 +)*

glad rags *n phr* **1** One’s best and fanciest clothing; party clothes: *He was piking around in his glad-rags, with the buy-bug in his ear* **2** Formal evening wear (1902 +)

glahm **See** GLOM

glam modifier **1** Glamorous; exhibiting beauty, sexiness, etc: “*Glam*”

is a term I'm having a little trouble with. Is this short for "glamorous"?/ the super-sexy glam vixens of the '80s/ The glam plan is neat and polished (1940s +) 2 Playing a kind of rock music called "glam-rock": They've been asked to open a show for new glam fave Suede (mid-1970s +) v To be glamorous; glamorize oneself (1937 +)

glamazon modifier Exhibiting the attractions of a robust woman; Junoesque: *We're getting back to the glamazon look of the '80s: bigger, taller, busty models (1980s +)*

glam it up v phr To dress and behave glamorously; GLAM: *I haven't done the black-tie bit in ages. Why don't we glam it up just for the fun of it?/ Ellen Barkin and Naomi Campbell glammed it up at New York City's fall fashion shows (1990s +)*

glamour (or glam) girl n phr A woman whose looks and life are glamorous, esp a movie star or other professional beauty: *She was a beautiful thing when she started her career as a glamour girl/ The three delivered flawlessly rhythmic patter with the charm of tom-boy glam-girls (first form 1935 + , second 1940s +)*

glamour-puss or glamor-puss modifier: *They are augmented by Daryl Hannah as Rourke's glamor-puss girlfriend n* A person whose looks and life are regarded as glamorous (1941 +)

glass n 1 Methedrine capsules 2 Rock cocaine (1980s + Narcotics)

glass ceiling n phr A solid but invisible barrier against women's advancement in business and other institutions: *Women could all stop wearing lipstick and blusher tomorrow, and I doubt it would help them break through the glass ceiling/ the sound of glass ceilings*

breaking as women empowered by the Clinton Administration rise to new positions of influence (1990+)

glasses *See* BOP GLASSES, GRANNY GLASSES

glass jaw or **china chin** *n phr* A boxer's chin that cannot tolerate a hard punch (1920+ *Prizefight*)

glass-jawed *adj* Having a very tender or vulnerable chin: *the glass-jawed bimbo which can't take it and dives into a clinch when shook up (1920+ Prizefight)*

glaum *See* GLOM

glaze someone over *v phr* To make someone ecstatic; intoxicate: *Said one enthusiastic participant: "Doesn't this just glaze you over?" (1980s+)*

gleam (or **glimmer** or **twinkle**) *in the eye*, a *n phr* A potential child; a passionate impulse with portent: *At that time he wasn't even born, wasn't even a gleam in his father's eye/ Your weight was genetically programmed when you were only a glimmer in your parents' eye/ No, I was not even a twinkle in my mother's eye (1940s+)*

glim *n* **1** A light, lamp, etc: *"Douse the glim, Mugsy," said a voice from my youth (1700+)* **2** (also **glimmer**) A headlight (1950s+ *Truckers*) **3** (also **glimmer**) An eye (1789+) *v*: *I glimpsed her from across the room*

glitch *n* **1** An operating defect; malfunction; a disabling minor problem: *despite such "glitches" (a spaceman's word for irritating disturbances)/ Most had assured themselves that the trouble signal was*

*only a “glitch” (1962+ Aerospace) 2 A sudden interruption of electrical supply, program function, etc: The term “bug” to refer to a computer glitch (1980s+ Computer) [fr German *glitschen* (or Yiddish *glitshen*), “slip”]*

glitter *n* A gaudy style of dress and grooming affected by some musicians, comprising dyed hair, jewels on face and body, and refulgent jumpsuits and cowboy suits (1960s+)

glitterati, the *n* Famous and glamorous people; outstanding celebrities: *among the glitterati/ to film the glitterati at a Derby bash* [1940+; based on *literati*; in the 1920s the presumed suffix *-ati* was used to form *hustlerati* and *flitterati*]

Glitter City *n phr* Las Vegas, Nevada: *the triumph of the sturdy Midwest over Glitter City (1980s+)*

Glitter Gulch *n phr* 1 Reno, Nevada (1940s+) 2 GLITTER CITY (1950s+)

glitter rock *n phr* Music played by rock groups that affect a spectacular style of dress (1972+)

glitz *n* High gaudy finish; flashy surface: *some optional Hollywood glitz/ applied Vegas and hot tub glitz to the old Jack La Lanne v* (also **glitz up**): *the Pirates of Penzance newly glitzed (mid-1970s+)* See GLITZY

glitzy *adj* Blatantly scintillant; flashy; gaudy: *and a glitzy sister who has backed into degeneracy* [1966+; fr German or Yiddish *glitzern*, “glitter, glisten”]

◁**globes**▷ *n* A woman’s breasts: *I’d even seen Elena’s soft globes (1889+)*

globocop *n* A global police officer, esp a government or group of governments that seeks to order and pacify the world: *No globocop, however powerful, can force implacable enemies to cry uncle* [1990s + ; probably based on *robocop*]

glom or **glaum** or **glahm** *n* **1** A hand, regarded as a grabbing tool **2**: *Have a glom at that leg, won't you?* **v** **1** To grasp; seize: *a contingency plan of creating wider seats for their popcorn-glomming customers* **2** GLOM ON TO **3** To steal: *"Where'd you glahm 'em?" I asked/ under the pretext of glomming a diamond from the strongbox* **4** To be arrested **5** To look at; seize with the eyes; GANDER, GLIM: *or walk around the corner to glom old smack heads, woozy winos and degenerates/ two new collections for the fashionable to glom* [1907 + Underworld & hoboes; fr British dialect *glaum, glam*, "hand," ultimately fr Old English *clamm*, "bond, grasp," related to *clamp*]

glom (or **glaum** or **glahm**) **on to v phr** To acquire; grab; seize; LATCH ON TO: *how many times the authorities might have glommed onto this man but didn't* (1907 + Underworld & hoboes)

gloomy gus *n phr* A morose, melancholic person; pessimist; GRAPE-HANGER [1940s + ; as the name of a comic-strip character, *Gloomy Gus* is found by 1904]

glop *n* **1** Any viscous fluid or mixture; GOO, GOOK, GUNK: *dimes that rolled into the glop* (1943 +) **2** Sentimentality; maudlin trash; SCHMALTZ: *That is very dull. I hate glop* **v** To smear; daub: *By glopping strings and chorales onto Tin Pan Alley lyrics, Nashville responded to rock's commercial success* (1980s +)

glorified *adj* Transformed into something illustrious; glamorized: *The Chrysler van is much more than a glorified golf cart (1821 +)*

glory days (or years) *n phr* A time of great success and acclaim; halcyon days: *Gorelick knows the lore of the glory days/ Natori's Glory Days/ George Romney, the man who led the Rambler glory years at American Motors (1980s +)*

glory hog *n phr* A person who blatantly seeks adulation; GLORY HOUND: *Our self-abnegating chief turned out to be a glory hog (1960s +)*

glory hole *modifier:* *A private glory-hole club makes a lot more sense* *n phr* A hole between stalls in a toilet, through which the penis may be put for oral sex (1940s + *Homosexuals*)

glory hound *n phr* GLORY HOG (1940s +)

glossy *n 1* A magazine printed on shiny coated paper; a high-quality magazine; SLICK: *female editors of the powerful "glossies"/ start their own glossies in three very different cities (1940s +)* **2** A photograph printed on shiny paper (1920s +)

glove *v* To catch and hold the ball (1887 + *Baseball*) **See** NOT LAY A GLOVE ON someone

glow *n* Mild intoxication; Tiddliness: *After a couple of bourbons she had a nice glow (1940s +)*

gluepot *n* A racehorse: *pay the cost the old gluepot rates when he toes the line* [1950s +; fr the conventional belief or suspicion that horses go to the *glue* factory as raw material when no longer of use]

glug *n 1* An imitation of the sound of liquid pouring from a bottle

held upside down and vertical (1768 +) 2 The quantity of liquor poured as the bottle makes one dull gurgle (1940s +)

glurp *v* SLURP: *She glurped a milkshake (1990s +)*

glutes *n* The gluteus maximus muscles; the large muscles of the butt:
Work those glutes

g-ma *n* Grandmother: *and cook the g-ma some special grub (1990s +)*

G-man *n* A Federal Bureau of Investigations agent; FEED (late 1920s +)

gnarly *adj* 1 Excellent; wonderful; COOL, HAIRY, GREAT: *That girl is gnarly. She goes to every party there is* 2 Disgusting: *So, when the halls became a little too gnarly for Principal Charles Lutgen/ "Gnarly" means disgusting [1980s + Teenagers; said to have originated among 1970s surfers, describing a dangerous wave; this sense persisted among skateboarders until at least 1988]*

gnome *n* An anonymous expert, esp a statistician or an industrious observer of trends; BEAN COUNTER: *The Gnomes of Baseball/ the inhibitions of sports announcers whose minds have been studied by small-town station managers and network gnomes [mid-1960s + ; the term is being extended from the first use, gnomes of Zurich, coined in 1964 and designating the faceless little men who take account of and in part determine the curiosities of the international money market]*

go *adj* 1 Functioning properly; going as planned; A-OK: *As the astronauts say, all signs are go in the National League (1950s + Astronauts)* 2 Appropriate; fitting • The phrase *all the go*, "the fashion," is found by 1893: *beatniks, whose heavy black turtle-neck*

sweaters had never looked particularly go with white tennis socks
 (1960s +) **n 1** A fight: *a ripsnorting go* (1890 +) **2** A try; CRACK, WHACK:
She gave it a good go, and made it (1835 +) **v 1** To die (1390 +) **2**
 To rule; be authoritative: *Whatever he says goes around here*
 (1891 +) **3** To relieve oneself; go to the bathroom: *The dog had to*
go. We set him in the sink (1926 +) **4** To happen; transpire; GO DOWN:
What goes here? (1940s +) **5** To say; utter: *You wake up one morning*
and you go, "Wait a minute" (1960s + Teenagers) **6** To yield;
 produce: *She'll go maybe 300, 400 pounds* (1816 +) **See** FROM THE GIT-GO,
 FROM THE WORD GO, GIVE **something** A SHOT, HAVE A CRACK AT **something**, HAVE
something GOING FOR **someone or something**, LET FLY, LET **oneself** GO, NO-GO,
 NO GO, ON THE GO, TELL **someone** WHERE TO GET OFF, THERE YOU GO, TO GO, WAY TO GO, WHAT
 GOES AROUND COMES AROUND

go-ahead, the **modifier** Putting a competitor in the lead: *The Tigers*
got the go-ahead run in the eighth and held the lead to win 9 to 8
 (1960s + Baseball) **n** Permission or a signal to proceed; consent:
She pleaded her case before state officials and got the go-ahead/ His
wife Joan had given him the go-ahead to make the race (1940s +)

Go ahead, make my day **sentence** Go ahead and do what you are
 going to do, which is exactly what I want [popularized in film by
 Clint Eastwood's "Dirty Harry" character]

goal **See** KNOCK someone FOR A LOOP

go all the way **v phr 1** To do the utmost; make a special effort; GO THE
 EXTRA MILE: *If you decide to do it, I'll go all the way for you* (1940s +) **2**
 GO THE LIMIT

go along for the ride **v phr** To do something or join in something in

a passive way: *I don't expect much, but I'll go along for the ride*
(1940s +)

go along with v phr **1** To agree with some suggestion or statement **2**
To accept or comply with some proposal; acquiesce (1940s +)

go along with the crowd v phr To lack or eschew individual
judgment; do what everyone else does: *What the hell, I figured I'd go
along with the crowd and vote yes* (1940s +)

go ape (or <ape-shit>) **v phr** **1** To behave stupidly, irrationally, and
violently; go wild: *When they told him, he went ape and wrecked his
room* **2** To be very enthusiastic; admire enormously: *People are
going quietly ape over the girl/ Everyone we met, experienced native
and green tourist alike, went ape for it* (1950s +)

go around the bend v phr To become insane; go crazy; FREAK OUT:
*Jessica Lange, who goes around the bend with more style, insight, and
intensity* (1920s +)

<**go around the world**> **v phr** To kiss or lick the whole body of
one's partner, esp as a prelude to fellatio or cunnilingus (1970s +)

go around with someone v phr To be someone's frequent escort or
date; be linked romantically or sexually (1950s +)

goat n **1** A car, esp an old one or one with an especially powerful
engine (1950s + *Hot rodders & teenagers*) **2** A person who takes the
blame for failure or wrongdoing; scapegoat; PATSY: *After the latest
flop they elected me goat* (1894 +) **3** The most junior officer in an
Army unit (1970s + *Army*) **4** A switch engine or yard engine
(1916 + *Railroad*) **5** A racehorse, esp an aged or inferior beast

(1940s + Horse racing) **6** A lecherous man **See** GET someone's GOAT, OLD GOAT

◀**goat fuck (or screw or rope)**▶ **n phr** A very confused situation, operation, etc; CHINESE FIRE DRILL (1970s + Army)

go at it hammer and tongs v phr To do something, esp to quarrel or fight, with great energy [1833 +; fr the tools of a blacksmith]

gob¹ n 1 A mass of viscous matter; BLOB: *She chucked a big gob of plaster at me (1382 +)* **2** (also **gabs**) A quantity, esp a large quantity: *I think he's got gobs of money (1819 +)*

gob² n The mouth • Chiefly British use [1550 +; fr Irish]

gob³ n A US Navy sailor; SWABBY [1915 +; perhaps fr earlier British *gabby*, "coast guard; quarterdeckman," of unknown origin]

go back on v phr To renege; fail to keep one's word (1859 +)

go back to (or be at) square one v phr To be forced to return to one's starting point, usu after a waste of effort; make a new beginning [1960 +; probably fr the first or starting *square* of a board game; an elaborate suggestion that it refers to a British grid system for locating places on the soccer field, for radio broadcasting of games, cannot be verified] **See** BACK TO SQUARE ONE, SQUARE ONE

go back to the well v phr To return to a reliable source: *We just kept going back to the well and he just kept making it (1980s +)*

go ballistic v phr To become very angry and irrational; BLOW UP, HIT THE CEILING: *Either way, some constituents will go ballistic/ Henry George would go ballistic over the idea of reopening the capital gains tax break*

for real estate [mid-1980s +; fr the extreme height attained by a *ballistic* missile, and the idea that upward motion is associated with anger]

go balls out v phr To make a supreme effort; GO FOR BROKE: *I went balls out on my term paper* [1980s + Students; see **balls-out** and **balls to the wall**]

go bananas v phr 1 To become wildly irrational; FREAK OUT, GO APE: *speculation that maybe old Strom had gone bananas at last* **2** To be extremely enthusiastic; admire enormously: *She went bananas over the dress and bought one in every color* [late 1960s +; fr the spectacle of an ape greedily gobbling *bananas*]

go bare v phr To be uninsured (1990s + *Insurance*)

go batshit v phr To become wildly irrational; blow one's stack, GO BANANAS: *Sal took a look at the page and went batshit/ The President said that Perot went batshit and has never forgiven him* (1940s + *Army*)

gobble v 1 To make a catch (1873 + *Baseball*) <2> To do fellatio or cunnilingus; eat it (1920s +)

gobbledegook or **gobbledygook n** Pretentious and scarcely intelligible language, esp of the sort attributed to bureaucrats, sociologists, etc [coined in 1944 by Representative Maury Maverick of Texas]

<gobbler> **n** A person who does fellatio or cunnilingus (1920s +)

gobble up v EAT UP (1601 +)

go belly up v phr To die; collapse; cease to operate; BELLY UP: *two major*

credit-card firms had gone belly up (1870s +)

go blooey v phr (Variations: **flooey** or **kablooey** or **kerflooey** or **kerflooie** or **kerfooey** may replace **blooey**) To end abruptly in failure or disaster; break down; collapse; Go Down the Tube: *Will I make it without the air conditioner in the car going kablooey/ Then, of course, the whole thing all goes flooey* [1920 +; echoic imitation of an explosion]

go boom See FALL DOWN AND GO BOOM

go broke (or bust) v phr To become penniless; become insolvent; GO BELLY UP, TAKE A BATH: *His newest escapade into the fashionable world of trade and manufacturing had again gone bust (1895 +)*

gobs See GOB

gobsmacked adj Extremely surprised: *gobsmacked at the nomination* [1980s +; fr *gob*, “mouth,” and *smacked*, “hit, struck,” the theatrical gesture of clapping a hand over the mouth as a gesture of extreme surprise]

gob-stick n A clarinet [1936 +; a *stick* to put in the *gob*, “mouth”]

go bust See GO BROKE

go-by, the See GIVE someone or something A MISS

go chase yourself sentence Don’t be so stupid; let me alone; GET LOST • Almost always a command (1893 +)

go coast-to-coast v phr To take the ball alone from one end of the court to the other, and usu score: *He went coast-to-coast for the lay-in (1990s + Basketball)*

go commando (or **freeball(ing)**) *v phr* As a male, to go without underwear: *sure feels funny to go commando*

go critical *v phr* To become unstable and dangerous: *He felt that the Salvadoran situation was about to go critical* [1955 +; fr nuclear physics, “to approach chain reaction”]

God See BY GUESS AND BY GOD, OLDER THAN GOD

god-awful *adj* Wretched; miserable; inferior: *cases that would never have come up but for this god-awful legislation* *adv* Extremely: *Ain't it god-awful cold in here?* (1878 +)

Goddamn or **Goddamned** *adj* Accursed; wretched; nasty; FUCKING • Often used for euphony and rhythm of emphasis: *Take your Goddamn foot off my Goddamn toes* [1851 +; much older than the date given; as an oath, found by 1640]

goddess See SEX GODDESS

godfather *n* The chief; highest authority; BOSS: *He was Life's first publisher, the godfather of the radio and film March of Time series* [1970s +; fr the Mafia term, “head of a Mafia family,” vogueish after a book and a movie] **See** FAIRY GODFATHER

godmother See FAIRY GODMOTHER

go down¹ *v phr* To become inoperative; stop functioning (1980s + *Computer*) **See** WHAT'S GOING DOWN

go down² *v phr* To happen; GO: *He wanted this scam to go down as rigged/ You can't define it in terms of what kind of rap is going down* (1940s + *Black*)

go down³ v phr To be convicted and punished; FALL: *I want somebody to go down for killing the kid and her baby/ You going down on this thing? (1906 +)*

◁**go down and do tricks**▷ **v phr** GO DOWN ON someone

go downhill v phr To deteriorate; worsen; GO TO POT: *It looks like his health is going downhill fast (1922 +)*

go down in flames v phr To be utterly ruined; be wrecked: *The ballet has gone down in flames after two years/ He became Washington bureau chief of ABC News and promptly went down in flames [1940s +; fr the fate of WWI combat pilots, who wore no parachutes]*

◁**go down on someone**▷ **v phr** To do fellatio or cunnilingus; eat it, SUCK: *Only she won't go down on me. Isn't that odd?/ When I try to go down on my girlfriend, she routinely blocks my head with her thighs (1916 +)*

go down swinging v phr To refuse surrender; show fight; nail one's colors to the mast: *The President promised he would go down swinging on that issue [1930s +; fr baseball, "to strike out, but swing at the third strike"]*

go down the line v phr To do whatever is necessary; GO ALL THE WAY: *Will unions go down the line for Clinton on the health bills? (1940s +)*

go down the rabbit hole v phr To use narcotics [1990s + students; fr *Alice in Wonderland*, where Alice follows the White Rabbit down the rabbit hole to a land of fantasy]

go down the tube (or **tubes** or **chute** or **drain**) *v phr* To go to wrack and ruin; be lost or destroyed: *Bache was in danger of going down the chute with the price of silver/ speaks of a whole generation going down the tube/ and all of that is going right down the drain/ Should the Government sanction the act of simply sending taxpayers' dollars straight down the gurgler?/ Our foreign policy would not be down the toilet (entry form 1963 +, chute 1940s +, drain 1925 +, toilet 1980s, tubes 1970s)*

God's gift *n phr* A very special blessing; premier offering • Nearly always ironical: *Wall Street tells MBA's they are God's gift to investment banking/ He is becoming God's gift to columnists (1938 +)*

God's medicine *n phr* Narcotics of any sort: *The joy-poppers had the will-power, they felt, to use God's medicine once or twice a month and forget it the rest of the time (1940s + Narcotics)*

God Squad *n phr* **1** A campus religious organization (1969 + *Students*) **2** A federal government committee that may set aside parts of the Endangered Species Act: *It was the first exemption ever granted by the committee, known as the "God Squad" because its rulings can doom a species (1990s +)*

go Dutch (or **Dutch treat**) *v phr* To pay one's own way at a dinner, show, etc: *Nobody had much money, so we all went Dutch (1914 +)*

go easy *v phr* **1** To restrain oneself; control one's anger: *Go easy, fellow, he was just jiving* **2** To be lenient with; spare: *Why do the judges go so easy with these perverts? (1885 +)*

goes around *See* WHAT GOES AROUND COMES AROUND

go eyeball to eyeball v phr To confront and contend with one another; GO HEAD TO HEAD: *He went eyeball to eyeball with a Soviet delegation (1960+)*

gofer or go-for or gopher n An employee who is expected to serve and cater to others; a low-ranking subordinate: *running the robo machine and acting as a receptionist, secretary, and general go-for/ attractive go-fers for executive editor Frank Waldrop [1967+; gofor, an underworld term for “dupe, sucker,” is found by the 1920s and is probably semantically related]*

gofer (or gopher) ball n phr A pitch likely to be hit for a home run [1932+ Baseball; said to have been coined by the pitcher Vernon Louis “Lefty” Gomez; when hit, the pitch will *go for* a home run]

go figure v phr To try to understand, esp something contradictory or astonishing: *Evidence that drug abuse and street crime derive principally from absence of strong fathers. Go figure/ Who knows. Go figure people [fr Yiddish gey vays, “go know”]*

go fishing (or on a fishing expedition) v phr To undertake a search for facts, esp by a legal or quasi-legal process like a grand-jury investigation (1960+)

go flatline v phr To die: *In the ambulance he went flatline (1980s+)*

See FLATLINE

go fly a kite sentence Cease annoying me; GO TO HELL, GET LOST: *I asked for more, and he told me to go fly a kite (1940s+)*

go for v phr 1 To be in favor of; admire; be attracted to: *I really go for her (1835+)* **2** To attack: *Three of the villains went for me (1838+)*

See HAVE something GOING FOR someone or something

go for all the marbles v phr GO FOR BROKE: *He goes for all the marbles*
(1970s +)

go for broke v phr To make a maximum effort; stake everything on a big try • This was the battle cry of the 442d Regimental Combat Team, made up of Japanese-Americans, in World War II [1940s + Hawaiian English; fr a gambler's last desperate or hopeful wager]

go for it v phr To make a try for something, esp a valiant and risky one • Often an encouraging imperative: *Will we play it safe, or go for it?/ Go for it! You've almost got it knocked!* (1871 +)

go for the fences v phr To try to make long base hits, esp home runs; SLUG (1970s + Baseball)

go for the gold v phr To strive for the highest reward; GO FOR BROKE: *Everything else looks real. They were going for the gold/ Any time Hollywood goes for the gold there are bound to be contestants that finish dead last* [1980s +; fr the gold medal awarded to the first-place finisher in Olympic competitions]

go for the jugular v phr To compete in dead earnest; give or take no quarter: *They were a tough team that always went for the jugular* [1980s +; fr the jugular vein in the neck, severance of which is usually fatal; the image is of a wolf or other attacking animal]

go for the long ball v phr To take a large risk for a large gain; GO FOR BROKE: *entering the fall campaign, might decide to go for the long ball* [fr football 1970s +; fr a long pass, the "bomb," thrown in a football game]

◀**go fuck** (or **impale**) oneself▶ **sentence** May you be accursed, confounded, humiliated, rejected, etc; GO TO HELL: *Oh, go fuck yourself, Stern/ Ah, go impale yourselves, the bunch of you* **v phr:** *If people were only interested in it 'cause she balled Paul McCartney "then they could go fuck themselves" (1960s +)*

go full bore v phr To go at the utmost speed: *We're going full bore, Sheriff Wells says (mid-1930s +)* **See** FULL BORE

go full term v phr To reach completion or fruition: *Although today's test did not go full term, we were impressed with the professional manner with which the launch team responded [1990s +; fr the obstetrical designation *full term*, "full development of the fetus at birth"]*

go gangbusters **See** GANGBUSTERS

go-getter n A vigorous and effective person; WINNER: *sometimes enviously referred to as a go-getter, a hot shot, a ball of fire (1921 +)*

gogglebox n An eager, rather idealistic, person; GOO-GOO: *Those do-goody goggleboxes in student government didn't help me at all [1980s + Students; probably fr the notion that such people wear goggles, "glasses"; used in the 1984 movie *Repo Man*]*

goggles n Eyeglasses: *I can't read that without my goggles (1836 +)*

go-go adj **1** Having to do with discotheques, their music, style of dancing, etc (1960s +) **2** Stylish; modish; TRENDY: *She may be getting on in years, but she certainly is a go-go dresser* **3** Showing vitality and drive, esp in business and commerce; urgent and energetic: *Religion is a really go-go growth industry these days/ Japan's go-go*

entrepreneurs can turn their operations into the new Goliaths **n 1** A bar or club with go-go girls: *It surely won't keep minors out of go-gos (mid-1980s +)* **2** The penis: *Mrs Bobbitt cut off her husband's go-go (1990s +)* **See** A-GO-GO

go-go girl (or dancer) n phr A scantily clad or partly naked young woman employed to do solo gy-rational dancing in a discotheque or club on a small stage or platform, in a cage, etc (1967+)

go gold v phr To sell enough copies to become a gold record: *A rerelease of his album recently went gold (1990s +)*

go great guns v phr To do extremely well; succeed remarkably: *He's going great guns as a wine-taster* [1913+; fr the early 1800s nautical expression *blow great guns*]

go gunning for someone See GUN FOR SOMEONE

go halvsies (or halvies or halfies) v phr To award an equal share; divide in two equal parts: *I may go halvsies/ If he stonewalled them or went halvesies with the truth* [1940s+; *go halves* is found by 1848]

go haywire v phr 1 To become inoperative; break down unexpectedly; GO BLOOEY: *This radio's gone haywire* **2** To go crazy; become confused and disoriented: *Remember that I tried to talk you out of it, and don't go haywire* [1929+; fr the ramshackle condition of something that must be hastily repaired with *haywire*]

go head to head v phr To confront and contend with one another; GO EYEBALL TO EYEBALL: *Lawyers Susan Sarandon and Tommy Lee Jones go head to head over the fate of an eleven-year-old boy (1960s +)*

go (or run) hog-wild v phr To be wildly excited and unrestrained:
I'm going to take a roundhouse wallop at the first thing I see and run hog-wild on the bases/ A person easily excited goes "hog-wild and crazy" (1904+)

go Hollywood v phr To affect arrogance, gaudy dress, and other presumed traits of motion-picture success: *It is at this point that the Hollywood ingenue goes Hollywood (1929+)*

go home feet first (or in a box) v phr To die: *Make one wrong move and you go home feet first (1940s+)*

goifa See GREEFA

going See HAVE something GOING FOR someone or something

going concern, a n phr A project, business, operation, etc, that is successfully launched and functioning smoothly: *Just an idea last year, now it's a going concern (1881+)*

going down See WHAT'S GOING DOWN

going out of style See LIKE IT'S GOING OUT OF STYLE

going-over, a n phr 1 A beating; trouncing: *The goons gave him a brutal going over (1940s+)* 2 An examination; scrutiny: *Give these records a going-over, please (1919+)* [related to the first sense, "a scolding, a dressing-down" is found by 1872]

goings-on n Happenings, events: *keeps her up on the group's goings-on*

go into one's act v phr DO one's NUMBER (1940s+)

go into one's dance v phr (Variations: **dog and pony show** or **song**

and dance may replace **dance**) To begin a prepared line of pleading, explanation, selling, seduction, etc: *He went into his dance, but she wasn't convinced* (1980s +)

go into orbit v phr To reach very extreme and apparently uncontrolled heights: *those whose stocks can absorb, say, \$50 million or more without going into orbit* (1960s +)

go into the dumper v phr To fail utterly; be discarded: *Gone to Carnival had gone straight into the dumper* [1990s +; *dumper* is probably a shortening of *Dumpster*, trademark for a refuse bin]

go into the tank v phr To lose a fight, game, etc, deliberately; THROW: *Some night you went inna tank?* [1940s + *Prizefight*; fr the resemblance between a fighter hitting the canvas and a person *taking a dive into a tank*]

go it alone v phr To do something arduous or tricky by oneself: *She tried going it alone but found it scary* [1842 +; fr the game of *euchre*, where one may play against combined opponents]

goiter *See* MILWAUKEE GOITER

go jump in the lake sentence May you be accursed, confounded, humiliated, etc; DROP DEAD, GO FUCK oneself: *Go jump in the lake (or perhaps something a little stronger), Wauwatosa Ald Joseph Ptaszek essentially told several people/ 'So far,' Rothschild said, 'Nader hasn't told us to jump in the lake.'* (1912 +)

go kerplunk v phr To fail; FLOP, GO BLOOEY: *If they go kerplunk, someone will have to scrape up the pieces* (1940s +)

gold *n* A high grade of marijuana (1960s + *Narcotics*) **See** ACAPULCO GOLD

gold braid *n phr* Naval officers, esp high-ranking ones: *It is evident that the gold braid doesn't think enough of the order* (1940s +)

goldbrick *n* (also **goldbricker**) A shirker; a person who avoids work or duty; GOOF-OFF (*WWI armed forces*) **v** 1: *She made him promise to quit goldbricking* 2 To swindle; cheat; CON (1902 +) [fr the convention of the confidence trickster who sells spurious *gold bricks*]

gold-digger *n* A woman who uses her charms and favors to get money, presents, etc, from wealthy men: *Lorelei Lee, the crazy-like-a-fox gold-digger* (1920 +)

gold dust twins *n phr* Any two persons thought of as a pair or who share a common interest: *Eddie Einhorn and Jerry Reinsdorf, the gold-dust twins of the Chicago White Sox and Bulls/ They called me and my buddy the gold dust twins* [1940s +; fr the picture of a grinning pair on the label of a household cleanser]

golden *adj* Supremely fortunate; excellent: *I'm golden*

golden-ager *n* An elderly person: *golden-agers playing bingo*

golden boy *n phr* A favored and especially gifted boy or man; FAIR-HAIRED BOY: *Casey regarded Inman as a brittle golden boy, worried about his image* [1937 +; popularized by the title of Clifford Odets's 1937 play about a boxer]

golden handcuffs *n phr* Arrangements, options, perquisites, etc, that induce one to stay in one's job: *These ties that bind have become*

known in industry as golden handcuffs (1976 +)

golden oldie or oldie but goodie *n phr* An old record, song, person, etc, still regarded as good, esp one that has revived or sustained popularity: *a golden oldie like “Honeysuckle Rose”/ All the golden oldies are replayed and the untied threads neatly resolved/ Oldies but Goodies Could Put Success in Senior Tours: There’s a golden patch of oldies who can still play great tennis/ oldies but goodies such as “Down by the Riverside” [mid-1960s + ; probably influenced by association with the gold phonograph record struck for a recording that has sold a million copies and more]*

golden parachute (or handshake) *n phr* Very high sums, benefits, etc, offered for taking early retirement: *“Golden parachutes” or severance packages are all becoming more common/ A parting golden handshake with GM included a valuable Cadillac franchise (first form 1980s + , second 1960 +)*

golden retriever *n phr* A successful motion-picture executive: *A golden retriever is a studio executive with the ability to outrun everyone else and bring in the hottest scripts, actors, or directors [1990s + ; fr the name of a kind of dog]*

◁**golden shower**▷ *n phr* Urination on someone who sexually enjoys such a wetting: *what girls do through the bladder, which is otherwise known as the “golden shower”/ Golden showers? Not me (1940s + Homosexuals & prostitutes)*

goldfinger *n* A type of synthetic heroin (1960s + *Narcotics*)

goldfish bowl *n phr* A place or situation where one is exposed; a

venue without privacy: *Celebrities must live in a goldfish bowl*
(1935 +)

goldilocks *n* 1 Any pretty blonde woman • Often used ironically:
Well, thought Jimmy, it won't be because of you, goldilocks (1598 +) 2
A burglar who breaks into a house, eats, and otherwise makes
himself at home, but takes nothing of value (1990s +) [second
sense fr the folk tale *Goldilocks and the Three Bears*]

gold mine, a *n phr* A fortunate or unexpected source of great wealth:
I didn't think much of the book, but the royalties have been a gold mine
[1882 +; a somewhat ambiguous use in 1664 probably refers to an
actual *gold mine*]

gold piece *See* COME UP SMELLING LIKE A ROSE

gold time *n phr* Double overtime pay: *When TV crews work past
midnight on Friday and Saturday, they are normally paid gold time*
(1990s +)

golf *See* BARNYARD GOLF

golf widow *n phr* A woman often left alone while her mate plays
golf (1908 +)

go like sixty *v phr* To go very fast; BARREL: *They all went like sixty to the
nearest exit* (1860 +)

golly *interj* A mild exclamation of surprise, dismay, pleasure, etc;
GOSH: *Golly, Mom, did you really win it?* [1775 +; a euphemism for
God]

go-long *n* A police patrol wagon; PADDY WAGON: *Joe Brown had you all in*

the go-long last night (1940s + Black)

goma (GOH mah) *n* Crude opium (1960s + *Narcotics*)

go mahoola v phr go down the tube [1970s + ; origin unknown; the verb *mahula*, “to fail, go bankrupt,” is found by the 1940s]

gomer n 1 A patient needing extensive care; a vegetative comatose patient: *We got a real gomer in from ICU yesterday/ He says the guy’s a total gomer now (1960s + Medical)* **2** A first-year Air Force Academy cadet, esp a clumsy trainee (1950s +) [origin uncertain; medical sense said to be an acronym of “get out of my emergency room”]

goms n A police officer (1920s + *Underworld*)

gon or gond See GUN²

go native v phr To take on the behavior and standards of the place one has moved to or is visiting, esp when this means a loss of rigor, respectability, etc: *On Bleecker Street he went native and donned a black sweatshirt and sneakers (1901 +)*

gone adj 1 Intoxicated, esp with narcotics (1940s + *Jazz musicians*) **2** In a trancelike condition; meditative: *gurgling forth a flow of words, a “gone” expression on his face (1940s + Cool talk)* **3** Excellent; wonderful; COOL: *a real gone chick (1940s + Cool talk)*

gone on (or over) adj phr In love with; enamored of: *I was so gone over her (1885 +)*

goner, a n Someone or something that is doomed; someone dead or about to die; DEAD DUCK: *pray, or you’re a goner/ for Rome will be a*

goner (1850+)

gong *n* **1** (also **gonger**) An opium pipe (1914+ *Narcotics*) **2** A military decoration; medal or ribbon (*British WWII use*) [both senses probably fr *gong*, “saucer-shaped metal bell,” of Malayan origin; the sense “opium pipe” may be related to the general association of *gongs* with Chinese matters, and the military sense to the notion that a decoration is something like the ceremonial sounding of a *gong*]

gonged *adj* **1** Intoxicated with narcotics; HIGH, STONED: *She’s sitting in the front row gonged to the gills with acid* (1900s+ *Narcotics*) **2** Dismissed; FIRED, SACKED: *Just ask Pat Sheridan, who was gonged by WISN last fall* (1980s+) [second sense fr television *Gong Show*, where performers were dismissed by the sound of a *gong*]

gongoozler *n* A person who stares idly or protractedly at something (1900s+)

goniff (GAH nəf) *n* (Variations: **gonef** or **gonif** or **gonof** or **gonoph** or **ganef** or **ganof** or **guniff**) A thief; a person who is in effect a thief, like an unethical salesperson: *And who is this arch-goniff?/ a gonof like Glick/ all the other gonophs, consultants who peddle bullshit, builders who build badly* (1845+) *v*: *Are you trying to goniff me, pal?* [fr Yiddish, “thief,” fr Hebrew *gannabh*, “thief”]

gonk *See* CONK

gonna *v phr* Going to • Casually pronounced form: *I’m gonna veg out tonight* (1913+)

go no-go *adj phr* Pertaining to the last critical moment at which a

project, plans, etc, can still be canceled; relating to the point of no return: *It's go no-go. Either we do it or we kill it (1960s + Astronauts)*

go nowhere v phr To be unsuccessful or frustrated in an attempt: *her proposal went nowhere*

go nowhere fast v phr To proceed very slowly; be stalled: *The proposal is officially still pending but going nowhere fast (1940s +)*

gonsil or gonzel See GUNSEL

go nuclear v phr GO BALLISTIC: *Susan and poor, meek little Emmett Couch went nuclear (1990s +)*

gonzo (GAHN zoh) **adj** Insane; wild; bizarre; confused; CUCKOO, BANANAS, NUTSO: *established Hunter Thompson as the father of gonzo journalism, a flamboyant if controversial style/ the gonzo idea of a cross-country street race n: The Gonzo and the Geeks/ These double-gaited gonzos are perpetrating a plague of bestselling takeoffs [1971 + ; fr Italian, "credulous, simple, too good"]*

goo n 1 Any sticky and viscous substance; GLOP, GUNK: *fell in the goo rounding third/ a layer of goo on the skin (1903 +)* **2** Sentimentality; maudlin rubbish; GLOP, SCHMALTZ (1922 +) **3** Fulsome flattery; overly affectionate greetings: *They ladle out the old goo* [perhaps sound symbolism, influenced by glue; perhaps fr burgoo, "oatmeal porridge"]

goob or goob-a-tron n A tedious, contemptible person; DORK, NERD: *Nerds can be "goobs" or "tools"/ A Goob-a-tron's Guide to Rad Speak [1980s + Students & teenagers; fr goober]*

goober *n* **1** A minor skin lesion; ZIT: *whiteheads, blackheads, goopheads, goobers, pips* **2** A stupid and bizarre person; GEEK, WEIRDO [1970s + Teenagers; fr *goober*, “peanut,” fr Kongo *nguba*, “kidney, peanut”; first sense probably because the first syllable describes the goo that exudes from or is squeezed from the lesion]

good *See* BE GOOD, DO-GOOD, DO-GOODER, FEEL GOOD, HAVE IT GOOD, MAKE GOOD, NO-GOOD

good and mad *modifier* Thoroughly angry: *good and mad at you*

good buddy *n phr* **1** The person one is cordially addressing (1970s + *Citizens band*) **2** One’s homosexual lover (1970s + *Homosexuals*) **3** A male homosexual: *It turns out that the most famous term in the CB vocabulary has become slang for “homosexual” (1980s + Citizens band)*

good butt *n phr* A marijuana cigarette; JOINT (1950s + *Narcotics*)

good-bye *See* KISS something GOOD-BYE

Good call! *interj* That was a good decision: *Chinese takeout? Good call!*

good cop bad cop or **nice cop tough cop** *modifier* Marked by alternations between friendliness and hostility, easiness and rigor, etc: *Successful management requires a variation of the “good cop, bad cop” routine/ In short, a “nice cop” Rousseau and a “tough cop” Rousseau/ I think that she’s the good cop and he’s the bad one, and I think it’s quite deliberate* [fr the interrogation technique by which one police officer pretends to sympathize with the suspect and to protect him from a pitiless and menacing fellow officer]

good deal *interj* An exclamation of agreement, pleasure, congratulation, etc: *You made it? Good deal!* **n phr** A pleasant and favorable situation, life, job, etc: *He had a good deal there at the bank, but blew it (WWII armed forces)*

good egg **n phr** A decent and kindly person; a reliable and admirable citizen: *Henry Fonda frequently was cast as the good egg* [1903 + ; modeled on *bad egg*, found by 1855]

gooder *See* DO-GOODER

good-for-nothing *adj*: *You good-for-nothing bastard, you* (1711 +) **n** A worthless person; scoundrel; **BUM** (1751 +)

good golly **Miss Molly** *interj* An exclamation of emphasis, surprise, indignation, etc; goodness gracious: *Good golly, Miss Molly!* *Lascivious lyrics were not, after all, introduced to the lower orders from above* [1950s + ; fr the tide of a 1950s song by Little Richard (Richard Penniman)]

good hair day **n phr** A day when things go right; good day: *She said she was having a good hair day as she arranged the seating for the photos during the interview* (1990s +) *See* BAD HAIR DAY

good head **n phr** A pleasant and agreeable person (1950+ *Teenagers*)

goodie or **goody** *modifier*: *Then I got out my goodie bag* **n** 1 **GOODY-GOODY**

2 A special treat; something nice to eat: *a huge basket of goodies* (1940s +) 3 Something nice; a pleasant feature; something very desirable: *headlight with a middle beam, the goodie you've been*

waiting for/ The local population took to the goodies of Western culture with avidity (1940s +) 4 (also **good guy**) Someone on the side of

virtue and decency, in contrast with a villain: *It's much easier to make a girl a baddie than a goodie* (1930s + Motion pictures) **See**

GOLDEN OLDIE

good Joe n phr A pleasant, decent, reliable man; GOOD EGG (1940s +)

good-looker n Someone or something that is handsome and attractive, esp a woman; LOOKER: *Is she a good looker?* (1893 +)

good night interj An exclamation of surprise, irritation, emphasis, etc: *Good night! Must you chew that gum so loud?* [1880s + ; a euphemism for good God]

good old (or ole) boy modifier: *Kevin Baker and Fred Ward have good-ol'-boy chemistry n phr* A white Southerner who exemplifies the masculine ideals of the region; BUBBA: *The helpful truck driver was a good old boy from around Nashville* (1970s +)

good one n phr A lie • Euphemistic: *You passed? Good one*

goods n Narcotics of any sort (*Narcotics*) **See** CANNED GOODS, GREEN GOODS, PIECE OF CALICO, STRAIGHT GOODS

goods, the n phr 1 Something or someone of excellent quality; just what is wanted: *She's the real goods* (1904 +) 2 The evidence needed to arrest and convict a criminal: *We've got the goods on him* (1908 +) 3 Stolen property; contraband: *They caught him with the goods in his pocket* (1900s +) **See** DELIVER THE GOODS, GET THE GOODS ON SOMEONE

◁**good shit**▷ **interj** GOOD DEAL **n phr** Anything favorable or pleasant; something one approves of: *This place is real good shit, ain't it?* (1950s +)

good sport n phr A person who plays fair, accepts both victory and

defeat, and stays amiable: *I just want to be a good sport and get along with people* (1917+)

good time *n phr* Time deducted from a prison term for good behavior: *a period of solitary confinement and a loss of “good time”* (1870+ *Prison*)

good-time Charlie *n phr* A man devoted to partying and pleasure; bon vivant (1927+)

good to go *interj* A rallying cry; battle cry; GUNG HO: *the similar “good to go” that came out of the Gulf (Persian Gulf War Army)*

good word *See* WHAT'S THE GOOD WORD

Goodyears *See* DOWN THE GOODYEARS

goody-goody *modifier*: *what might have been a goody-goody role* (1871+) *n* A prim and ostentatiously virtuous person: *I'm not a mammy boy nor a goody-goody* (1873+)

goody gumdrops *interj* An unenthusiastic exclamation of semiapproval: *watching more TV, goody gumdrops*

goody two-shoes *modifier*: *in spite of its Goody Two-Shoes ecological image* *n phr* An obviously innocent and virtuous young woman; GOODY-GOODY • Most often used mockingly or contemptuously (1766+) [fr the name of the heroine of a 1760s children's story, probably by Oliver Goldsmith, about a little girl who exulted publicly at the acquisition of a second shoe]

goopy *adj* Consisting of, covered with, or resembling goo: *These passages seem affected and a bit goopy/ the story of Teresa Stratas,*

without gooey heaviness (1906 +)

goof n 1 A stupid person; BOOB, KLUTZ, SAP: *two goofs can't agree on how many orgasms they should have/ High school girls now talk of the "goofs we go with" (1916 +)* **2** An insane person; mental case: *He couldn't have acted more like a goof (1940s +)* **3** One's cellmate (1930s + *Prison*) **4** A blunder; bad mistake; BOO-BOO: *They covered their goof quite well (1950s + Jive talk)* **v 1:** *You goofed again; it's a one-way street (1941 +)* **2** To pass one's time idly and pleasantly; GOOF OFF: *In Sarajevo, members of a student volunteer brigade goofed and joked as they worked (1932 +)* **3** GOOF AROUND (1940s +) **4** To fool; KID: *Don't goof your grandpa (1940s +)* [fr British dialect *goof, goff, "fool"*]

goof around v phr 1 To pass one's time idly and pleasantly; potter about; FART AROUND **2** To joke and play when one should be serious; FUCK AROUND, HORSE AROUND: *The monarch ordered the field marshal to quit goofing around and win the goddamn war (1940s +)*

goofball n 1 A stupid and clumsy person; GOOF: *roles that earned him the affectionate labeling as a "goof ball" (1959 +)* **2** An eccentric person; ODDBALL, WEIRDO (1959 +) **3** A pill or capsule of Nembutal™ (1940s + *Narcotics*) **4** A barbiturate, tranquilizer, etc, used as a narcotic: *took over three hundred goof balls (1940s + Narcotics)* **5** A portion or dose of a narcotic; BALL, GB: *A goof ball is a narcotics preparation which is burned on a spoon and inhaled (1930s + Narcotics)* **6** Marijuana (1930s + *Narcotics*)

goof-butt See GOOFY-BUTT

goofed *adj* Intoxicated with a narcotic, esp marijuana; HIGH, STONED
(1950s+ *Narcotics*)

goofer or **goopher** *n* **1** A fool; GOOF: *Don't be a critical goopher or you can't go* (1925+) **2** An intrepid fighter pilot (WWII Army Air Forces)

◁**go off**▷ *v phr* To have an orgasm; COME OFF (1928+)

go off half-cocked *v phr* To make a premature response, esp an angry one: *Let's not go off half cocked/ But before I went off half-cocked, I had to check the alibis* [1833+; fr the accidental firing of a gun at *half cock*]

go off on someone *v phr* To lose one's temper; attack someone: *Now think about this before you go off on me* (1980s+ *Students*)

go off the deep end *v phr* To go into a violent rage; BLOW one's TOP [1921+; perhaps fr the notion of jumping into a pool at the *deep end*, hence being in *deep* water, in trouble] **See** JUMP OFF THE DEEP END

go off the rails *v phr* To behave abnormally; lose stability: *Most of what she said was okay, but she went off the rails with that last remark* (1848+)

goofiness *n* The acts, ways, ideas, etc, of those who are goofy: *an unparalleled tolerance for goofiness* (1920s+)

goof-off *n* **1** A person who regularly or chronically avoids work; FUCK-OFF: *getting kicked out of seminary as a goof-off* **2** A period of relaxation; respite: *A little goof-off will do you good* (WWII armed forces)

goof off v phr To pass one's time idly and pleasantly; potter about; shirk duty; GOOF AROUND: *My goofing off in the final period had knocked down a possible A average/ Are you trying to tell me my son is goofing off? (WWII armed forces)*

goof on someone v phr To play a joke on someone; fool someone (1970s+ Teenagers)

goof-proof v To ensure against mistakes; forestall errors: *her own formulas for goof-proofing a party (1970s+)*

goof-up n A blunder, esp a serious one; FUCK-UP, SNAFU (1960s+)

goof up v phr 1 To spoil; disable; QUEER: *He goofed up the whole deal by talking too soon 2* To blunder; GOOF: *that can look at a child when he goofs up and reflect, "I understand and I love you" (1960+)*

goofus n 1 THINGAMAJIG (1940s+) **2** A small calliope (1915+ Circus) **3** A saxophone-shaped, breath-operated reed instrument with a keyboard covering two octaves, intended as an easy aid to the musically uneducated • The name may have been given by the jazz saxophonist Adrian Rollini, who led a group called *The Goofus Five*, featuring the instrument; it was originally known as the Couesnophone after the French manufacturer Couesnon et Compagnie (mid-1920s+) **4** A stupid person; DIMWIT, DOPE, spazz: *The networks always remind me of slow-witted goofuses squatting out there in the L A glare (1918+)* **5** A rural person; naive spectator; EASY MARK (1920+ Circus & carnival) **6** Tasteless and meretricious material or entertainment designed for the unsophisticated (1950s+ Show business)

goofy *adj* Silly; foolish; crazy; DOTTY • Nearly always has an affectionate and amused connotation: *a goofy grin/ a goofy awkward kid/ And he looked, well, goofy (1921 +)*

goofy about *adj phr* CRAZY ABOUT (1921 +)

goofy-butt or **goof-butt** *n* A marijuana cigarette; JOINT (1950s + *Narcotics*)

googly *adj* Protruding; exophthalmic: *her great big googly eyes* [1901 +; origin uncertain; perhaps fr *goggle*, which meant “stare at admiringly or amorously”; perhaps fr mid-1800s *google*, “the Adam’s apple,” where the eyes are thought of as similarly protruding; perhaps influenced by *goo* in the sense of “sentimental, amorous”; popularized by the hero of a comic strip]

goo-goo or **gu-gu** *adj* Infantile; cooing: *talking goo-goo talk to her, like you would to a baby (1863 +)*

goo-goo eyes *n phr* Eyes expressing enticement, desire, seduction, etc [1897 +; probably fr *googly*, with which it is synonymous in early uses] **See** MAKE GOO-GOO EYES

gook¹ or **guck** *n* Dirt; grime; sediment; GLOP, GOO, GUNK: *Glim gets the gook off/ Joan has white guck all over her face (1940s +)*

◀**gook**²▶ *modifier*: *Give it to the gook hospitals* *n* An Asian or Polynesian; SLOPE • Originally a Filipino insurrectionary, then a Nicaraguan, then any Pacific Islander during WWII, the term embraced Koreans after 1950, Vietnamese and any Asian fr 1960s; sometimes used of any colored person: *take it on the chin better than an American or a Zulu or a gook/ the way he felt about Vietnam and*

the gooks/ It was there that I first heard of dinks, slopes, and gooks
[1900s+ Army; fr *gugu*, a term of Filipino origin, perhaps fr Vicol
gugurang, “familiar spirit, personal demon,” adopted by US armed
forces during the Filipino Insurrection of 1899 as a contemptuous
term for Filipinos, and spread among US troops to other places of
occupation, invasion, etc; probably revived after 1950 by the
Korean term *kuk*, which is a suffix of nationality, as in *Chungkuk*,
“China,” etc]

◁**gooky**▷ *adj* Sticky; viscid; greasy: *Greaseless. Non-gooky (1940s+)*

goombah (also **goombar** or **gumba** or **gumbah**) *n* **1** A friend;
companion; trusted associate; patron; PAL: *They called him Joey*
Gallo's rabbi or his goombah/ trying to make these old goombars
understand/ We want all our gumbahs to come over and get rich **2** An
organized-crime figure; Mafioso: *I'm gonna kill any greasy Guinea*
goombah that tries to stop me/ This big dumb gumba can send you
home with your nuts in a paper bag [fr dialect pronunciation of
Italian *compare*, “companion, godfather”]

goomer *n* A hypochondriac [1970s+ Medical; fr *get out of my*
emergency room] *See* GOMER

goon modifier: *goon squad/ his goon tactics* *n* **1** A strong, rough,
intimidating man, esp a paid ruffian: *Fondled, pinched, handled by a*
big red-haired goon who was our jailer **2** Any unattractive or unliked
person; JERK, PILL: *He had the face of a pure goon* **3** The police [mid-
1930s+; origin uncertain; perhaps entirely fr the name of Alice the
Goon, a large hairy creature who appeared in E C Segar's comic
strip “Thimble Theatre” in 1936, but who had a very gentle

disposition; perhaps connected with Frederick Lewis Allen's term for "a person with a heavy touch," that is, a literary or stylistic touch, found by 1921; perhaps fr *gooney*]

go on *interj* A mild exclamation of disbelief, esp when one is praised:
Oh, go on, I'm not that good (1940s +)

goon boy *n phr* A despised person; GEEK, JERK, NERD (1950s + *Students*)

go something or someone **one better** *v phr* To surpass or outbid;
raise the standard: *That wasn't a bad offer, but I'll go you one better*
[1845 + Gamblers; fr the raising of bets in poker]

gooned or **gooned out** *v phr* Intoxicated; HIGH, STONED: *Getting gooned on Nyquil (1960s +)*

gooney *n* A stupid person; simpleton; fool [1895 + ; fr earlier *goney*, *gonus*, "simpleton," found by 1580, and of obscure origin]

gooney bird *n phr* The DC-3 airplane: *Pilots everywhere refer to it with great affection as the "Gooney Bird" after the albatross* [WWII aviators; fr the slow but sure flight of the *gooney bird*, "black-footed albatross," the bird so called by seamen because of its foolish look and awkward behavior when on the ground]

goonk *See* GUNK

goonlet *n* A young hoodlum or ruffian: *Cops handle young goonlets gently (1940s +)*

goon squad *n phr* A group of ruffians • Used of the opposition by both sides in labor disputes: *A few weeks later, another "goon squad," as they have been rightly labeled/ What some doctors deride as*

investigative “goon squads” (mid-1930s +)

go on the hook for something *v phr* To go into debt: *So you’ll go on the hook for one of those eighty-dollar sports-car coats (1950s +)*

go on track *v phr* To patrol an area seeking prostitution customers;
HOOK: *Then I’d go on track till 4 AM, sleep two more hours, and start over (1970s + Prostitutes)*

goop¹ or **goup** *n* **1** A nasty viscid substance; GLOP, GOO: *Suck up the goop and then spill it over* **2** Stupidly sentimental material; sugary rubbish: *who can’t transcend the Positive Mental Attitude goop she is forced to utter [1940s + ; probably fr goo]*

goop² *n* A stupid and boorish person; CLOD, KLUTZ [1900 + ; fr the name of an unmannerly creature invented by the humorist Gelett Burgess in the late 1800s]

goophead *n* A minor skin lesion; ZIT: *whiteheads, blackheads, goopheads, goobers, pips (1980 + Teenagers)*

goopher *See* GOOFER

goopy *adj* **1** Viscid; nastily sticky: *You certainly tend to get goopy fancy food these days* **2** Stupidly sentimental; maudlin; GOOEY: *There’s no way to talk about that without sounding goopy/ Please, not another goopy eulogy to the past (1940s +)*

goose *n* **1** A rough prod in the anal region: *He threatened a goose, and I cringed* **2** A strong verbal prodding: *The whole bunch needed a good goose* *v* **1** To prod someone roughly and rudely in the anal region, usu as a coarse and amiable joke: *As she was bending over her lab*

table, a playful lab assistant goosed her (1881 +) **2** To exhort strongly and irritably; goad harshly: *and goosed the media into hyping them/ Every once in a while goose it with defense spending (1930s +)* **3** To run an engine at full speed or with spurts of high speed; GUN: *Vroom-vroom-vroom, he goosed the engine to full-throated life (1940s +)* [fr the presumed prodding action of an angry goose; influenced by an earlier sense, “to do the sex act to; screw,” where the instrument is a tailor’s goose, a smoothing iron with a curved handle, found by 1690] **See** COOK someone’s GOOSE, as FULL OF SHIT AS A CHRISTMAS GOOSE, LOOSE AS A GOOSE

goose bumps (or pimple) n phr A roughness of the skin or the production of small pimples on the skin as the result of fear, cold, or excitement; gooseflesh (*first form 1930s +, second 1914 +*)

goose-bumpy adj Frightened; panicky: *goes goose-bumpy at the thought of hooking a 50-pound sailfish (1930s +)*

goose egg n phr Zero; nothing; a score of zero; ZILCH: *My contribution appears to have been a great big goose egg (1866 + Baseball)*

goose something up v phr To make something more exciting, intense, impressive, etc; JAZZ something UP: *If we tried to goose it up too much, it wouldn’t help anybody (1970s +)*

goosy or goosey adj Touchy; jumpy; sensitive: *I feel a little goosy about the whole thing/ Hennessey was goosey anyway, and he jumped (1906 +)* **See** LOOSE AS A GOOSE

go out v phr 1 To die (1888 +) **2** (also **go out like a light**) To lose

consciousness; PASS OUT: *Last thing I heard before I went out was the siren/ Something swished and I went out like a light (1930s +)*

go out of one's skull v phr **1** To become very tense; get nervous: *You can go out of your skull while they're doing that* **2** To become very excited; be overcome with emotion; GO APE: *They went out of their skulls when she grabbed the mike to sing* **3** To be overcome with tedium; fret with boredom: *The silence made him go right out of his skull (1960s +)*

go out of one's way v phr To make a special effort; try very hard;
BEND OVER BACKWARDS: *I went out of my way to be nice to the guy (1876 +)*

go out on a limb v phr To put oneself in a vulnerable position; take a risk: *OK, I'll go out on a limb and vouch for you (1897 +)*

go over v phr To succeed; be accepted: *This demonstration will never go over with the hard hats [1910 + ; go in this sense is found by 1742]*

go over big v phr To succeed very well; be received with great approval: *Her proposal went over big with the biggies [1920s + ; the form go big is found by 1903]*

go overboard v phr **1** To be smitten with love or helpless admiration: *He went overboard for her right away* **2** To commit oneself excessively or perilously; overdo: *Take a couple, but don't go overboard* **3** JUMP OFF THE DEEP END (1931 +)

go over like a lead balloon v phr To fail miserably; FLOP: *The whole thing went over like a lead balloon (1940s +)*

go over the hill v phr To go absent without leave from a military unit (1920s + *Armed forces*)

go over with a bang v phr To succeed splendidly; be enthusiastically approved: *My idea for a new bulletin board went over with a bang* (1928 +)

goozle n The throat (1800s +)

go pfft (or phut or phffft or poof) v phr To end or fail; dissolve; break up; FIZZLE: *Their romance went pfft after that/ This year, two ballyhooed mergers have gone phffft/ New opportunities are emerging even as old ones go poof* [1930s +, second form by 1880s; used by gossip columnists; fr the British echoic phrase *go phut*, “come to grief, fizzle out,” found by 1888, and imitative of the sound of a dull impact]

gopher¹ n 1 A young thief or hoodlum: *tough West Side gophers who wouldn't hesitate to use a gun* (1893 +) **2** A safecracker (1901 + *Underworld*) **3** A safe or vault (1970s + *Underworld*); (1870s +) **4** GOFER

gopher² v To hit a GOFER BALL in baseball: *only about the fifth or sixth that Orosco had gophered home the eventual gamer*

gopher ball See GOFER BALL

go piss up a rope sentence Go away and do something characteristically stupid; GET LOST, GO FLY A KITE: *He asked for another contribution and I told him to go piss up a rope* (1940s +)

go pittypat v phr (also **pit-a-pat** or **pitterpat**) To beat strongly and excitedly; pump with joy and anticipation: *My veteran heart went*

pittypat (1601 +)

go places v phr To do very well in one's work; have a successful career; make good (1930s +)

go postal v phr To succumb to tension and fatigue; LOSE IT, STRESS OUT
[1990s + Computer; a grim reference to “the unfortunate number of postal employees in recent years who have snapped or gone on shooting rampages”—*Macon Telegraph*]

go pound salt (or sand) v phr (Variation: **up** one's **ass** may be added) To do something degrading and humiliating; GO FUCK oneself:
He told Glazer and the feds to go pound sand, in legal terms, of course
[1950s +; the date should probably be earlier]

go public v phr To reveal oneself; acknowledge openly; COME OUT OF THE CLOSET: *how she adjusted to going public as a single-breasted woman/ Rumor is that the FBI is about to go public with another suspect* [fr the financial idiom *go public*, “offer stock for sale in the stock market after it had previously been held in a family or otherwise privately”]

gorilla n 1 (also **gorill**) A ruffian; GOON: *Strong-arm men, gorillas, and tough gangsters/ Those gorills do not care anything about law* (1904 +)
2 A hired killer; HIT MAN (1920s +) **3** Anything very powerful and unstoppable; anything very forceful and intimidating: *It is very simple to create the appearance of a “gorilla,” a product with a lot of momentum* (1980s +) **v 1** To steal or rob with threat and violence: *if you let somebody gorilla you out of some money* (1960s +) **2** To beat someone up; savage someone; CLOBBER: *If that doesn't work, we'll*

gorilla a little bit/ You ain't gonna gorilla anybody (1960s +) See SIX-HUNDRED-POUND GORILLA

gorilla juice *n phr* Anabolic steroids and other substances used by body-builders, weightlifters, etc, to increase bulk and musculature (1980s +)

gork *n 1* A stuporous or imbecilic patient; a patient who has lost brain function: *The gork in that room has the "O" sign, did you notice?/ By any definition, a gork. Lived a few minutes (1980s + Medical)* <2> A despised person; DORK, GEEK, JERK: *Hubert is such a gork. His glasses are always falling off his nose, and he wears plaids with stripes (1980s + Students)* *v* To sedate a patient heavily (1980s + Medical) [said to be fr *God only really knows*, referring to a patient with a mysterious ailment]

gorked or **gorked out** *adj* or *adj phr* Stuporous; semiconscious; heavily sedated; SPACED-OUT (1980s + Medical)

gork out *v phr* To become stuporous or comatose (1980s + Medical)

gorm *v* To eat voraciously [1850 + Students; fr *gormandize*]

gormless *adj* Stupid; slow-witted; DUMB [1746 + British; fr British dialect *gaumless*, "half-silly," lacking *gaum*, "understanding"; the dated sense is in the form *gaumless*; the entry spelling is found by 1883]

go-round *n* A turn; a repetition: *That was nice. Let's have another go-round (1960s +)*

go round and round *v phr* To quarrel; squabble; fight: *They went round and round on the same issues for hours [1970s + ; go-round, "a*

fight,” is found by 1891]

gorp¹ v To eat greedily; GOBBLE, GORM [1940s +; probably fr British *gawp up*, “to devour”]

gorp² n A food mixture of dried fruit, nuts, and seeds, consumed esp by hikers, alpinists, etc [1980s +; said to be fr *good old raisins and peanuts* and probably related to *gorp¹*]

go screw *sentence* or v phr GO FUCK oneself: *Until that time, all those more experienced guys could go screw*

gosh *interj* A mild exclamation of pleasure, disbelief, surprise, etc: *Gosh but I’m tickled, Reverend* [1757 +; a euphemism for *God*]

gosh-awful *adj* Wretched; miserable; DARNED: *Isn’t that picture gosh-awful?* ***adv*** Extremely: *Wasn’t it gosh-awful dark in there?* (1900 +)

◁**go shit in your hat**▷ ***See*** SHIT IN YOUR HAT

go sit on a tack *sentence* Cease annoying me; GO FLY A KITE, GO TO HELL (1900 +)

go slumming *See* SLUM

go soak yourself (or your head) *sentence* Cease annoying me; GO TO HELL: *When I asked for a date she told me to go soak my head* (1884 +)

go some v phr To go very fast: *By the first turn we were going some* (1911 +)

go sour v phr To become unsatisfying; fail; disappoint: *After a couple of years of fame it all went sour* (1935 +)

go south (also head south, take a turn south) v phr 1 To

disappear; fail by or as if by vanishing: *He played unbelievably, then all of a sudden he just went south/ North Goes South/ Royals' offense heads south when Cone takes turn on mound (1940s +)* 2 To abscond with money, loot, etc: *She went south with a couple of silk pieces/ I hope he doesn't go South with the winnings (1925 +)* 3 To cheat, esp to cheat at cards: *go south 1: Palm cards or chips 2: Quit a game while winning, pretending to have suffered losses (1950 + Underworld)* 4 To lessen; diminish: *concern about injury went south/ His salary request needs to take a turn south/ The price immediately heads south in a highly competitive market (1980s +)* [probably fr the notion of disappearing south of the border, to Texas or to the Mexican border, to escape legal pursuit and responsibility; probably reinforced by the widespread Native American belief that the soul after death journeys to the south, attested in American Colonial writing fr the mid-1700s; GTT, "Gone to Texas, absconded," is found by 1839]

gospel (truth) n The absolute truth: *His book's the gospel*

gospel-pusher n A preacher; minister

go steady v phr To have a constant and only boyfriend or girlfriend:
Going steady means taking out one girl until a better one comes along (1905 +)

go straight v phr To renounce a life of crime; reform; Slipper
(1919 + Underworld)

go straight to dessert See CUT TO THE CHASE

got See NO GOT

gotcha interj Got you; caught you: *a gotcha campaign n 1* A wound or

injury, usu minor like a slight razor slice incurred while shaving:
Remember the gotchas you got from that worn old wrench? 2 A
capture; a catch; an arrest: *"This is a gotcha," Johnson allegedly told Jaffee* 3
Gleeful and persistent faultfinding and personal recrimination, esp a particular fault loudly found: *The Admissions office at Georgetown revealed that blacks on average had lower test scores. "Gotcha!" was the attitude among critics/ a gigantic game of "gotcha," leading the Senate into what he described as "uncharted waters" (1980s +) [fr got you]*

gotchie *n* The prank of pulling the underwear upward from behind by the waistband; WEDGIE (1980s + *Canadian children*)

got it made *v phr* To have all the trappings for success; to be in an advantageous position: *with all those degrees, she has it made* (1955 +)

go the distance *v phr* To finish an arduous effort; persist to the end: *Don't start this if you can't go the distance* (1940s + *fr horse racing*)

go the extra mile *v phr* To make an extra effort; do more than usual: *It is time to communicate that. It is time to go that extra mile/ But for women, you have to go the extra mile to prove your credibility* (1980s +)

go the hang-out road *v phr* To make a complete disclosure; abandon all concealment; LET IT ALL HANG OUT (1960s +)

go the limit (or all the way) *v phr* To do the sex act, as distinct from heavy petting, foreplay, etc: *all-American girl must not "go the limit"* [1925 + ; entry form fr poker, "to bet the maximum

allowed”]

go the whole hog or go whole hog v phr To do the utmost; not slacken; pursue to the limit; GO THE WHOLE NINE YARDS: *He decided to go the whole hog and buy a real big boat* [1828 + ; fr the notion of buying an entire animal and not a butchered part of it; *go the whole animal* is found as a variant by 1890]

go the whole nine yards v phr To do the utmost; GO THE LIMIT, GO THE WHOLE HOG: *I went the whole nine yards (1960s +)* **See the** WHOLE NINE YARDS

go through v phr **1** To search and rob a place (1860 +) **2** To use up, esp eat or spend in a short amount of time

go through changes v phr **1** To work very hard; strive; HUSTLE **2** To pass through various emotional difficulties; be unstable and unsure: *Since last July 31, he has “gone through every change, from suicidal to who gives a shit” (1952 + Black)*

go through the cellar v phr To plummet; fall disastrously; GO SOUTH: *The ratings went through the cellar (1980s +)*

go (or be) through the mill v phr To have practical experience of something; be thoroughly seasoned: *I think you can rely on her; she’s been through the mill (1859 +)*

go through the motions v phr To imitate some action rather than perform it; simulate a feeling, stance, etc: *Are you really remorseful, or just going through the motions? (1816 +)*

go through the roof v phr To become very upset and angry; GO BALLISTIC, HIT THE CEILING: *All I said was “Cool it,” and she hit the roof (1950s +)*

go Titanic v phr To sink or fail: *project went Titanic* [from the sinking of the famous ship *Titanic*]

go to bat v phr To be tried for a crime (1940s + *Underworld*)

go to bat against v phr Oppose; contend against: *None of her victims would go to bat against her (1940s +)*

go to bat for v phr To support or defend; help: *to judge by how he'd gone to bat for him*

go to bed v phr To be in final form ready for the press: *I can predict before the paper goes to bed (1930s+ Newspaper office)*

go to bed with someone v phr To do the sex act with someone; SLEEP WITH someone (1940s+)

go to blazes sentence GO TO HELL (1853+)

go to Denmark v phr To have a sex-change operation; become a transsexual [1960s+; fr the fact that such operations were originally done primarily in Denmark]

go toe to toe v phr To fight, esp to fight hard; SLUG IT OUT: *They are going toe-to-toe with Cosmo, Glamour/ Men in the courtroom can go toe to toe and then go off patting each other on the back (1940s+)*

go-to guy n phr 1 A player to whom the ball is thrown for a fairly sure score: *He was our go-to guy down low. And you knew if he got fouled he'd make his free throws/ He's once again the go-to guy on the best team in the conference (1990s+ Basketball) 2 (also go-to office)* The best person or place to go for information, action, etc: *Professor Wilson is the main go-to guy on race and poverty for the institutions that shape agendas/ His became the go-to office for getting things done (1990s+)*

◁**go to hell**▷ **sentence** May you be accursed, confounded, humiliated, etc; DROP DEAD, GO FUCK oneself: *He wanted me to lie, but I told him to go to hell (1836+)* **v phr** To deteriorate; be ruined: *The whole town's gone to hell, with that new mayor/ Old Joe's gone to hell*

a bit lately (1930s +)

go to hell in a handbasket (or a bucket) v phr To deteriorate badly and rapidly; GO DOWNHILL: *White people can go to hell in a handbasket. They can go to Burger King and not have their way (1980s +)*

go to pot v phr To deteriorate; worsen; GO DOWNHILL, GO TO HELL: *A group of men who had literally and figuratively let themselves go to pot get back into good physical condition/ A middle-aged man going to pot gets more than muscle tone from heavy exercise [1831 + ; fr the condition of an animal no longer useful for breeding, egg-laying, etc, that will now be cooked in the pot]*

go (or be taken) to the cleaners v phr To lose all one's money, esp gambling at craps; TAKE A BATH (1907 +)

go to the dogs v phr GO TO HELL, GO TO POT [1864 + ; fr the notion that something unfit for human food would be given to the lowly dogs]

go to the glass v phr To shoot for a basket [1990s + Basketball; fr the glass backboard of the basket]

go to the mat v phr To fight; contend mightily: *They soon stopped sparring and went to the mat [1908 + ; fr the mat used as a wrestling site]*

go to the wall v phr 1 To be ruined and destitute; collapse: *if a real biggie, like Brazil, say, went to the wall (1589 +)* 2 To do sacrifice oneself; give way to another's interest; GO ALL THE WAY: *We've gone to the wall for you (1858 +)* [first sense fr the plight of someone being executed by being shot, against a wall]

go to (or down to) the wire v phr To be in very close competition until the very end; be NIP AND TUCK: *The 1928 pennant race between the As and the Yanks went to the wire (1901 +)*

go to town v phr **1** To do very well; succeed; perform impressively **2** To throw off restraint; let go (1933 +)

got up on (or out of) the wrong side of the bed v phr To be peevish, perverse, etc; be in a nasty mood: *He just about bit my head off, must have got up on the wrong side of the bed (1930s +)*

got what it takes v phr To have the right tools or aspects for success: *that singer's got what it takes*

gouge v To cheat; FLIM-FLAM, SCAM: *Looks respectable, but this place regularly gouges the customer (1875 +)*

go under v phr To fail; sink; esp to lose consciousness (1880 +)

go underground v phr To go into hiding; to operate in secret: *the school newspaper went underground/ the persecuted go underground*

goup *See* GOOP¹

go up v phr **1** To become intoxicated from narcotics (1960s + *Narcotics*) **2** To forget one's lines (1920 + *Theater*)

go up against v phr To confront; face; challenge: *So that's the kind of piffle actors have to go up against (1940s +)*

go up in smoke or flames v phr To be ruined; be destroyed: *He just saw his beautiful scam go up in smoke (1933 +)*

go up in the air v phr **1** To miss a cue, forget one's lines, etc; FLUFF

(1920+ *Theater*) **2** To lose one's composure; become angry; LOSE one's COOL: *You will rouse his anger, and he may "go up in the air"* (1906+)

go (or hit) upside one's face (or head) v phr 1 To beat and pummel, esp around the head **2** To defeat utterly; trounce; CLOBBER (1960s+ *Black*)

go up the wall See CLIMB THE WALL

gourd n The head; skull (1844+) **See** LOSE one's GOURD, OUT OF one's HEAD

gow (GOU) n 1 Opium (1915+ *Underworld*) **2** Any narcotic (1915+ *Underworld*) **3** Pictures of unclad or scarcely clad women; LEG ART: *this type of artwork, which in the newspaper field is called cheesecake and in the paperbooks field is "gow" (mid-1950s+)* [fr Canton Chinese, *yao-ka*, "sap, opium"]

gowed up adj phr Intoxicated with a narcotic; HIGH, HOPPED UP: *some gowed-up runt* (1940s+ *Narcotics*)

go west v phr To be spoiled or ruined; also, to die: *valuable evidence gone west* (1910+)

go whole hog See GO THE WHOLE HOG

go with v phr To date exclusively or go steady: *he's gone with her for four years* (1890s+)

go with the flow v phr To consign oneself to the order and pace of things; be passive: *They pondered a while and decided to go with the flow and they all went back to sleep/ Really, I'm just trying to go with the flow* [1960s+ *Counterculture*; probably a reference to Taoism]

go (or come) with the territory (or turf) v phr To be an integral part of some occupation or status, esp a part that is not especially delightful: *At EPA It Goes With the Territory/ Tierney's answer was that such speculation "goes with the territory"/ Such embarrassments come with the turf, however* [1960s+; fr the conditions implicit in a sales representative's covering of a certain *territory*, popularized by use in the Requiem section of Arthur Miller's 1949 play *Death of a Salesman*]

gowster n A marijuana user; POTHEAD (1930s+ *Narcotics*)

grab n An arrest; BUST, PINCH: *We will get credit for the grab, and we will also profit/ The only thing worse than no grab is a bad grab* (1753+ *Police*) **v** To seize the admiration or attention of; impress: *How does that grab you?/ to reflect on a whole lot of things that had been grabbing me* (1966+)

grab a handful of air v phr To apply the brakes of a truck or bus quickly [1930s+ *Truckers*; fr the fact that such vehicles have *hand-operated air* brakes]

◁**grab-ass or grabarse**▷ **n** Sexual touching and clutching: *less anxious, less suspicious about my merry games of grabarse* (1940s+)
See PLAY GRAB-ASS

grab-bag n A miscellaneous mixture; random collection: *the grab-bag of memories in my muddled head* [1855+; dated sense refers to a carnival game in which one may reach inside a bag of small prizes after paying a fee]

grabber n Anything that seizes and rivets the attention; something

that commands immediate admiration; HOOK: *Dance within the regular format is a solid grabber/ He's found a real grabber (1966 +)*

See MOTHERFUCKER

grabby *adj* **1** Greedy; acquisitive; selfish: *Share that, don't be grabby (1910 +)* **2** Seizing; arresting; riveting: *spent hours working on a goddamn grabby lead (1960s +)*

grabs **See** UP FOR GRABS

grab shot *n phr* A photograph taken in great haste, without time for proper focusing, exposure-setting, etc; a photograph of opportunity (1980s +)

grab your socks **See** DROP YOUR COCKS AND GRAB YOUR SOCKS

grad *modifier:* a grad student/ grad reunion **n** A graduate: *college grad (1871 + Students)*

grade **See** EATIN' STUFF

grade, the **See** MAKE THE GRADE

grade-grubber *n* A very hardworking student who is also popular with teachers

graft *n* **1** One's occupation; GAME, RACKET (1853 + *British*) **2** The acquisition of money by dishonest means, esp by bribery for political favors: *the usual charges of graft at City Hall (1865 +)* [origin unknown; an 1883 source connects the two senses: *Graft. To work. Grafting. Helping another to steal*]

grain *n* Marijuana; GRASS, POT: *You been smoking too much grain. You head is juiced (1980s + Narcotics)*

gramps *n* Grandfather; any old man: *Need any help, gramps?*
[1940s + ; *gramp* is found by 1898]

gran *n* Grandmother: *gran made cookies*

grand *n* A thousand dollars; GEE: *A banker would scarcely call one thousand dollars “one grand”* [1920 + Underworld & sports; said to have originated with Peaches Van Camp, a criminal who flashed such *grand* notes for ostentation]

grand bounce, the *n phr* the BOUNCE

Grand Central Station *n phr* Any place that is overcrowded and busy; MOB SCENE: *My office was like Grand Central Station this morning*

granddaddy of all something *n phr* The most venerable, most impressive, largest, etc, of what is named; doyen; dean; MOTHER OF ALL something: *The Newport is the granddaddy of all jazz festivals* (1956 +)

grandfather *v* To give someone a special status or privilege because of service before the time a new or definitive arrangement is made: *Some farmers just got grandfathered in, that’s true* [1900 + ; fr the *grandfather clause* often written into new arrangements in order to be fair to older incumbents or practitioners; the date indicates the earliest instance of *grandfather clause*]

grandma *n* **1** The lowest and slowest gear of a truck; CREEPER (1940s + *Truckers*) **2** Any old woman: *Can I carry your groceries, grandma?* (1940s +) [the second sense’s date must be much earlier]

grand slam modifier: grand-slam home run *n phr* **1** The winning of

all the goals, games, prizes, etc, available; total comprehensive victory: *Nobody won the tennis grand slam last year (1814 +)* **2** GRAND SLAMMER (1940 + Baseball) [fr a bridge term for winning all the tricks in one hand]

grand slammer n phr A home run hit when all the bases are occupied, and scoring four runs (1940 + Baseball)

grandstand modifier: a grandstand catch v To play or perform in a brilliant and spectacular way, esp in order to get the approval of an audience; HOT DOG, SHOW OFF: *Coach told him to stop grandstanding and take care of business (1895 + Students)*

grandstander n A person who habitually grandstands; HOT DOG, SHOW-OFF (1895 + Students)

grandstand play n phr **1** A play made with special brilliance and brio, esp in order to impress the spectators **2** Any action, speech, tactic, etc, designed to appeal to spectators; a tour de force: *The President's pronouncement's just a grandstand play (1888 + Baseball)*

granny dress n phr A floor-length dress, usu with long sleeves and a high neckline (1960s +)

granny (or grampa) dumping n phr The abandonment of helpless and destitute old people by families that cannot care for them: *Some overwhelmed families turn to granny dumping, abandoning their relatives at hospital emergency rooms/ John Kingery, 82, victim of Alzheimer's, found abandoned in his wheelchair at a dog track, drew national attention to the phenomenon of grandpa dumping (1991 +)*

granny flat n phr A small cottage or apartment where elderly people

may live near but not actually with their children's family; Mother-in-Law Apartment (1965 +)

granny glasses *n phr* Eyeglasses with small, circular steel or gold frames (1960s +)

granny tax *n phr* A state tax on nursing-home beds: *Groups who represent the elderly consider Thompson's proposal a "granny tax" (1990s +)*

granola modifier: geeky granola-type Ely/ Fort Collins isn't really into hard music. There's a granola scene here **n** A person who is objectionably or prissily devoted to the 1960s values of environmental awareness, multiethnic tolerance, healthy "natural" diet, usu vegetarian, precious antiquated tastes, etc; EARTH MUFFIN: *Stephanie turned into a granola when she started college. She won't even eat at McDonald's/ Elizabeth was far too granola for Jason, what with her herb garden and Celtic record collection [late 1980s + Students; fr a multigrain WK Kellogg breakfast cereal devised around 1886]*

grape *n* Wine or champagne (1636 +)

grapefruit league *n phr* The association of major-league teams as they play each other in preseason training [1937 + Baseball; fr the fact that most spring training camps are held in citrus-growing regions]

grapevine *adj* Coming from an unofficial source of rumor or news: *a grapevine item/ grapevine gossip (1863 +)*

grapevine, the *n* The source and route of rumors and unofficial

news: *I heard it through the grapevine (Civil War)*

grass n 1 The straight hair typical of Caucasians (1950s + *Black*) **2** (also **grass weed**) Marijuana; POT: *smoking a little grass and passing on venereal disease/ Scoring grass here is easier than buying a loaf of bread (1930s + Narcotics)* **See** one's ASS IS GRASS

grass-cutter or **grass-clipper n** A very hard-hit ground ball (1868 + *Baseball*)

grasshopper n A person who smokes marijuana; POTHEAD: *My wife was a little grasshopper herself. But she didn't go on to become an addict (1960s + Narcotics)*

grass widow n phr A woman who is alone because of divorce, separation, rejection, etc [1839 +; because her husband is still above the *grass* rather than under it]

gratis See FREE GRATIS

gram v To worry; fret: *All a bookmaker grams about is they don't drop an atom bomb [1950s +; perhaps fr Middle English *gramen*, "be afflicted or tormented," fr Old English]*

grave See HAVE ONE FOOT IN THE GRAVE

gravel See HIT THE DIRT

graveyard shift n phr A working shift that begins at midnight or 2 AM (1907 +)

graveyard watch n phr A period of guard or watch duty from midnight to 4 AM or 8 AM (1927 + *Railroad & Navy*)

gravity check *n phr* A fall from a surfboard, snowboard, etc

gravy *n* Money or other valuables beyond what one actually earns or needs; a bonus or excess: *Once we make back our expenses, everything else is gravy* (1910+)

gravy train (or **boat**), the *n phr* A chance, job, business, etc, that gives a very ample return for little or no work; an obvious sinecure; the LIFE OF RILEY: *His job's a permanent gravy train/ Thus, railroad workers referred to a short haul that paid well as a "gravy train" (fr railroad 1927+)* **See** ON THE GRAVY TRAIN, RIDE THE GRAVY TRAIN

Gray Bar Motel *n phr* Jail; prison: *These days, the Gray Bar Motel is a synonym for "the bucket," which means jail* [1990s+ Los Angeles police; said to have been the name of the Lincoln Heights police station; a place displaying gray prison bars; earlier terms like *Graybar Hotel* and *Graystone College* are found by the 1930s]

graybeard *n* A very senior pilot (1970s+ *Airline*)

gray market *n phr* The sale of reputable products, esp cameras and electronic equipment, by persons who have not bought them from the manufacturers' authorized distributors and hence offer lower prices because the products do not qualify for the makers' guarantees: *There is a growing "gray" market for Levi's* (1960s+)

gray matter *n phr* Intelligence; BRAINS, SMARTS (1899+)

gray mule **See** WHITE MULE

graze *v* To eat small amounts often: *"I don't eat meals," she said. "I graze all day long"/ Cindy Crawford grazing at the salad bar*

(1980s +)

grazer *n* **1** A person who grazes rather than eats meals **2** A person who shifts rapidly from one television station to another; CHANNEL SURFER: *Comedy will come in quick bursts, aimed at TV grazers who flip around the dial with their remotes (1980s +)*

greafa or **greapha** *See* GREEFA

grease *n* **1** Money (1800s +) **2** Bribe or protection money; money given for corrupt purposes: *They get so much grease it takes them half a block just to change direction (1823 +)* **3** Butter (WWII Army) **4** Food (Persian Gulf War Army) **5** A gun: *You handled the grease real good, but not good enough, you didn't kill them* **v** To shoot, esp to kill by shooting: *He has a gun and might try to grease you (WWII armed forces)* [the verb *to grease*, "to bribe," is found by 1557; last two senses fr *greasegun*, a WWII submachine gun] *See* AXLE GREASE, ELBOW GREASE, GREASE someone's PALM

greaseball *n* ◀**1**▶ A dark-skinned, dark-haired person of Mediterranean or Latin American origin; DAGO, GREASER: *taking knives away from greaseballs in zoot suits/ This time the greaseball smacked her. They were taking turns smacking her (1915 +)* **2** A dirty tramp (1920s + Hoboes) **3** A cook or kitchen worker (WWII Navy) **4** A hamburger stand or concession (1940s + Circus) **5** An actor who uses too much makeup or greasepaint (1920s + Theater)

greased lightning *n phr* Something or someone extraordinarily fast; a BLUE STREAK: *He got out of there like greased lightning (1848 +)*

grease job *n phr* A very smooth landing (WWII aviators) *See* GIVE

someone A GREASE JOB

grease joint *n phr* **1** The cookhouse and eating tent (1920s + *Circus & carnival*) **2** A hamburger stand (1914 +)

grease monkey *n phr* **1** A worker who lubricates machines, esp automobiles: *Good grease monkeys all, they could think better with a grease rack to lean against* **2** A stoker, oiler, or wiper on a ship (*Merchant marine*) **3** Any mechanic, esp an automotive mechanic (1920s +)

grease (or **cross** or **oil**) someone's **palm** *v phr* To pay someone for a corrupt purpose; bribe; buy favors: *If you grease the commissioner's palm, you can get anything fixed/ Officials whose palms have been crossed* (1581 +)

greaser *n* ◀ **1** ► GREASEBALL • Used esp in referring to a Mexican or an Italian (1849 +) **2** A hoodlum, petty thief, etc; PUNK: *Stradazzi. Looks like a greaser, too* (1950s + *Teenagers*) **3** A very smooth landing (1980 + *Aviators*) [second sense fr the *grease* used for their typical combed-back hairstyle]

grease the wheels *v phr* To make things go smoothly; facilitate (1809 +)

grease trough (or **pit**) *n phr* A lunch counter or lunchroom: *Imagine yourself in the grease trough again/ a shadowy grease pit midway between* (1940s +)

greasy *adj* **1** Repellent in an unctuous and cunning way; OILY (1529 +) **2** Muddy and slippery: *to negotiate a "greasy" mile before an approving audience* (1950s + *Horse racing*)

greasy spoon *n phr* A small, cheap restaurant, lunchroom, or diner:
The Marx brothers ate in coffee pots and greasy spoons/ your above-average greasy spoon in Boston's Back Bay (1925 +

great *adj* Excellent; wonderful: *Hey, that's really great (1848 +)* *n* A famous person, esp an athlete or entertainer: *Weiss, a former football "great" (1400 +)*

great divide *n phr* A divorce

greatest, the *n phr* A person or thing of superlative quality; the MOST
(1950s + Bop & cool talk)

greatest thing since sliced bread, the *See* the BEST THING SINCE SLICED BREAD

great guns *See* GO GREAT GUNS

Great something or somebody **in the Sky** *n phr* Heaven; God; the ultimate authority: *Senator Levin will be in the Great Committee Room in the Sky before Congress revisits the lobbyist mess/ We'll leave this play to that Great Critic in the Sky (1970s +)*

great shakes *See* NO GREAT SHAKES

great unwashed, the *n phr* The common people, hoi polloi: *in the auditorium with the great unwashed*

greedball *n* Professional baseball as administered and played by very high-paid and wealthy persons *(1980s +)*

greedhead *n* An avaricious person; GREEDYGUT: *The man's corrupt! A total greedhead! (1970 +)*

greedygut or **greedyguts** *n* A glutton; CHOW HOUND, PIG: *One has no*

problem with Clifford Irving, a mere greedyguts (1546 +)

greefa *n* (Variations: **goifa** or **greafa** or **greapha** or **greefo** or **greeta** or **grefa** or **grieho** or **griffa** or **grifo**) Marijuana or a marijuana cigarette [1930s + Narcotics; fr Mexican Spanish *griffa*, “weed”]

Greek *n* 1 A Greek-letter fraternity member (1900 + *College students*)

2 A professional gambler, esp a card-sharp (1528 + *Gambling*) *See*

ALL GREEK TO

◁**Greek way** (or **style**), the▷ *n phr* Anal intercourse, esp

heterosexual: *Another request is for Greek style. That is, anal sex*

green *adj* Advocating environmental protection; proecological • The

opposite of *brown* (1970s +) *n* Money, esp ready cash; FOLDING MONEY:

plus “green” or “front money” to pay off others (1920s + Underworld

& sports) *See* LONG GREEN, MEAN GREEN

green apples *See* SURE AS GOD MADE LITTLE GREEN APPLES

green (or **blue**) **around the gills** *adj phr* Sick-looking; pale and

miserable; nauseated: *He was looking green around the gills, so I told*

him to lie down [1930s +; the date should probably be earlier; *gills*,

“face,” is found by 1626]

◁**green-ass**▷ *adj* New and inexperienced; callow; green: *I spent*

thirty-four months havin’ green-ass corporals chew me up (1940s +)

greenback *n* A dollar bill [1870 +; said to have been coined by

Salmon P Chase, who died in 1873]

green fingers *n phr* Exceptional skill at growing plants (1934 +)

green folding *n phr* FOLDING MONEY (1950s +)

green goods *n phr* Counterfeit paper money (1887 +)

greenhorn *n* An inexperienced person; newcomer; neophyte; ROOKIE
(1753 +)

green ice *n phr* Emeralds (1950s + *Underworld*)

greenie *n* **1** GREENHORN (1830s +) **2** A heart-shaped green stimulant pill of dextroamphetamine: *Do you take something, like greenies?/ Greenies are pep pills and a lot of baseball players couldn't function without them* (1960s + *Narcotics*) **3** A traffic ticket (1990s + *Los Angeles police*)

green-light *v* To approve; sanction: *Who in the world thought that Levinson's screenplay should be green-lighted?* (1968 +)

green light, the *n phr* Permission, esp a superior's approval to proceed; the GO-AHEAD: *When she got the green light, she invited the couple to see her in Washington/ have also been given the green light to advertise special plates* (1937 +)

greenmail *n* The buying, at a premium price, of the stock holdings of someone who is threatening to take over a company, in order to induce the person to cease the attempt: *The most cited recent case of greenmail occurred this spring and summer as Walt Disney Productions fought to escape a takeover/ But Wall Street analysts agreed that CBS was unlikely to consider such action, since it amounts to "greenmail"* [1983 +; modeled on *blackmail*]

green money *n phr* Paper money; ready cash; FOLDING MONEY: *shooting for green money* (1940s +)

green one *n phr* A dollar bill; dollar; BUCK, CLAM: *Alphamassage, only 15,000 green ones at Hammacher Schlemmer, plus 125 for shipping and handling (1980s +)*

green stuff, the *n phr* Money; ready cash; paper money; FOLDING MONEY, LONG GREEN: *He really poured the green stuff to the bookies (1880s +)*

green thumb, a *n phr* **1** A special talent for gardening **2** The ability to make projects succeed like flourishing plants: *possessor of a green thumb when it comes to making musicals blossom (1940s +)*

greenwash or **greenwashing** *n* The practice of promoting environmentally friendly programs to deflect attention from an organization's environmentally unfriendly or less savory activities: *using greenwashing techniques to sell themselves [green, "environmentally friendly," and (white) wash, "conceal flaws"]*

greeta or **grefa** *See* GREEFA

gremlin *n* **1** An imaginary imp who caused malfunction in machines, problems in projects, confusion in arrangements, etc • The Royal Naval Air Service apparently used the term in WWI (*WWII Army Air Forces fr British*) **2** (also **grem**, **gremmie**) A person, esp a girl, who frequents surfing beaches without surfing; BEACH BUNNY: *gremlins, usually girls, those hangers-on who may never get wet (1960s + Surfers)* [origin unknown; probably modeled on *goblin*, with the first syllable perhaps fr Irish *gruaimin*, "irascible little creature"]

greyhound therapy *n phr* The practice by some municipalities or other governmental groups of ridding themselves of the homeless and other potentially burdensome persons by giving them a bus

ticket to another place: *Greyhound therapy, giving the homeless a one-way bus ticket to Los Angeles* [mid-1980s + ; fr the trademark name of the *Greyhound* bus company]

grid or **gridiron** *modifier*: the grid squad/ gridiron victories **n** A football field

G-ride **n** Car theft; grand theft auto (1990s + *Los Angeles police*)

gridlock **n** A blockage; paralysis: *Until the emotional and psychological gridlock over the Federal deficit is broken* [1980 + ; fr the traffic term designating a total blockage of traffic caused by cars stopping in intersections behind other stopped cars and blocking traffic on the intersecting street]

grief **n** Complaints; faultfinding; reprimand: *I don't want no grief from the fourteenth floor* (1929 +) **See** GIVE SOMEONE GRIEF

griego or **grifo** or **griffa** **See** GREEFA

grievous bodily harm or **GHB** **n phr** An illegal steroid substance, gamma hydroxybutyric acid; **SCOOP**: *GHB crossed over onto the club circuit, where users refer to it as Grievous Bodily Harm* (1990s +)

grift **n** **1** Money gotten dishonestly and by one's wits, esp by swindling **2** Any dishonest way of getting money by cunning, esp the deceptions of confidence tricksters, hawkers, etc **v**: *He grifted a couple years then got a regular job* (1914 + *Carnival & circus*)

grifter **n** **1** A gambler (*Circus*) **2** A confidence trickster, hawker, minor criminal, etc **3** A hobo; vagabond; **DRIFTER** (1915 + *Carnival & circus*)

grin and bear it *v phr* To exercise forbearance and fortitude; TOUGH IT OUT (1864+)

grinch *n* A person who spoils a happy occasion, esp Christmas; spoilsport; SCROOGE: *The grinch at City Hall/ Mecham of Arizona is drawing fire as a new kind of grinch* [1980s+; fr a character in Dr Seuss's 1957 book *How the Grinch Stole Christmas*]

grind *n* 1: *to wow the audience with her bumps and grinds* (1940s+) 2: *No one except a few notorious grinds studied that night* (1864+ Students) 3: *They heard the hawker go into his grind* 4 A hawker or barker (1925+ Circus) 5 Any obnoxious or annoying person; JERK, a PAIN IN THE ASS, PILL: *The prof's a tedious old grind* (1890+) 6 Any very difficult and trying task, esp one that lasts a long time and is slowly and painfully done: *Writing dictionaries is indeed a grind* (1852+) *v* 1 To rotate one's pelvis in the sex act or in imitation of the sex act • Nearly always in combination with *bump*: *the strippers bumping and grinding away* (1940s+) 2 To study diligently: *Five days to grind and two days to be social, the way it was at Yale* (1864+ Students) 3 To attract and address a crowd at a show or concession; spiel (1925+ Circus) **See** BUMP AND GRIND, IF YOU CAN'T FIND 'EM

grindcore *n* A variety of hard-rock music: *This veteran quintet may be the purest and most primal grindcore band* (1990s+)

grinder *n* 1 A barker or hawker (1925+ Circus & carnival) 2 A stripteaser; STRIPPER (1950s+) 3 A car, esp an old and ramshackle one: *bought a brand new Chev to take the place of her old grinder* (1940s+) 4 HERO SANDWICH (1950s+) 5 A parade ground; drill field (1940s+ Marine Corps)

grind-house or **grind movie** *n* or *n phr* A theater that runs continuously without intermissions, holidays, etc: *Four years ago, it would have been restricted to a few downtown grind-houses/ He dragged me to the Times Square grind-house to which it had been relegated* [1930s+ Theater; probably fr *grind show*, perhaps influenced by the burlesque and sexual connotations of *grind*]

grinding *See* BIT-GRINDING

grind something **out** *v phr* To produce or make something, esp with uninspired precision or long and painful effort: *They sat down and ground the script out in two days/ They just grind them out ten a day* (1940s+)

grind show *n phr* A show that runs continuously [1930s+ Carnival; probably because the show *grinds* along like a machine]

◁**gringo**▷ *n* English people or Anglo-Americans: *gringo, used contemptuously by Spanish-Americans* (1849+)

grip *n* **1** A stagehand or stage carpenter: *crowded with assistant directors, character actors, movie stars, grips and electricians* (1888+ Theater & movie studio) **2** A traveling bag; valise: *Gonna pack my grip and make my getaway* (1879+) [second sense a shortening of *gripsack*]

gripe *n* **1**: *I want to clear my desk of various matters, mostly gripes* (1934+) **2** GRIPER (1930s+) *v* **1** To complain, esp habitually and trivially; groan; BITCH, KVETCH, PISS: *He got good and sore and griped* (1932+) **2** To annoy or disgust; afflict; distress: *What's griping him is that he can't do anything for the kids* (1559+) [ultimately fr

griping of the gut, “colic, bellyache, stomach cramp”]

◁**gripe one’s ass**▷ **v phr** (Variations: *balls* or **butt** or **cookies** or **left nut** or **middle kidney** or **soul**, or some other organ or possession at the whim of the speaker, may replace **ass**) To disgust or annoy someone extremely: *His sycophancy gripes my ass (1940s +)*

griper n A chronic complainer; malcontent; KVETCH (1938 +)

gripe session n phr A conversation or discussion consisting primarily of complaints (1940s +)

grip’n’grin modifier Showing someone, esp a politician, shaking hands and smiling: “*grip’n’grin*” *photographs and mind-numbing meeting minutes (1980s +)*

gripper See GROUND-GRIPPER

grit n **1** Courage; fortitude and stamina (1825 +) **2** The roadpath beside a railroad track (1950s + *Railroad*) **3** (also **grits**) Food (1930s + *Black*) ◁**4**▷ A Southerner: *He’s a hotshot down here among the grits. A good Yankee guard would eat him alive (1960s +)* **5** (also **Grit**) A white person: *It’s a God’s wonder some Grit didn’t kill us (1960s + Black)* **v** To eat (1930s + *Black*) [food senses at least partially fr *hominy grits*, although *grit* was British military slang for “food” in the 1930s; Southern dialect sense probably ironically fr Civil War use of the expression *true Yankee grit* by Northern soldiers and writers] **See** HIT THE DIRT

gritch v To complain: *gritching about the dog next door*

gritty See the NITTY-GRITTY

grody or groady or groaty or groddy *See* GROTTY

groan box *n phr* An accordion (1930 +)

groaner *See* GRUNT-AND-GROANER

groceries *n* A meal or meals: *I got hooked for the groceries (1940s +)*

See BRING HOME THE BACON

grog *n* Liquor (1770 +) [fr British naval *grog*, “rum and water,” so called because it was introduced in the mid-18th century as a sailor’s ration by “Old Grog,” Admiral Sir Edward Vernon, who habitually wore a *rogram* coat]

grogged *adj* 1 Drunk 2 Sleepy; GROGGY

groggy *adj* Sleepy; dazed; semiconscious: *Conlon was so groggy that he wanted to know why Nelson was not coaching the Warriors (1832 +)*

grog-mill *modifier*: no grog-mill cuties **n** A saloon; tavern (1940s +)

grok (GRAHK) **v** 1 To communicate sympathetically: *all rapping and grokking over the sound it made/ All the Romans grokked like Greeks (1961 + Counterculture & students)* 2 (also **grok on**) To get into exquisite sympathy with: *She met him at an acid-rock ball and she grokked him/ The Handbook of Highway Engineering, they totally grokked on it (1961 + Counterculture & students)* 3 To understand: *You’ve come to grok that Cronenberg’s narrative is merely the pretense for his imagery (1980s + Computer)* [coined by Robert A Heinlein as a Martian word in the 1961 science-fiction novel *Stranger in a Strange Land*]

grollo *n* GROWLER

grommet *n* A young surfer • Apparently a borrowing from Australia, where it is also spelled *grummit*: *an ersatz club scene for junior high-schoolers, grommets, kiddies (1986 +)*

gronk *n* Any nasty substance, like a collection in one's belly button or between one's toes: *use a Q-Tip on that gronk*

gronk out *v phr* To cease functioning; GO DOWN: *The terminal gronked out about ten minutes ago (1980s + Computer)*

grooby *adj* Excellent; GROOVY: *You, too, can get on the grooby side (1943 + Teenagers)*

groove *n* Any habitually preferred activity; what excites and gratifies one; BAG, KICK (1958 +) *v* 1 To enjoy intensely; take gratification, esp rather passively and subjectively; GO WITH THE FLOW: *To groove means to yield yourself to the flow of activity around you/ I just like to get out there and groove a little (1960s +)* 2 To like and approve; DIG: *They see the spade cats going with ofay chicks and they don't groove it (1960s +)* 3 To perform very well; be effective: *really grooving on that funny trumpet (1935 +)* [fr the sense that a musician is in a definite and exciting track, has hit a perfect stride, when playing well, esp a solo; perhaps influenced by the *grooves* of a phonograph record] **See** IN THE GROOVE

groove, a *n phr* Something excellent, desirable, exciting, etc: *Working at ABC is "a groove"/ Your hat is a groove (1960s +)*

groove on something or someone *v phr* To enjoy intensely; GROOVE: *I can really groove on the Beatles/ She walks for blocks grooving on Reality (1960s +)*

groovy *adj* **1** Playing and enjoying music well and with concentration; HEP, IN THE GROOVE (1930s + *Jive talk*) **2** Excellent; wonderful; FAR OUT: “Hey, groovy,” said Sally (1944 + *Teenagers*) **3** Obsolete; out-of-date: a way of describing, with heavy sarcasm, maroon polyester suits: “Groovy!” (1980s + *Teenagers*)

grope *v* To touch, feel, caress, fondle, etc, with seeming or actual sexual intent (1250 +) **See** GROUP-GROPE

grope-in *n* GROUP-GROPE (1960s +)

gross *adj* Disgusting; rebarbative; GROTTY: at this moment (how gross!) blowing kisses into the phone (1958 + *Teenagers*)

grossed out *adj phr* Disgusted; revulsed (1960s + *Teenagers*)

gross-out *modifier*: The Animal House gross-out movies are all about groups/ gross-out scenes of the Dalmatian mounting the smaller dog **n** Something particularly disgusting; repellent trash: *He attempts the ultimate gross-out: “self-expression” of the kind found in Greenwich Village* (1960s + *Teenagers*)

gross someone out *v phr* To disgust or offend, esp with crude and obscene language and behavior: *They’re grossing me out, too, you know/ Being a mother really grosses me out* (1968 + *Teenagers*)

grotty (GROH dee, -tee) *adj* (Variations: **grody** or **groaty** or **groddy** or **groady**; **to the max** may be added) Disgusting; nasty; repellent; bizarre; GRUNGY, SCUZZY: *The magazines had covers with those grotty weirdos on them* **n**: *the introspective hedonism and political individualism of the second group, called groddies* [mid-1960s + *Teenagers*; fr *grotesque*; popularized by the Beatles in the 1960s;

perhaps fr Merseyside dialect]

ground See BEAT TO THE GROUND, DOWN TO THE GROUND, NOT KNOW **one's** ASS FROM **one's** ELBOW, NOT KNOW **someone or something** FROM A HOLE IN THE GROUND, RUN **something** INTO THE GROUND, STAMPING GROUND

ground someone v phr To deny privileges to someone, esp to keep someone confined at home as a punishment: *If my father got a pair of bell-bottoms, I think I'd ground him* [1940s + ; fr the practice of not permitting a pilot to fly, as a punishment, the word found by 1931]

ground biscuit n phr ALLEY APPLE (1920s +)

grounder n 1 A cigarette butt (1930 + *Hoboes*) **2** A batted baseball that rolls along the ground (1861 + *Baseball*) **3** A homicide case that be easily and quickly solved: *decided to hand Kennedy the 23rd Street jumper, which he thought was a grounder* (1980s + *Police*)

ground floor See IN ON THE GROUND FLOOR

ground-gripper n 1 A landlubber **2** A sailor who neither flies in an airplane nor sails in a ship (*WWII Navy*)

ground-pounder n A military infantry soldier

ground rations n phr The sex act [1950s + Black; probably fr the sexual sense of *grind* plus the frequent association of the sex act with eating]

group See IN GROUP

group-grope n 1 Mutual touching and caressing by a group of people, either plainly orgiastic or with some sort of psychotherapeutic intent; GROPE-IN **2** Intimate intertwining of entities:

Harvard will reestablish an independent department of sociology, ending 24 years of interdisciplinary group-grope (1960s +)

groupie modifier: The “groupie” syndrome, personified by adulatory novices of science flocking around the luminaries **n 1** A young woman who seeks to share the glamour of famous persons, esp rock musicians, by offering help and sexual favors; **BUNNY:** *No fool, no groupie, no teeny-bopper, she takes rock music, rightly, seriously 2* An ardent devotee and votary; **FAN:** *like many of Hollywood’s young trendies, a political groupie/ the American literary groupies (1960s + Rock and roll)*

grouse v To complain; **BITCH:** *No grousing, no foot-dragging, both signs of a solid pro (1887 + British armed forces)*

growl v To complain; mutter angrily (1707 +)

growler n 1 (also **grollo**) A container used to carry beer home from a bar: *A can brought in filled with beer at a barroom is called a growler (1888 +, now obsolete) 2* A public-address loudspeaker or system; **BITCH BOX, SQUAWK BOX (WWII Navy) 3** A small iceberg (1912 +) **4** A police squad car; **PROWL CAR:** *They got back into the growler and took off (1980s + Police)*

grrrl modifier Aggressively feminist, as expressed in music, fashion, ideas, etc: *leader of the hard-core feminist riot grrrl movement/ media overkill about the Riot Grrrl fashion trend [1990s + ; a blend of the angry animal-like utterance grr! with girl] See RIOT GRRRL*

grrrldom n The realm and principles of an aggressive feminism: *the humorless man-hating axis of riot-grrrldom (1990s +)*

grub *n* Food: goods one can exchange at the kitchen door for grub/
nonchalantly gobble up mounds of this grub (1659+) *v*: Come over
and grub with us (*Black*)

grubbies or **grubs** or **grubbers** *n* Older, worn-out clothes, esp worn
for hanging out or doing dirty work: *Wear grubbies for the
archaeology dig*

grubbin' *n* Good food (*1990s+ Teenagers*)

grubby *adj* Not clean; dirty: *grubby kid*

grub-pile *n* A meal (*1863+ Cowboys*)

grub-slinger *n* A cook (*1912+ Cowboys*)

grubstake *n* The money needed for a new venture, new start, etc:
Nobody knows how much he gave away in grubstakes (1863+)

grudge fight (or **match**) *n phr* A sports contest in which personal
animosity figures: *Their every match is a grudge match (1930s+)*

gruesome twosome *n phr* A couple going steady (*1940s+ Teenagers*)

grunge or **grunch** (GRUHNJ, GRUHNCH) *adj* **1** Boring (*1960s+
Teenagers*) **2** GRUNGY (*1960s+ Teenagers*) *n* **1** A dull, tedious person;
NERD, PILL **2** Slovenliness; sloppiness (*1960s+ Teenagers*) **3** Something
nasty: *Those globs of guitar grunge get me off every time (1960s+
Teenagers)* **4** A style of dress featuring mismatched and rumped
garments, mostly suggesting lumberjacks, appearing to have been
bought at thrift shops and donned at random, and favored by
grunge rock musicians: *"Stuff We Hate" grunge as high fashion/
Garth's wardrobe is mostly grunge (1990s+)* **5** A kind of rock music

originally associated with Seattle, WA: *Nirvana and Pearl Jam are two of the best grunge bands (1990s +)*

grungy (GRUHN jee) *adj* Shabby; squalid; dirty; GROTTY, SCUZZY: *I put down in my grungy little notebook that Max Frisch was a wise man/ the peerless, fearless, slightly grungy Grodin to investigate [1960s + Teenagers; origin unknown; perhaps sound symbolism resembling gross, mangy, mung, stingy, etc]*

grunt n 1 A line repairer's helper who works on the ground and does not climb poles (1900 + *Line repairers*) **2** A locomotive engineer; HOGGER (1940s + *Railroad*) **3** An infantry soldier: *I was drafted and served twelve months as a grunt in Vietnam/ Now there's a willingness to tell the story of the poor grunt who got his tail shot off (Vietnam War armed forces)* **4** Any low-ranking person, neophyte, etc: *The attitude among the reporter grunts was pretty much "them against us" (late 1960s +)* **5** A bill for food or drink: *I just hope Toots didn't bring along any of the grunts I must have left in that oasis (1940s +)* **6** A diligent student; GRIND: *A grunt is a student who gives a shit about nothing except his sheepskin (1980s +)* **See** CLUCK AND GRUNT

grunt-and-groaner n A wrestler (1940s +)

grunter n A wrestler (1940s +)

grunt-horn or grunt-iron n A tuba (1940s + *Musicians*)

grunt work (or labor) n phr Hard and/or tedious toil; BULLWORK, SCUT work: *The machine will do the grunt work, filing, typing lists, comparing, sorting/ Congress returned to Washington and settled down for a month of grunt work/ Whereas Agassi's every second of court*

time is grunt labor (1977+)

G-string or **gee string** *n phr* or *n* A breechcloth, or brief covering for the genitals, worn esp by striptease dancers: *Thus the G-string became an integral part of a stripper's apparatus [1878+; origin unknown; the dated use refers to Plains Indian use of a loincloth; the stripper sense is found in the 1930s]*

guard *See* HOME GUARD

guardhouse lawyer *n phr* LATRINE LAWYER (1888+ Army)

Gucci Gulch *n phr* A fashionable shopping street or mall in Washington, Los Angeles, etc: *I'm gonna have to kill some time at Gucci Gulch/ Yes, Wisconsin's red and white army shopped the gold and jewels of Gucci Gulch [1990s+; fr the posh and pricey Florentine retail house of Gucci]*

guck *n* Any thick, gooey substance: *guck on the windowsill*

guesstimate *n* An approximation based on calculation and guesswork **v**: **Let's guesstimate a yield of four percent (1934+)**

guess what or **who** or **why** **v** To feign a conjecture when the truth is blatantly obvious; you'll never guess, SURPRISE SURPRISE: *The only one bold enough to call the proposal a smoke screen disguising congressional complicity was Colorado Republican Armstrong. Guess what? He's retiring this year/ Kissinger's scheme outlined a framework between the two superpowers to be arranged by a secret envoy (guess who?)/ The stoppages were unpopular; the Western press—guess why?—is no longer keen on Polish strikes (1930s+)* **See** BY GUESS AND BY GOD

guest shot *n phr* A guest appearance on a television show: *I get a big guest shot for big bucks on his next special (1980s +)*

guff *n* 1 Nonsense; pretentious talk; bold and deceitful absurdities; BULLSHIT: *his ability to listen to all the guff, through all the tedium (1888 +)* 2 Complaints, abuse: *Don't take any guff from him* *v* To lie; exaggerate; BULLSHIT: *Quit your guffing and tell it right* [perhaps fr Scots *gaff*, "loud, rude, merry talk"; *gaff* in the first sense, now obsolete, is found by 1825]

guide *See* TOUR GUIDE

Guido or **guido** *n* A gaudy macho type: *Guido: a greasy, pimpy, open-shirted, hairy-chested, gold-chain-danglin' sleazoid/ It's not my fault I look like a Guido* [1980s + Teenagers; the name of a character in the 1983 movie *Risky Business*]

guilties, the *n phr* Feelings or pangs of guilt: *Sometimes we get the guilties on this account (1980s +)*

◀**Guinea**▶ (GIHN ee) (also **ghinney** or **ginee** or **ginnee** or **ginney** or **guin** or **guinea** or **guinie**; any of the variants may begin with a capital letter) *adj*: a tough Ginney bootlegger *n* 1 An Italian or person of Italian descent (1896 +) 2 A native of a Pacific island, including Japan (*WWII armed forces*) [perhaps fr contemptuous association with the outdated term *Guinea Negro*, "black slave from the Guinea coast"]

guinea pig *n* Person or thing used in an experiment, sometimes without agreement: *the guinea pigs for her cooking*

◀**guinzo**▶ *See* GINZO

gulch *See* DRY-GULCH

gum *v* **1** To talk; chatter: *The he-gossips at the Press Club have been gumming about another romance (1940s +)* **2** GUM UP (1901 +) *See* BAT one's GUMS, BUBBLEGUM MUSIC, **the** BUBBLEGUM SET

gumbah *See* GOOMBAH

gumball *n* The lights carried atop a police car; PARTY HAT: *Don't believe in gumballs. I kinda like to sneak around, you know* *v*: *A dozen police cars blocking the streets, their red-and-blue lights gumballing in all directions (1970s +)*

gum-beater *n* A persistent talker, esp a pompous braggart; BLOWHARD (1930s + *Black*)

gum-beating *n* **1** A conversation; chat; RAP **2** Vain and exaggerated talk; BALONEY, BULLSHIT (1930s + *Black*)

gumby *n* **1** A dull, tedious person, esp one out of touch with current fashions; NERD, PILL: *You can become a gumby by wearing the wrong plaid stretch pants (1970s + Canadian teenagers)* **2** A slanted box haircut: *Murph has a gumby (1980s + Teenagers)* [first sense fr a repulsive character, Mr *Gumby*, in the television series *Monty Python's Flying Circus*; second sense fr a person-shaped toy rubber (gum) figure named *Gumby*, seen in television shows and also portrayed by the comedian Eddie Murphy on the television series *Saturday Night Live*]

gummy *adj* **1** Inferior; tedious; unpleasant: *He found himself in a very gummy situation, with both of them berating him (1922 +)* **2** Sentimental; maudlin; CORNY: *a gummy, gooey tearjerker of a film*

(1940+) [like *icky* and *sticky*, fr the unpleasant feel of glue or slime]

gump *n* **1** A fool; dolt; KNUCKLEHEAD (1825+) **2** A chicken, esp a stolen one (1899+ *Hoboes*) **3** A male homosexual (1950s+ *Prison*) [fr British dialect, “fool”]

gumption *n* Initiative; enterprise; courage; SPUNK (1831+)

gums *See* BAT one’s GUMS

gumshoe *n* (Variations: **gum boot** or **gumfoot** or **gumheel** or **gumshoe man**) A police officer, esp a detective or plainclothes officer: *It made him a good gumshoe* **v** **1** (also **gumheel**) To work as a police officer or detective: *Still gumheeling?* **2** To walk a police beat: *Police now ride prowl cars instead of gumshoeing around the block* **3** To walk quietly and stealthily [1906+; fr *gumshoe*, “rubber-soled shoe”]

gum up or **gum up the works** **v phr** To ruin; spoil; throw into confusion; BOLLIX UP, FUCK UP [1890+; fr dialect *gaum*, “handle improperly, damage,” found by 1656, influenced by the stickiness and clogging capacity of *gum*]

gun¹ *n* **1** An armed criminal: *They hired a gun to blast the competition* (1859+) **2** An important person; BIG GUN: *He’s quite a gun around there now* (1830+) **3** The throttle of a car, airplane, etc: *Get your stupid foot off the gun* (1900s+) **4** A hypodermic needle (1930s+ *Narcotics*) **5** A long, heavy surfboard (1960s+ *Surfers*) **6** Throwing arm, esp a strong and accurate one (1929+ *Baseball*) **v** **1** To shoot someone: *Canales had no motive to gun Lou* (1898+) **2** To speed up

an engine or vehicle, esp abruptly; GOOSE: *He gunned the Rolls into the parking spot (1940s +)* **See** BIG GUN, BURP GUN, GIVE IT THE GUN, JUMP THE GUN, SCATTERGUN, SIX-SHOOTER, SMOKING GUN, SON OF A BITCH, TOMMY GUN, ZIP GUN

gun² n (also **gon**) A professional thief, esp a pickpocket [1858 + ; fr Yiddish *gonif*]

gunboats (also **battleships**) **n 1** A pair of shoes or galoshes, esp of large size: *He brought some of the 14EE gunboats with him from the States* **2** A pair of large feet (1886 +)

gunbunny n An artillery man (1970s + *Army*)

gunch n An attempt to influence the roll of a pin-ball **v:** *the body English, the nudging, gunching, and infinite alternations of the ways to flip the flipper (1970s +)*

gun someone down v phr To shoot so as to fell or kill: *They gunned him down in a barber chair (1898 +)*

gun (or go gunning) for someone v phr 1 To seek out or pursue with harmful intent; aim to punish: *He gunned for her after she slapped him with a lawsuit (1888 +)* **2** To pursue actively: *She's gunning for a new image (1940s +)*

gunge n An irritation of the groin region; crotch rot

gung ho adj phr Very zealous; totally committed; enthusiastic: *They were gung ho about the opportunity, their talk charged with an eagerness/ reminiscent of the gung-ho shot making that brought him so many grass-stained knees at Wimbledon* [WWII Marine Corps; fr the name of a Chinese industrial cooperative organization, *kung ho*, “work together,” adopted as *Gung ho!* to be the battle cry of a

Marine Corps raiders group in World War II]

guniff *See* GONIFF

gunk or **goonk** *n* **1** Any sticky, viscous liquid, esp hair tonic, cosmetics, lubricants, or cleaning fluids; GLOP, GOOK¹ **2** Dirt; slime; oily grime; muck: *The anchor was clotted in noisome gunk* [1932+; fr a trademark, *Gunk*, for a degreasing compound, and part of a cluster of nearly synonymous terms beginning with g]

gunkhole *n*: We found a nice gunkhole near the Kennebec v To cruise rivers, creeks, tidal estuaries, etc, in a small yacht, anchoring in remote spots (1908+ *Yachting*)

gun moll *n phr* A female criminal or a criminal's consort [1908+; fr *gonif* rather than fr the firearm; *Moll* is a diminutive of *Mary* and has been identified with notorious women since the early 1600s]

gunner *n* **1** A flashy performer; GRANDSTANDER, HOT DOG: *the reputation of a gunner and a hot dog, playground terms for players who showboat* (1960s+ *Basketball*) **2** A student who aggressively courts attention in class • In earlier use, *gunner* meant a sexually aggressive student: "*Gunners*" are people who raise their hands in class repeatedly just to impress (Students 1990s+)

gunny *n* **1** A gunnery sergeant: *Whenever you try to explain something, the gunny accuses you of trying to skate* (1940s+ *Marine Corps*) **2** An armed criminal: *Tell us the rest about the two gunnies* **3** A proponent of gun possession: *How did gunnies cling so ferociously to beliefs that were completely at odds with majority opinion?/ Or, as gunnies on the Internet chat group rec.guns put it* (1950s+)

guns *See* HEAVY ARTILLERY

gunsel¹ (also **gonsil** or **gonzel** or **guncel** or **guntzel** or **gunzl**) *n* 1 A sexually vulnerable boy or young man; catamite; PUNK (1914 + *Underworld*) 2 A male homosexual (1931 +) [fr Yiddish *gantzel*, “gosling”]

gunsel² *n* (Variations: see **gunsel**¹) An armed criminal; HOODLUM: *The reformed gunzl took a quick gander/ The gunsels killed each other off* [1950s +; fr a blend of *gonif*, *gunsel*¹, *gunman*, etc]

gun-shy *adj* Apprehensive; reluctant; fearful: *He’s still gun-shy about putting things on paper* (1884 +)

gunslinger *n* 1 An armed criminal: *The gunslinger will spend his life behind bars/ He thought of himself as a lone gunslinger, like John Wayne* (1920s +) 2 An inmate who habitually exposes himself to female guards: *the sexually aggressive inmates, known as “gunslingers” in prison lingo* (1990s + *Prison*)

guppie *n* A homosexual yuppie (young urban professional) [1984 +; *gay* and *yuppie* blend]

guru *n* 1 A leader, expert, or authority in some field, esp a charismatic or spiritual figure who attracts a devoted following: *turning for guidance to such gurus as Paul Goodman and Herbert Marcuse/ That genial guru of the right, Barry Goldwater* (1960s +) 2 A psychiatrist; SHRINK (1960s +) 3 A person who aids and supports someone having a psychedelic drug experience (1960s + *Narcotics & counterculture*) 4 A computer expert: *when you were with gurus* (read: *seasoned computer veterans*) (1990s + *Computer*) [fr Sanskrit,

“venerable”]

Gus See GLOOMY GUS

gussy up v phr 1 To dress in one’s best clothes; adorn oneself; DOLL UP

2 To clean or make neat: *The freak had the little apartment all gussied*

up 3 To decorate or elaborate on a plain design 4 To refurbish,

renovate; polish: *They’re gussying up the same old tiredness* 5 To

decorate; make fancy: *It resembled a gussied-up Studebaker* [late

1940s + ; origin unknown; perhaps fr *gusset*, a triangular insert that

might be used to prettify a dress; perhaps fr someone or some place

named *Augusta*]

gusto n Beer: *get some gusto*

gut adj 1 Basic; essential; most immediate: *the gut issues in the*

forthcoming election (1964 +) 2 Deep and not essentially rational;

visceral; intuitive: *this deep, gut feeling that they want to be part of*

things/ He has to convince me on a gut level that I can do things my

mind resists/ Whether the messenger is a top Government official or an

ordinary Russian with a gut instinct (1968 +) 3 Easy: a “gut”

humanities course where the professor is said to put on a good show

(1916 + *Students*) **n** 1 The stomach; abdomen; paunch; BAY WINDOW,

POTBELLY (1000 +) 2 GUT COURSE: *considered a gut by at least 50 percent of*

the students (1916 + *Students*) **v** To remove all unessentials

(1950s + *Hot rodders*) **See** BUST A GUT, PINCH-GUT, POTBELLY, ROTGUT, SPILL one’s

GUTS, SPLIT A GUT, TUB OF GUTS

gutbucket n 1 A strongly rhythmic, emotionally evocative,

uninhibited style of jazz: *puts toe-tapping tunes atop the complicated*

counterpoint, so I’ve started calling this music avant-gutbucket for its

brains, historical sweep, and down-home emotion **2** A fat, pompous person [1910+ Jazz musicians; first sense fr a New Orleans name for a low resort, where a *gutbucket*, that is, a beer bucket or a chamber pot, would be used to collect contributions for the musicians; second sense fr the notion of *a bucket of guts*]

gut course *n phr* (also **gut**) An easy course in college [1916+ College students; perhaps fr earlier sense *gut*, “a feast,” hence a course that one can “eat up”]

gut it out *v phr* To be strong and resistant; be sturdily stoic; persist;
TOUGH IT OUT: *Cook claimed that he was innocent of any wrongdoing and until last week insisted that he would “gut it out” (1970s+)*

gutless *adj* Cowardly; feeble; CHICKEN (1915+)

gutless wonder *n* A totally insipid and spineless person: *gutless wonders never knowing which way is up*

gut reaction *n phr* An immediate and instinctive response; an intuition; HUNCH: *if the public-opinion polls and gut reaction count for anything (1968+)*

guts *n* **1** The insides of a person, machine, etc; viscera; INNARDS: *He removed the cover and exposed the guts (1580+)* **2** The most essential material or part; essence: *The guts of the matter is that they are not here (1950s+)* **3** Courage; nerve; BALLS: *the guy who had guts enough to croak “Tough Tony” (1893+)* **See** HATE someone’s GUTS, SPILL one’s GUTS, TUB OF GUTS

gutsy *adj* **1** Brave: *a gutsy lady* **2** Energetic and tough; ZINGY: *a gutsy car (1930s+)*

gutter *n* A dive in which one lands flat on the water; BELLY-WHOPPER
(1950s +) **See** HAVE ONE'S MIND IN THE GUTTER

gutter, the *n phr* A wretched and lowly venue; the PITS: *Without jobs they'll never get out of the gutter* (1846 +)

gutter language *n phr* Profanity and obscenity; scabrous speech: *This dictionary has a selection of gutter language* [1890 +; *gutter*, "appropriate to the gutter or sewer," is found by 1849]

guttersnipe or **gutterpup** *n* A vulgar person; a vile wretch [1869 +; in the sense "a curbside stock broker" found by 1856]

gut-thumper *n* An exciting and suspenseful occasion; CLIFFHANGER: *It wasn't a cakewalk, but it wasn't exactly a gut-thumper either* (1980s +)

gutty *adj* **1** Forceful and assertive: *a good gutty rock number* (1939 +)
2 GUTSY (1950s +) **3** Capable of high speed; having a powerful engine (1950s + *Hot rodders*)

gut-wrenching *adj* Emotionally shattering; extremely disturbing: *graphic, gut-wrenching description of gang violence/ Thursday's gut-wrenching roll-call victories represented a down payment on Clinton's campaign promises to get the country moving again* (1990s +)

gut-wrenchingly *adv* In a gut-wrenching way; shattering: *Many of Breyten's poems included gut-wrenchingly vivid evocations of his actual situation* (1990s +)

guy *n* **1** A person of either sex, esp a man; fellow • Used of and to women in address, and then almost invariably in the plural, but

seldom in reference or in the singular (1876 +) **2** A woman's fiancé, husband, lover, etc: *Just remember he's my guy* (1940s +) **3** A thing referred to, esp something one does not know the name of; BABY, GADGET, SUCKER: *I'll have this guy, this guy, and this guy* (1980 +) **v** To mock; ridicule (1869 +) [ultimately fr the name and reputation of Guy Fawkes, and esp of his ugly effigies burnt in England on November 5 to commemorate the foiling of the Gunpowder Plot, his plot to blow up the Houses of Parliament] **See** FALL GUY, JIGGER-MAN, ONE OF THE BOYS, REGULAR FELLOW, SMART GUY, TOUGH GUY, WISE GUY

guyed out *adj* Drunk [1930 + Circus; fr *guy out*, "tighten"]

guyness *n* Maleness; masculinity: *Busfield's rustic, feely guyness* (1990s +)

guy thing *n* Something only understood, experienced, or done by males; something that appeals only to men: *reading on the toilet is a guy thing*

guzzle *n* GOOZLE **v** **1** To drink, esp rapidly: *He guzzled a Coke* (1500s +) **2** To drink liquor, esp to excess: *He guzzled a lot when he got worried* [fr French *gosier*, "throat," or perhaps like that French word, echoically based on the sound of swallowing]

guzzler *n* A heavy drinker of alcohol: *guzzlers at the VFW*

guzzlery or **guzzery** *n* A saloon or bar; GIN MILL (1890s +)

guzzle shop *n phr* A saloon or bar: *No lower guzzle shop was ever operated* (1890s +)

◁**gweebo**▷ *n* A tedious and contemptible person; DORK, NERD (1980s + *College students*)

gym rat *n phr* An athlete; a person who frequents gymnasiums: *a thin, fortunate group of very highly paid gym rats (1970s +)*

gyp or **gip** or **jip** *modifier*: a gyp joint/ gyp terms **n 1** (also **gyp artist** or **gypster**) A swindler; cheater; CROOK: *denunciations of punks, tinhorns, and gyps (1889 +)* **2**: *the victim of any such gyp (1914 +)* **3** A cabdriver who does not start the meter, hence can pocket the fare (1930+ *Cabdrivers*) **v** To cheat; swindle; CON: *We got gypped out of it all in two days [fr gypsy]*

gyp joint *n phr* Any business place that overcharges, cheats, etc; CLIP JOINT: *Cops tried to shut down the midtown gyp joint (1935 +)*

gyppo or **jippo** *modifier*: They discussed gyppo logging **n 1** Part-time work **2** An itinerant worker or piece-worker **v** To cheat; swindle; GYP: *The contract worker is being unmercifully gypped by the boss (1920s +)*

gypsy *n 1* GYPSY CAB (1940s +) **2** A truck driven by its owner rather than a union driver (1942+ *Truckers*) **v** To make a risky bet or call: *You will find players consistently gypsyng, flat-calling with kings up or less (1940s + Gambling); (1950s +)*

gypsy cab *n phr* A taxicab operating without a taxi license or medallion, or with only a livery license that does not entitle it to pick up passengers on the street: *the advent of the latest taxi competitor: the gypsy cab (1970s +)*

gyrene or **girene** (ji REEN) *n* A US Marine; LEATHER-NECK (1894 +)

gyve *See* JIVE

H

H n Heroin (*Narcotics*) *See* BIG H

hab n A French-speaking resident of Quebec [1980s+ Canadian; fr French *habitant*, “a French settler or a descendant of one”]

habit n Drug addiction: *I had a great big habit (1897+ Narcotics) See*
CHUCK HABIT, GARBAGE HABIT, ICE CREAM HABIT, OFF THE HABIT

ha-cha-cha See HOTCHA

hack¹ n 1 A taxicab (1704+) **2** A bus (1950s+ *Bus drivers*) **v** To drive a taxi or bus: *I worked in an office for years. Then I took to “hacking” (1931+)* [ultimately fr *hackney*, “horse,” fr *Hackney*, a village incorporated into London, fr Old English “Haca’s island” or “hook island”; presumably the horses were associated with the place]

hack² n 1 A persistent, often nervous, cough: *oughta see someone about that hack (1885+)* **2** A try; attempt; WHACK: *Let George take a hack at it (1836+)* **3** A mediocre performer or worker; tiresome drudge: *They are not the hacks that Eric’s scholarship would make them (1700+)* **4** (also **hack writer**) A professional, usu freelance, writer who works to order • This sense belongs to *hack* reflecting the notion that such a writer was for hire like a horse, but its own derivatives blend with those of the meaning “try, stroke, etc”

(1810+) **5** A computer program, esp a good one: *A well-crafted program, a good hack, is elegant (1980s+ Computer)* **6** A guard: *The guards, the hacks, as they called them/ The hacks didn't worry about the old convicts too much (1940s+ Prison)* **7** A white person; HONKY, OFAY (1940s+ *Black & Prison*) **v 1**: *If you quit smoking maybe you won't hack like that* **2** To cope with, esp successfully; manage; HANDLE
 • Most often in the negative: *"I can't hack this," Sandy remarked/I couldn't hack the lines, so I used Mother Nature's privy (1940s+)* **3** (also **hack at**) To attempt; do persistently but mediocrelly: *Do I play tennis? Well, I hack at it (1940s+)* **4**: *They hacked for some of our most respected leaders (1813+)* **5** To work with a computer or computer program, esp to do so cleverly, persistently, and enthusiastically • This term has many specialized senses in computer slang (1980s+) **6** To annoy; anger; BURN: *That attitude really hacks me (1892+)* [nearly all senses ultimately fr *hack*, "cut, chop"; black and prison senses fr identification of prison guards with white persons in the pattern identical with that of the *man*; prison guards perhaps so called because they sometimes beat prisoners]

hack (into) v To gain unauthorized access to a computer system:
hack into my site (1985+)

hack around v phr To do nothing in particular; idle; loaf; BEAT AROUND:
He says he's been hacking around in some bar/So I quit Butter, hacked around for a while (1960s+)

hack-driver n A chief petty officer (WWII Navy)

hacked adj (also **hacked off**) Annoyed; angered; chagrined: *How*

come you're so hacked off about Combs? (1892 + Black)

hacker¹ n A persistent but generally unskillful performer or athlete;
DUFFER (1950s +)

hacker² n 1 A skillful but not necessarily elegant computer programmer • This term has many senses in computer slang; the core notion is simply “someone who enjoys messing with computers, cleverly or not”: *When a hacker programs, he creates worlds/ As a hacker, McLachlan is a member of an intense, reclusive subculture of the computer age (1976 + Computer)* **2** A person who with evil, inquisitive, or self-aggrandizing intent intrudes into computer networks and files: *He said computer intruders, commonly referred to as hackers, who take over a router can do whatever they want (1980 + Computer)* [said to be fr *hack²*, computer jargon for a clever and subtle correction of a flow in a computer program]

hackery n Routine mediocrity; esp the dull performance and tone of an average political professional: *the gray, self-serving hackery of previous City Councils (1970s +)*

hackie n (also **hacker** or **hacky**) A taxicab driver: *He enriched another hacker by an even \$5,000/He actually found a hackie named Louis Schweitzer (1937 +)*

hack it v phr To cope successfully; CUT IT, HANDLE • Often in the negative: *John Fist can't back it anymore (1940s +)*

hack on someone v phr To ridicule someone; PUT someone DOWN
(1990s + *Students*)

had (or **taken** or **took**), **be v phr 1** To become a partner in the sex

act (1594 +) **2** To be duped or cheated; be victimized: *You practically need a finance degree to know that you are being had* (1805 +)

had it *See* one HAS HAD IT

ha-ha *adj*: *even made a ha-ha pass at him/ ha-ha candles made to look like penises* **n** A joke; something funny; stroke of wit: *That's a ha-ha all right* [1940s + ; *ha-ha* represented the sound of laughter by 1000] *See* the MERRY HA-HA

Haight, the **n phr** HASHBURY (1960s +)

hail Columbia *interj* A mild exclamation of emphasis, annoyance, etc: *Hail Columbia, can't I ever go?* **n phr** Punitive measures; a rebuke; HELL: *They'll give me hail Columbia when they know* [1854 + ; a euphemism for *hell*]

Hail Mary *modifier* Done in pious hope and desperation: *Staubach hurls a Hail, Mary pass into the end zone/“We did what could be described as the Hail Mary play,” Gen. Schwarzkopf says/You know a Hail Mary moment when you see one: It happened at the Redskins-Cardinals game* [1980s + Football; fr the liturgical prayer *Hail, Mary, full of grace*, etc]

haimish or **heimish** (HAY mish) *adj* Friendly and informal; unpretentious; cozy: *No one in his right mind would ever call Generals de Gaulle or MacArthur haimish* [1960s + ; fr Yiddish, with root of *haim*, “home”]

hair **n** Complexity: *a system with a lot of hair* (1980s + Computer) *See* CURL **someone's** HAIR, FAIR-HAIRED BOY, GET IN **one's** HAIR, HAVE A BUG UP **one's** ASS,

HAVE **someone** BY THE SHORT HAIRS, IN **someone's** HAIR, LET **one's** HAIR DOWN,
LONGHAIR, NOT HAVE A HAIR ON **one's** ASS

hair bag modifier: *Hairbag is police slang for men who don't care anymore, who are waiting out retirement* **n phr** 1 A veteran police officer: *Hair bag—A veteran policeman, especially knowledgeable about the inner workings of the Police Department (1950s + Police)* 2 An unreliable novice police officer: *Hair bag: a cop, the sloppy new gun who acts like he's an old timer (1980s + Police)*

hairball or **furball** **n** 1 A noisy, destructive drunk: *Jon was being a hairball last night. He got heated and thrashed the whole upstairs (1980s + Students)* 2 A repulsive person; scumball, **SLEAZEBAG:** *makes a nice change from the hairballs featured in most crime novels (mid-1980s +)*

haired **See** LONGHAIR, FAIR-HAIRED BOY

hairnet **See** WIN THE PORCELAIN HAIRNET

hair of the dog (or **of the dog that bit one**), the **modifier:** *Does the hair-of-the-dog procedure eventually desensitize key cells in the immune system to the offending allergen?* **n phr** A drink of liquor taken as a remedy for a hangover; in general, the use of a harmful agent against itself [1546 + ; fr the belief that the bite of a *dog* could be healed by applying its *hair* to the wound]

◁**hair on one's ass**▷ **See** NOT HAVE A HAIR ON **one's** ASS

◁**hair pie**▷ **n phr** 1 Cunnilingus; **BOX LUNCH** 2 The female genitalia; the vulva; **PUSSY** [1930s + ; a pun on *hare pie*]

hair wrap *n phr* A hair braid interwoven with colored thread: *doing hair wraps, those vaguely Rastafarian braids woven with Technicolor threads (1990s +)*

hairy *adj* **1** Old; hoary: *a hairy tale (1940s +)* **2** Difficult; rough; TOUGH: *We had a hairy time getting it all organized (1848 +)* **3** Frighteningly dangerous; hair-raising; scary: *Campus guards would comb the dorm “It was hairy”/the hairy strip of 42d Street (1940s + Teenagers)* [last sense probably fr the *hairy* monsters of horror films, but the sense of “difficult” was used at 19th-century Oxford, and that of “dangerous” in the British armed forces of the 1930s]

hairy eyeball *See* GIVE SOMEONE THE FISH-EYE

half *See* BETTER HALF, DEUCE AND A HALF, a LAUGH

◁**half-and-half**▷ *n* Fellatio plus copulation (1960s + *Prostitutes*)

half a shake *n phr* A moment; a trice: *I’ll be there in half a shake* [1930s +; fr the expression *two shakes of a lamb’s tail*, “a very short time”]

◁**half-assed** or **half-ass**▷ *adj* Ineffectual; incompetent; half-hearted; HALF-BAKED: *You first ran into censorship problems with the words “half-assed games”/So far it’s been a half-ass investigation* [1932 +; perhaps fr a humorous mispronunciation of *haphazard*]

half a yard *n phr* Fifty dollars: A “yard” and “half a yard” meaning one hundred dollars and fifty dollars respectively (1940s +)

half-bagged *adj* Drunk: *They keep half-bagged all day and bore their new friends silly with stories (1950s +)*

half-baked *adj* Foolish; ill-conceived; not completely thought out;
HALF-ASSED (1621 +)

half bill or **half a bill** *n phr* Fifty dollars: *Half an hour after I'd lent
Reno the half bill, he was back uptown (1920s +)*

half cocked *adj*: *a half-cocked start* *adv* Prematurely; unprepared: *not
going into this half-cocked (1940s +)* **See** GO OFF HALF COCKED

half-corned *adj* Drunk (1950s +)

half crocked *adj phr* Drunk; half-drunk: *laying around on a settee, sort
of half crocked/I came out at twelve, one o'clock, half-crocked, really
snockered (1920s +)*

halfies or **halvies** or **halvsies** *n* One half of what is indicated, esp as
an equal share: *She found it, but I claimed halvsies because I did most
of the work (1960s +)* **See** GO HALFIES

half in the bag *adj phr* Drunk; half-drunk: *He was half in the bag. He
always is at Christmas/Billy Small was half in the bag even that early
(1920s +)*

half load *n phr* Fifteen packets of a narcotic, esp of cocaine or heroin
(1960s + *Narcotics*)

half of it *n phr* The most significant or important part of something •
Usu in negative contexts: *her attitude is not the half of it (1932 +)*

half-pint modifier: *half-pint showman* *n* 1 A short person: *the little
half-pint that she was* 2 A boy (mid-1920s +)

half seas over *adj phr* Drunk [1736 +; fr the notion that one is like a
ship low in the water and burdened so that relatively low waves,

half seas, sweep over its deck]

half-shot *adj* Drunk; half-drunk: *when they were half shot with beer* (1837+)

half-step *v* **1** To act tough but then back down when challenged **2** To do something halfway, insufficiently, or incompetently

half-Stewed *adj* (Variations: **screwed** or **slewed** or **snapped** or **sprung** may replace **stewed**) Drunk; half-drunk (1737+)

half-wit *n* A foolish person: *half-wits in the phys ed class* (1755+)

hall *See* CHOW HALL

halvsies *modifier* Split equally between two; GO DUTCH: *let's go halvsies on dinner* *See* GO HALVSIES

ham¹ *modifier*: *a ham radio operator/ham network* *n* An amateur radio operator [1928+; fr *amateur*]

ham² *modifier*: *ham actor/ham performance* *n* **1** An actor who overacts, dramatizes himself, emotes too broadly, etc: *had been roasted by the critics as a ham/Variety never referred to actors as "hams"* (1882+) **2** A person who uses overtheatrical and overly expressive airs and actions: *Miss Moment was no doubt the biggest ham of a teacher* (1940s+) *v* **1** (also **ham it up**): *The famous star was hamming all the way* (1933+) **2** (also **ham it up**): *The prof strode into the lecture hall hamming and mugging* (1940s+) [fr *ham-fatter*]

ham and or **ham an** *n phr* Ham and eggs (1940s+ *Lunch counter*)

ham-and-egger *n* **1** An average, predictable person or thing;

ordinary Joe: *The new People Wieners album is a ham and egger*
(1920s +) **2** An average or mediocre prizefighter (1920s +
Prizefight)

hambone modifier: *The night's most ebullient winner was Finkel, who plays the hambone attorney* **n** A person who fancies himself an actor; histrionic self-advertiser; HAM: *Every hambone from the deep sticks was constrained to make a speech for the benefit of the cameras* (1893 +)

hamburger **n** **1** A scarred and unvictorious prizefighter **2** A hobo or mendicant **3** An inferior racing dog (1940s +) **See** MAKE HAMBURGER OUT OF someone or something

ham-fatter **n** HAM, HAMBONE [1882 +; fr a minstrel song of 1887, "The Hamfat Man," having to do with a second-rate actor, and the use of *ham fat* as greasepaint to remove makeup] **See** HAM JOINT

hamfist **n** A large fist, big as a ham: *His huge hamfist had landed me a vicious blow* (1920s +)

ham-handed or **hamfisted** **adj** Crude and clumsy; lacking in finesse: *his hamfisted approach to a delicate matter* (first form 1918 +, second 1928 +)

ham-handedness **n** Crudeness; clumsiness; lack of polish: *In selecting the rottenest apples, one seeks the pretension and the exploitation rather than mere ham-handedness* (1928 +)

ham joint **n phr** A cheap restaurant or pool hall, used as a loitering and gathering spot by criminals: *rendezvous is a "ham joint"* (1920s +)

hammer *n* **1** A sexually desirable woman; FOX • Regarded by some women as offensive (1960s + *Black*) **2** The accelerator of a truck (1960 + *Truckers*) <3> The penis: *How's your hammer hangin', Tiger?* (1960s +) **v** **1** To denigrate severely; DUMP ON: *You can be playing outside the pearly gates and you're still going to get hammered* (1900 +) **2** To beat down the price of a stock: *Beverly's stock was being hammered by the company's persistent losses* (1846 + *Stock market*)

hammer and tongs *adv phr* Very violently; with full force: *We went at each other hammer and tongs* [1708 +; reflecting use of both the blacksmith's main tools]

hammer away at someone or something *v phr* To persist in a line of questioning or declaration; attempt to persuade or break down by force: *The prosecutor kept hammering away at the alibi/He hammered away at my credibility* (1887 +)

hammer down *adv phr* Going full speed; with throttle to the floor; WIDE OPEN: *a herd of L A rednecks, all of 'em pie-eyed and hammer down* (1960 + *Truckers*)

hammered *adj* Drunk: *I don't get hammered anymore* (1950s +)

hammerhead *n* A stupid person: *The best way out is for one of the three to be a hammerhead* (1930s +)

hammer lane *n phr* The fast lane of a superhighway: *The passing lane can be "centerfield," "the hammer lane," or "the showoff lane"* [1980s + *Truckers*; fr the trucker sense *hammer*, "accelerator"]

hammer-man *n* An authoritative person; strongman [1950s + *Black*;

perhaps an echo of *John Henry*]

hams *n* Legs or hips; the hamstring muscles: *worked her hams at the gym*

hamster-wheel brain *n* An instance or condition where one's mind goes over and over an issue or problem without reaching a solution: *I'm mostly worrying about work, with my hamster-wheel brain running*

ham up *v phr* To make histrionic; overexpress; HAM: *The baseball umpire was hamming up his signals for the benefit of the television audience (1929 +)*

hand *v* To give, esp something not desired; bestow forcefully, fraudulently, etc: *The Red Sox handed the Yankees a 12 to 3 shellacking/What kind of con job was he trying to hand you? (1919 +)*

See BOTH HANDS, COOL HAND, DEAD MAN'S HAND, GIVE someone THE GLAD HAND, GLAD-HAND, HAVE ONE'S HANDS FULL, NOT LAY A GLOVE ON someone, TIP one'S MITT, WITH one'S HAND IN THE TILL, WITH ONE HAND TIED BEHIND one'S BACK

hand, a *n* **1** A round of applause: *Well she got a big hand (1838 +) **2** Help; aid (1960 +) **See** GIVE someone A HAND*

hand someone a lemon *v phr* To take advantage of; cheat; GYP: *if they hand me a lemon (1860s +)*

handbasket **See** GO TO HELL IN A HANDBASKET

handbook *n* **1** A place, other than a legal betting office, where bets are made away from the racetrack; Horse Room: *I was in the handbook near Loomis and Madison* **2** BOOKIE [1894 + Horse racing &

gambling; probably fr the fact that betting records were kept in small, concealable notebooks for secrecy and portability]

H and C n phr A mixture of heroin and cocaine; HOT AND COLD, SPEEDBALL (1960s + *Narcotics*)

handcuffs See GOLDEN HANDCUFFS

handed See HAM-HANDED, LEFT-HANDED, RIGHT-HANDED

hander See FORKHANDER, GLAD-HANDER

handful n 1 A five-year prison sentence or term (1930 + *Underworld*)
2 A great deal to manage; burdensome task: *That kid of yours is a handful* (1887 +) **See** GRAB A HANDFUL OF AIR

hand someone his head v phr To destroy; figuratively to decapitate someone and hand him his own head; CLOBBER: *Do what they want, or they'll hand you your head/when the press is handing Francis Coppola his head* (1970s +)

hand-holding n Support; reassurance; encouragement: *Congress wants some hand-holding from Clinton on Somalia* (1908 +)

handies See PLAY HANDIES

hand-in-glove adv In close cooperation or relationship; going together naturally: *those two ambitions work hand-in-glove*

hand it to someone v phr To compliment; praise someone for a success • Often said with overtones of reluctance: *I got to hand it to you* (1906 +)

◁**hand job**▷ **n phr** An act of masturbation, usu done for one person

by another: *rolled over on top of me and started giving me a real good hand job/If you were unlucky, all you got was a hand job (1940s +)*

handle *n* 1 A person's name, nickname, or alias: *He is known by that handle ever since to all his pals/Many people use handles for themselves instead of their real names (1870 +)* 2 The gross receipts or the profit of a sporting event, a gambling game, an illegal operation, etc: *A total handle of between 4 and 10 billion a year in the handbooks, the numbers, and the slots (1920s +)* 3 The amount of money bet on a specific race or game, or in a particular day or week, etc: *The handle at Belmont dropped today on account of the blizzard (1920s + Gambling)* 4 A way of approaching or grasping something; an initial and relevant insight: *Women. I don't seem to have a handle on them/So we may have less handle on him than we did before (1972 +)* *v* To cope with; manage; HACK: *He can handle Tom's temper tantrums very well/My wife left me and I don't know how to handle it (1970s +)* **See** FLY OFF THE HANDLE, GET A HANDLE ON something, PANHANDLE

handler *n* A person who seconds, supports, advises, etc, a principal: *Bush and his political handlers believe, as Reagan did, that the way to the people's heart is paved with unshucked corn [1950 +* *Prizefighting; the term was used of those who handled gamecocks, dogs, etc, by 1825]* **See** PANHANDLER

handles **See** LOVE HANDLES

hand-me-down or **fetch-me-down** *modifier*: *a pair of hand-me-down pants/fetch-me-down ski boots* *n* Something, esp clothing, used by one person and then passed to another, esp to a younger sibling: *I*

wore mostly my brother's hand-me-downs (1874 +)

handout *n* 1 Food, money, or other donations received or given •

Nearly always with the implication that the giver is overgenerous or self-interested, and the recipient undeserving: *Damn hippies lived on food stamps and other bleeding heart handouts (1882 + Hoboes)* 2

A leaflet or flyer passed out on the streets 3 An official press release or communiqué: *The newspaperman's slightly derogatory slang term for the news release is "handout" (1941 +)*

hand over fist *adv phr* Very energetically, persistently, and rapidly:

It was a treat to see them go at it hand over fist (1833 +) **See** MAKE

MONEY HAND OVER FIST

hands **See** BOTH HANDS, HAVE one's HANDS FULL, SIT ON one's HANDS

hands are tied, one's *sentence* One is unable to act: *I'd like to help, but my hands are tied (1940s +)*

hands down *adv phr* Very easily; without effort • Most often in the phrase win hands down: *She entered the race unheralded, and won it hands down/We just loafed along, but beat them hands down [1867 + fr horse racing; fr the gesture of a jockey who drops his hands and lets the reins go loose in an easy victory]*

handshaker *n* A person who characteristically gets on by being amiable, making friends, pleasing superiors, etc; GLAD-HANDER (1900 +)

hands-off *adj* Noninterfering; passive: *the president's hands-off policy (1902 +)*

handsome **See** HIGH, WIDE, AND HANDSOME

hands on *adj* Practical and active rather than theoretical: *what we labeled a hands-on mayor/No Hands-On Achiever Need Apply* *adv phr* Manually, by direct control rather than automatic control: *The ship was then flown hands on* *modifier: hands-on landing of the aircraft* (1960s +)

hand trouble *n phr* A pronounced tendency to touch and caress; generalized tactile amorousness: *Bonnie had encountered men with hand trouble* (1940s +)

hand up *v phr* To testify against; betray; RAT ON: *He said he'd do life before he'd hand up his associates/This, like the problem of cops refusing to hand up other cops* [1893 +; the dated instance is from British schoolboy slang]

hand-waving *n* A signal that one does not want to give a full explanation; also, an argument that is not fully supported or fully convincing: *They asked him about progress, but he just offered some hand-waving./She tried to explain why she forgot, but the hand-waving said it all*

hand-wringing *n* An ostentatious show of grief, remorse, etc: *hand-wringing on the part of the press* (1603 +)

handyman's special *n phr* Something, esp a house, in dire need of major repair; a wreck: *"Hudson River Castle for Sale: Handyman's Special with View"* (1970s +)

hang *v* **1** To spend time; frequent; GOOF OFF, HANG OUT: *Who runs the coffeepot where they hang?/If a person is goofing off, he's hanging* (1951 + *Teenagers*) **2** To endure a situation; survive; handle

pressure: *No one ever chants I am somebody. If you weren't, you couldn't hang/This is so stressful. I can't hang (1980s + Students) See HAVE IT ALL HANGING OUT, LET IT ALL HANG OUT*

hang a few on v phr To have several drinks of liquor: *He had only hung a few on and was, for him, slightly sober (1950s +)*

hang a left (or a right) v phr To turn left or right, to round a corner: *Bellsey hung a left on 53rd Street [1960s + Teenagers; perhaps fr surfers' phrases *hang five, hang ten*]*

hang around v phr 1 To idle about; loiter; HACK AROUND **2** To stay where one is; remain: *I decided to hang around and see what went down (1847 +)*

◁**hang-down**▷ **n** The penis; PRICK: *like the horse's hang-down that I am, get myself shit-faced (1970s +)*

hanged See I'LL BE DAMNED

hanger See CLIFFHANGER, CRAPE-HANGER, FENCESTRADDLER, PAPERHANGER

hangers See APE HANGERS

hang five v phr To ride forward on the surfboard so that the toes of one foot are over the edge (*1960s + Surfers*)

hang in (or in there) v phr To endure in some difficult action or position; persist tenaciously; HANG TOUGH: *He didn't pack it up, of course, he hung in there and saw the story through/Rosemary Woods is hanging in (1969 +)*

hanging See HOW THEY HANGING

hang it v phr To administer intravenous medicine: *As soon as the*

nurse is free, he'll be in to hang it (1970s + Medical)

hang it up v phr To retire; cease working, competing, etc: *since Joe Namath and Sonny Jurgenson hung it up/After a serious injury they wanted me to hang it up (1874 +)*

hang (or stay) loose v phr To be relaxed and nonchalant; be uninvolved; COOL IT • Often heard as a genial exhortation: *I needed to hang loose, breathe free, get lost, take a trip/You're healthier and happier when you hang loose/Stay loose, man (1950s + Hot rodders)*

hang of something, the See GET THE HANG OF something

hang on v phr To endure; persist; HANG IN

hang something on someone v phr To place the blame on: *Don't hang that mistake on me*

hang (or tie or pin) one on v phr 1 To get very drunk; go on a drinking spree (1900 +) 2 To hit someone hard; CLOBBER: *Will you hang one on my jaw? (1908 +)*

hangout¹ n 1 A place for loitering, loafing, and passing time, esp with congenial companions: *a grad student hangout on Miranda Lane/a gay hangout (1893 +)* 2 One's home; DIGS (1920s +)

hangout² n Complete disclosure; total openness: *a "modified limited hangout," meaning a response that would satisfy Watergate investigators while disclosing as little as possible (1960s +)* **See** GO THE HANGOUT ROAD

hang out v phr To pass time; loaf pleasantly about; loiter; HANG: *Just us five hangin' out/The best hours of my youth were spent loitering in*

front of Simon's Candy Store doing nothing, just hanging out (1844 +)

See HAVE IT ALL HANGING OUT, LET IT ALL HANG OUT

hang out the laundry v phr To drop paratroops from an aircraft
(*WWII Air Forces*)

hang out the wash v phr To hit a hard line drive [1930s + Baseball;
because the ball's path resembles a taut clothesline]

hang someone out to dry v phr **1** To punish someone severely, esp
as a scapegoat: *The company silently took the fall; Storms was hung
out to dry/J R Rider says he was "hung out to dry" by Nevada-Las
Vegas officials* **2** To defeat utterly; CLOBBER: *hang Sox out to dry* **3** To
catch a base-runner in a rundown; pick off a base runner: *I was
hacking because I didn't want to leave Listach out to dry (1980s +
Baseball) (1980s +)*

hangover n The headache, morbid sensitivity, nausea, etc, felt upon
awakening some hours after drinking too much liquor (1912 +)

hang ten v phr To ride forward on a surfboard so that the toes of
both feet are over the edge (1960s + *Surfers*)

hang time n phr The time that a punted ball stays in the air: *He's got
lots of great stats, hang time (1980s + Football)*

hang tough v phr To endure in a difficult plight; show plucky and
stoic persistence; HANG ON, TOUGH IT OUT: *You've got a friend at Chase
Manhattan, if you've still got a traveler's check to cash. Otherwise,
hang tough/Mr Shannon glorifies Kennedy for his ability to "hang
tough" (1960s +)*

hang-up *n* **1** A mental block; a psychological disturbance, fixation, or problem: *ribald anecdotes concerning his hang-up on strong women* **2** Anything encumbering, frustrating, distressing, etc; an impediment: *You couldn't carry around an amplifier and electric guitar and expect to survive, it was just too much of a hang-up/The only hang-up we can see right now is that business of paying the doctors* (1959+)

hang up *v phr* To become fixated: *Why did you get hung up on Proust, anyhow?* (1960s+)

hang someone or something *up v phr* To stall or immobilize; frustrate; paralyze: *The four would not be able to hang the entire jury up/or some other means of transcending the realities that hang one up* (mid-1800s+)

hang something *up v phr* To abandon one's efforts; CALL IT QUILTS: *Police have hung it up* (1854+)

hang up (or **out**) one's **shingle** *v phr* To commence professional practice; open a law office, doctor's office, etc: *He's passed his bar exam now, so he can hang up his shingle* (1871+)

hang with *v phr* To seek and prefer the company of; consort with: *Sandra didn't hang with nobody but doctors* (1950s+)

hankie or **hanky** *n* A handkerchief (1895+)

hankty *See* HINCTY

hanky-pank *adj* Cheap and gaudy; trashy; SCHLOCKY: *hanky-pank costume jewelry* *n* **1** Any game that is cheap to play, esp one where

the customer gets a prize each time he or she plays: *Typical hanky-panks are the fish-pond, the ring-toss and dart-throwing games* **2** A barker's exhortations; SPIEL (1950s + Carnival)

hanky-panky *n* Anything dishonest, deceptive, or unethical; esp, in recent use, sexual infidelity; MONKEY BUSINESS: *She seems just to be along for some hanky-panky with her pal, General Von Griem/can be an assurance against clandestine wrongdoing and political hanky-panky* (1841 +)

happening *adj* **1** Up-to-date and desirable; chic; COOL, HIP, WITH IT: *That dress is definitely happening; you look great/This music is happening* **2** Lively; vibrant: *It's a way happening town* *n* An event: *the concert was a happening* (1980s + Students)

happenings *n* Narcotics; JUNK (1950s + Narcotics)

happy *adj* Drunk, esp slightly so; TIDDLY (1893 +)

-happy combining word Somewhat insane over or excessively wrought upon by what is indicated: *bomb-happy/car-happy/power-happy/trigger-happy* [1930s +; probably modeled on *slap-happy*]

happy as a clam *adj phr* Very happy; euphoric: *She's happy as a clam with contractor Roe Messner/on a posing dais in front of a full-length mirror, happy as a clam* [1636 +; fr earlier locution *happy as a clam at high tide*, that is, when it cannot be dug]

happy as a pig in slop *adj phr* Very happy; euphoric: *happy as a pig in slop just to be playing in the National Football League* [1970s +; a euphemism for *happy as a pig in shit*, found by 1896]

happy-cabbage *n* Money; CABBAGE (1940s +)

happy camper *n phr* A contented person; someone well pleased:

Quayle called the people of American Samoa “happy campers”

[1980s + ; said to have originated among California movie and show-business people; the reference is probably to child clients of summer camps]

happy-dust *n* 1 Cocaine 2 Morphine (1920s + Narcotics)

happy face *n phr* A stylized circular smiling face, drawn or pasted up

as a talisman: *I don’t want to put one of those Chuck Tanner happy faces on this season (1960s +)*

happy hour *n phr* 1 The hour or so of relaxation with drinks after

work; cocktail hour 2 A specified period of time, usu in early evening, in some restaurants and bars when drinks are sold at lower prices or when free food is provided (1980s +)

happy-juice *n* Liquor: *The increased taxes on happy-juice have cut the revenues from liquor sales (1950s +)*

happy pill *n phr* A tranquilizer pill (1956 +)

happy talk *modifier*: *as for the happy-talk format that sandwiches*

cheerful repartee between the fire and robbery reports n phr Informal chat and chaffing among news broadcasters during the program, as an element of entertainment: *Later, happy talk evolved, to break the tension created by the action, that is the violence, shown on TV news [1980s + Television studio; fr the title of a song in the 1949 Rodgers and Hammerstein musical South Pacific]*

haps, the *n phr* Events; happenings; attractions: *Free Haps/E-mail our trend hotline with the haps in your town (1990s +)*

hard adj 1 Demonstrable; verifiable; not dependent on subjective judgment, emotion, etc: *A comprehensive set of hard figures emerged for the first time (1960s +)* 2 TOUGH (1818 +) 3 Excellent; good; COOL (1930s + *Jive talk*) *n* <H> HARD-ON (1893 +) **See** TAKE IT HARD

hard (or tough) act to follow n phr Something or someone difficult to rival or beat: *Dr Nick's going to be a hard act to follow [1975 +; from the notion of a performer coming next on a variety bill]*

hard as nails adj phr Extremely durable and grim; TOUGH (1850s +)

<hardass or hardassed> **adj**: *Some are hardass disciplinarians/even your most hardassed rightwingers had some showboat in them n* A severe and often pugnacious person; *I've gotten the reputation as being a hardass (1940s +)*

hard at it adj phr Doing the sex act; SCREWING: *Was you and she not hard at it before I came into the room? (1749 +)*

hardball modifier: *fields hardball questions in a practice TV interview/despite his hardball attitude toward sponsors of offensive TV shows n* Serious and consequential activity, work, etc; perilous and responsible doings: *It's hardball now, it's not games anymore/It's going to be hard ball. We're talking about physicians losing income v* PLAY HARDBALL (1973 +)

hard-boiled adj Severe and uncompromising; strict and pugnacious; TOUGH: *The rather hard-boiled painting that hangs in Father's office*

[1886 + ; fr *hard-boiled egg*]

hard-boiled egg *n phr* A severe and pugnacious person; TOUGH GUY: *Our basic idea of a hero is really a “hard-boiled egg”* [1880s + ; because “it can’t be beat”]

hardboot *n* A devotee of horses and of horse racing: *Granted hardboots can be sentimental about a horse on the lead* (1940s +)

hard bop *n phr* A type of music resembling the blues that is related to, but more earthy and modal in approach than, straight bop: *swing, bop, cool jazz, hard bop, funky jazz* (1950s + *Jazz musicians*)

hard (or heavy) breathing *n phr* Passionate lovemaking (1970s +)

hard case *n phr* A rough and dangerous person; TOUGH GUY: *Most of the hardcases knew their rights better than the cops* (1836 +)

hard cheese *n phr* 1 An unfortunate outcome or situation • Still chiefly British; often an interjection: *This is hard cheese indeed* (1876 +) 2 A fastball; SMOKE (1980s + *Baseball*)

hard coin *n phr* Large amounts of money; MEGABUCKS: *There’s some hard coin being made by the music magnates* (1970s +)

hard copy *n phr* A printed copy of a computer document; printout: *Millie, can you give me a hard copy of that?* (1964 +)

hard-core *adj* Essential and uncompromising; unmitigated: *a hard-core Republican/hard-core pornography* (1951 +) *n* Pornography that openly depicts complete sex acts: *He sort of likes dirty stuff, but not real hard core* (1970s +)

hard drug *n phr* A narcotic, like heroin or morphine, that is

powerfully addictive and injurious: *The American problem is heroin, as "hard" a drug as there is* [1960s+ Narcotics; probably modeled on *hard liquor*]

hard facts *n phr* Information that is dependable and verifiable (1887+)

hard hat *modifier*: *Caution, this is a hard-hat zone* *n phr* 1 A derby hat: *The boys with the hard hats always ask a lot of questions about murders* (1935+) 2 (also **brain bucket**) The steel or plastic helmet worn by various sorts of workers, esp constructions: *From here on we wear hard hats/They lay aloft at 1930 with their "brain buckets" (hard hats) and bags of tools* (1953+) 3 A worker who wears a hard hat: *The hard hats sat around and whistled at the passing girls* (1960s+) 4 A very conservative rightwinger; a reactionary: *He knows he can count on the hard hats to support him* (1970s+) 5 A regular Viet Cong soldier, who wears a military helmet, as distinct from a guerrilla or reservist: *Some 50,000 are "hard-hats" (full-time fighters) (Vietnam War armed forces)* [the political sense fr the vocal and sometimes violent opposition of many construction workers to the US peace movement during the Vietnam War, reinforced by terms like *hard line* and *hard core*]

hardhead *n* An obstinate or stupid person (1519+)

hardheaded *adj* 1 Obstinate; stubborn; PIGHEADED (1583+) 2 Realistic; practical; unevasive; HARD-NOSED (1779+)

hard line *adj*: *the President's hard-line views on abortion* *n phr* A policy or attitude based on severity and lack of compromise: *Take a hard*

line with them or they'll murder you (1960s +)

hard liquor *n phr* Whiskey, rum, gin, brandy, etc., as distinct from wine and beer; spirits; strong waters (1879 +)

hard look, a *n phr* **1** An intense and unblinking scrutiny; strict examination: *Take a hard look at what's going on upstairs/We'll have a hard look at the income and expenses (1960s +)* **2** A menacing or hostile stare: *She gave me a real hard look when I blurted her name (1888 +)*

hard-luck story *n phr* A tale calculated to gain sympathy and help: *He gives me the same old hard-luck story every time (1900 +)*

hard news *n phr* Information that is definite and verifiable, free of conjecture (1938 +)

hard-nosed *adj* **1** Stubborn; obstinate (*mid-1920s +*) **2** Severe and practical; harshly realistic; HARDHEADED, TOUGH: *They'll take a hard-nosed look, then report (1940s +)*

hard nut *n* A difficult or uncompromising person: *was a hard nut, that's for sure (1888 +)*

◁**hard-on**▷ *n* **1** An erection of the penis: *It was another one of those subway things. Like having a hard-on at random (1893 +)* **2** A severe and intolerant person, esp a martinet leader or superior: *Stone is turning into a world-class hard-on (1980s +)* **See** HAVE A HARD-ON FOR someone or something

hard-road freak *n phr* A drifting young person who has rejected conventional society and has typically been arrested for vagrancy,

drug use, etc; HIPPIE (1960s +)

hard-rock *adj* Severe; dour and pugnacious; TOUGH: *the old hard-rock guy who would line up all the cocaine users and shoot them* [1923 + ; probably fr the difficulty of *hard-rock* mining as distinct fr other kinds; influenced by *rock-hard*]

hard rock *n phr* A form of rock-and-roll music with a simple, driving beat, usu played on heavily amplified guitars (1960s + *Rock and roll*)

hard (or **tough**) **row to hoe**, a *n phr* A difficult task; a period of trouble and travail; HARD TIMES: *If he focused on Rwanda, where would he get the interest and support? It's going to be a hard row to hoe* (1835 +)

hard science *n phr* A science such as chemistry or physics where the data and conclusions are supportable by objective criteria (1960s +)

hard sell *n phr* An act or policy of selling aggressively, forcibly, loudly, etc: *Joe is a master at hard sell* (1950s +)

hard-shell *adj* Strict; conservative; HARD-CORE: *her hard-shell manner, her hipped-up weariness*

hard stuff *n* **1** Whiskey and other strong liquors; spirits; HARD LIQUOR: *The troubles the hard stuff inflicts on men with no defense against it* (1891 +) *n phr* **2** HARD DRUG (1960s + *Narcotics*) **3** Money, esp loot or other illicit gain (1910 + *Underworld*)

hard swallow *n phr* Something hard to accept: *Clinton's change of*

policy is a hard swallow for Ghali (1990s +)

hard time *n phr* Time actually spent in prison by a sentenced criminal: *Hard men are serving hard time 10 miles down the road (1930s + Underworld)* **See** GIVE SOMEONE A HARD TIME

hard times *n phr* A period of economic depression, poverty, etc (1705 +)

hardtop *n* **1** A car with a metal roof, esp one resembling a convertible or with a convertible counterpart (1940s +) **2** A paved area or road: *Park over there on the hardtop (1950s +)*

hard up *adj phr* **1** Poor; penniless: *It was no disgrace to be hard up in those times (1821 +)* **2** Sexually frustrated; needing sexual gratification; HORNY: *He declared he was so hard up he'd fuck mud (1940s +)* [apparently fr a nautical expression meaning the helm is *hard up*, that is, held all the way to windward while beating and so pinched as tight as possible]

hard up for something *adj phr* Lacking; deficient in: *We're hard up for booze around here (1840 +)*

hardware *n* **1** Weapons and other war matériel: *military "hardware," tanks, planes, guns, rockets, weapons (1865 +)* **2** Military insignia or medals worn on a uniform (*WWII armed forces*) **3** Badges and other identification jewelry (1930s +) **4** HARD DRUG, HARD LIQUOR

hard way, the *n phr* **1** The repetition of an even number that came up on the first roll, made by rolling two even dice that add up to it (1950s + *Crapshooting*) **2** The most difficult and strenuous way of doing anything: *Wideman is building a picture of the world the hard*

way—*person by person, life by life* (1931 +)

hard-wired *adj* Determined by innate brain functions; not a matter of choice: *These individuals seem hard-wired only to show up at work, do their task and leave with a paycheck/We're hard-wired to be social creatures* [1970s + ; fr the definiteness of an actual wired connection in a computer, as distinct from something depending on a program]

hardwood, the *n* A basketball court (1940s + *Basketball*)

harness *n* The dress and equipment of special categories of persons, such as telephone line repairers, police officers, train conductors, motorcyclists, etc: *Wise detectives, who dread going back into "harness" or uniform* (1841 +) **See** IN HARNESS

harp *n* ◀1▶ An Irish person or one of Irish descent (1904 +) 2 A harmonica (1887 +) 3 Phencyclidine or PCP, a narcotic (1990s + *Narcotics*)

harrumph *v* To speak disparagingly or indignantly: *Louise Trubek harrumphed that title insurance is regarded as a "consumer rip-off"/She harrumphed and slammed her door closed* (1940s +)

Harry **See** BIG HARRY, EVERY TOM, DICK, AND HARRY

harsh *v* To nag and complain; NUDGE (1990s + *Teenagers*)

Hart, Schaffner and Marx *n phr* Three jacks [1960s + *Poker*; fr the name of a men's clothing manufacturer]

has-been *n* 1 A person who was once famous, successful, courted, etc, but is no longer so: *Some has-beens make spectacular comebacks*

(1786 +) **2** BACK NUMBER

hash *adj* Excellent; wonderful; COOL (1960s + *Cool talk*) *n* Hashish (1950s + *Narcotics*) **v** **1** To discuss, esp at length; HASH OVER: *They had hashed and rehashed for many a frugal conversational meal* (1920 +)
2 HASH UP (1663 +) **See** MAKE HAMBURGER OUT OF someone or something, SETTLE someone's HASH, SLING HASH

has had it, one *sentence* **1** (Variations: **up to here** or **up to one's ass** or **up to one's eyebrows** or some other anatomical feature may be added) One is exhausted, disgusted, unwilling to put up with any more: *All at once I've had it up to here with psychiatry* **2** One has been given a last chance and has failed: *That's the ball game, buddy, you've had it* [WWII armed forces; fr shortening of WWII British Royal Air Force slang: He's *had his time*, "He's been killed"]

Hashbury *n* The Haight-Ashbury section of San Francisco, a haunt of hippies during the 1960s; the HAIGHT (1960s + *Counterculture*)

hasher *n* **1** A waiter or waitress: *going to give them jobs as hashers* **2** A cook or kitchen worker (1916 +)

hashery *n* A restaurant or lunch counter, esp a small or cheap place: *We'll inhale a few hamburgers at some fashionable hashery* (1870 +)

hash head *n phr* A frequent user of hashish or marijuana (1950s + *Narcotics*)

hash-house or **hash joint** *n* A restaurant or lunch counter, esp a cheap one; HASHERY: *the sort of language that one would expect to hear from a hobo in a Bowery hash-house* (1875 +)

hash mark (or stripe) n phr **1** A service stripe, worn on the sleeve of a military uniform to mark each four-year period of service: *the voice of a subaltern of God, hashmarks running down his arm for a thousand miles (1909+ Armed forces)* **2** An inbounds line marker used to help fix the point where the ball is put in play, and spaced one yard from the next mark (1960s+ *Football*) [military sense apparently fr the number of years one has had free food from the Army]

hash over (or out) v phr **1** To discuss, esp repeatedly and lengthily: *We kept hashing over the same tired old topics/She thought we should hash it out right now* **2** To rehash, review: *Asked him in to hash over a point or two* [1931+; fr the notion of chopping something fine]

hash session n phr GABFEST (1940s+)

hash-slinger n **1** A waiter or waitress, usu in a cheap restaurant or lunch counter: *Hash-slingers are plentiful, but well-trained waitresses are scarce* **2** A cook or kitchen worker (1868+)

hash up v phr To ruin; spoil; FUCK UP, MESS UP (1940s+)

hassle or hassel n **1** A disagreement; quarrel; fight: *A hassel between two actors touched off the riot/The hassle over putting fluoride in drinking water* **2** A difficult or tedious task or concern: *Getting those tickets was a real hassle* **v** **1**: *They were hassling about who would pay the bill* **2** (also **hass**) To harass; treat rudely and roughly: *I went to an assistant DA and told him I wanted to discuss being hassled by the police/What you going to do if you find the hobo that hassled him?* **3** To get narcotics with difficulty: *He finally hassled one bag* (1950s+)

Narcotics) [1920s + , but mainly 1940s + ; origin unknown; probably fr *hatchel*, “to harass,” found by 1800, a *hatchel* being an instrument for beating flax, and related to *heckle*; perhaps fr *hazel*, with a variant *hassle*, the switch used for beatings; *hazel oil* meant “a beating” by 1678]

bassle-free *adj* Without difficulties and worries: *The bliss of hassle-free existence depends first and foremost on other people who can dispense with all the pesky minutiae of daily life. In other words, you need staff* (1980s +)

hat *n* A condom (1990s + *Teenagers*) **See** BRASS HAT, GIMMIE HAT, HARD HAT, HERE'S YOUR HAT WHAT'S YOUR HURRY, HIGH-HAT, KNOCK **something** INTO A COCKED HAT, OLD HAT, PARTY HAT, PASS THE HAT, SHIT IN YOUR HAT, STRAW HAT, TALK THROUGH **one's** HAT, THROW **one's** HAT IN THE RING, TIN HAT, UNDER **one's** HAT, WEAR TWO HATS, WHITE HAT, WOOL HAT

hatch *n* The mouth and throat: *DeCasseres would hurl the first legal drink down his hatch* (1931 +) **See** BOOBY HATCH, DOWN THE HATCH, NUTHOUSE

hatchet job *n phr* **1** A malicious attack; a diatribe or indictment meant to destroy: *By hatchet job is meant here a calculated attempt to demolish the author* **2** A discharge or dismissal; AX (1940s +)

hatchet man *n phr* **1** (also **hatchet**) A professional killer; HIT MAN (1880 +) **2** A person whose task and predilection is to destroy an opponent, often by illegitimate means (1944 +)

hate someone's **guts** *v phr* To have an extreme hatred for someone; absolutely execrate someone: *I dislike him, but I don't hate his damn guts* (1918 +)

hate-jock *n* A radio talk-show host who encourages bigotry: *a protest against the racism of white hate-jock Bob Grant (1990s +)*

hat in hand *adv phr* Obsequiously; tamely; pleadingly: *The President stands there, hat in hand, begging the Congress for their votes*

hatrack *n* A thin or frail person; BEANPOLE (1930s +)

hat trick *n phr* **1** The scoring of three goals in a single game by the same player in hockey or soccer (1877+ *British sports*) **2** The feat of hitting a single, double, triple, and home run in one game (1980s+ *Baseball*) [fr cricket, “the bowling down of three wickets with successive balls,” probably compared with the magician’s trick of pulling a rabbit out of a hat; also said to be a feat that entitled the player to the proceeds of a collection, that is, a passing of the *hat*, or to a new *hat*]

hatty *See* HIGH-HAT

haul *n* **1** Profits or return, esp illicit ones; loot: *The show yielded a huge haul* **2** The proceeds from any activity: *a haul for the canned goods collection* [1776+; fr the contents of a fish net that is *hauled*]

See COLD HAUL, FOR THE LONG HAUL, GET one’S ASHES HAULED, LONG HAUL, OVER THE LONG HAUL

haul one’s ashes *v phr* To leave; depart; HAUL ASS (1950s +)

haul someone’s ashes *v phr* **1** To harm or injure someone, esp by beating **2** To do the sex act with someone (1950s +) *See* GET one’S ASHES HAULED

haul ass *v phr* **1** (also **haul a**) To leave; depart; BUG OUT, CLEAR OUT, DRAG ASS: *If you’re smart you’ll haul ass out of here before you get in big*

trouble/Time to haul a, man! (WWI Navy) **2** To act quickly, esp in response to a command: *being ready to haul ass when the ball was hit*
3 To drive or travel very fast: *They were really hauling ass when they hit that curve (1950s + Hot rodders)*

hauler *n* A very fast car; HOT ROD (1950s + *Hot rodders*)

haul someone in *v phr* To arrest someone; RUN someone IN: *The police decided to haul them all in (1940s +)*

haul it *v phr* To run away; flee; escape [1940s + Black; fr *haul ass*]


haul off *v phr* To launch an attack, diatribe, etc: *The parson hauled off and told that bunch of jerks they were a bunch of jerks* [1870 +; probably fr the action of drawing away to make more room for launching the fist, and *haul* suggests a nautical origin]

haul off on someone *v phr* To hit or beat someone; launch a blow at someone: *counting fifty before they hauled off on a Red (1930s +)*

haul (or rake) someone over the coals *v phr* **1** To rebuke someone harshly; castigate; chew out **2** To put someone through an ordeal [1719 +; fr the old ordeal by fire]

haul the mail *See* CARRY THE MAIL

hausfrau (HOUS frou) *n* A woman whose primary interests are keeping house, raising children, etc • Often used in mild contempt, and to suggest a lack of chic [1918 +; fr German, “housewife”]

have *v*  To do the sex act with; possess sexually: *I had Mary Jane in her own bathtub ten times (1594 +)* **2** To cheat; deceive; DIDDLE: *I'm afraid it's a scam, they have had us (1805 +)* **3** To gain an advantage

over: *I have you there, old man!* (1596 +) **See** be HAD

have a bag (or half a bag) on v phr To be drunk: *He had half a bag on and looked it* (1940s +)

have a ball v phr To enjoy oneself particularly well and uninhibitedly: *After the dean left we had us a ball* (1940s +)

have a bellyful v phr To get more than one wants; be unpleasantly surfeited: *I've had a bellyful of your bitching* (1886 +)

have a big foot v phr To be important; have much influence: *We have a big foot in Asia* (1990s +)

have a big head v phr **1** To think of oneself as superior **2** To have a hangover

have a big mouth v phr To be inclined to say embarrassingly too much, esp about others' personal affairs: *Marcel Proust sure had a big mouth/When he heard that, my pal told me I had a big mouth* [1960s +; popularized by the comedian Jackie Gleason, who often said it of himself]

have a bird v phr To exhibit shock or anger; HAVE KITTENS: *Charlie will have a bird when he learns she died* (1960s +)

◁**have a bone on**▷ **v phr** To have an erect penis [1920s +; fr a hubristic anatomical misstatement]

have a bone to pick with someone v phr To have a matter to complain about or go into with someone (1565 +)

◁**have a broom up one's ass**▷ **v phr** (Variations: **get** may replace **have**; **stick** may replace **broom**; **in one's tail** may replace **up one's**)

ass; butt may replace **ass**) To work diligently and eagerly; be an over-achiever [1930s+; fr the willing or harried worker in a joke, whose hands are full, but who would sweep the floor if one placed a *broom* in the worker's nether cavity]

◁**have a bug (or hair) up one's ass (or up one's nose)**▷ **v phr** To be very irascible and touchy: *These people with little bugs up their ass, they come here to cause trouble/Obviously the chief had a bug up his ass, and this was not the time to start an argument/Cheatham had a hair up his ass, was the consensus/He had some bug up his butt and insisted I come down last night (1940s+)*

have a bun in the oven v phr To be pregnant: *The outspoken Miss Bow, who had a bun in the oven, replied (1940s+)*

have a bun on v phr To be drunk (1900+)

have a can on See GET A CAN ON

◁**have a case of the dumb-ass**▷ **v phr** To do something stupid; err idiotically (1970s+ *Army*)

have a case on someone v phr To be infatuated with or in love [1852+; case was specialized to mean “a case of being in love” by the mid-19th century]

have a chip on one's shoulder v phr To be very touchy and belligerent; be easily provoked (1855+)

have a clue v phr To know; be aware or apprised of • Often in the negative: *Do you have a clue about what's going on here? (WWII British armed forces) See* NOT HAVE A CLUE

have a cow *See* HAVE KITTENS

have (or take) a crack at something *v phr* (Variations: **go** or **rip** or **ripple** or **shot** or **whack** may replace **crack**) To make an attempt at something; have a try: *He said he wasn't sure he could, but he'd have a crack at it (1836+)*

have a crush on someone *v phr* To be infatuated or enchanted with someone, esp to be secretly in love with someone older and more worldly than oneself (1913+)

have a field day *v phr* To indulge oneself freely and successfully; have it entirely one's way; go all out: *When the news gets out, the press will have a field day/I'm afraid the bunnies have had a field day with the hyacinths [1827+; fr mid-1700s field day, "a military review"]*

have a finger in the pie *v phr* To participate in an intrusive way; meddle: *I'm afraid the Commissioner has a finger in this pie (1659+)*

have a free ride *See* GET A FREE RIDE

have a full (or much on one's) plate *v phr* To be very busy; be preoccupied and overburdened: *I know you have a full plate and can't give any one case the coverage it needs/I have so much on my plate and so little time (1924+)*

have a go *v phr* To make an attempt; have a try; HAVE A CRACK AT something: *Thought I'd have another go at friend Gary (1835+)*

◁**have a hair on one's ass, not**▷ *See* NOT HAVE A HAIR ON one's ASS

have a hair up one's ass *See* HAVE A BUG UP one's ASS

◁**have a hard-on for** someone or something▷ **v phr** To have antipathy for; hate: *He knows I'm a federal cop, so he's got to figure I got a hard on for Panthers/couple heavy-duty Cubans worked for the CIA when the CIA had a hard-on for Castro (1970s +)*

have a heart *interj* A pleading exclamation: *Have a heart, baby, I only did it once! (1916 +)*

have a hole in one's head (or wig) **v phr** To be very stupid; be insane; HAVE ROCKS IN one's HEAD (1940s +)

have a leg up on someone or something **v phr** To have a good start on some project, process, in some competition, etc; be well on the way to a goal: *She just started, and they already have a leg up on it (1940s +)*

have a little on the side *See* GET A LITTLE ON THE SIDE

have all one's buttons (or marbles) **v phr** To be normal or mentally sound; be sane; be shrewd and aware • Most often in the negative: *When I'm sure I no longer have all my buttons I'll quit this line of work/ The old guy doesn't seem to have all his marbles, the way he mumbles to himself [1860 + ; buttons probably refers to the neatness and completeness of a normal mind compared with the uncertainty and slovenliness of clothes lacking buttons]* *See* LOSE one's MARBLES

have all one's ducks in a row *See* HAVE one's DUCKS IN A ROW

have all one's switches on, not *See* NOT HAVE ALL one's SWITCHES ON

have all the moves **v phr** To be very skillful; be expert, esp and originally in a sport or game (1970s +)

have a load on v phr To be drunk; FEEL NO PAIN (1598 +)

have a lock on something v phr To be assured of some result; be certain of success: *Catholics constantly yearn for moral conviction, and Mr Powell's got a lock on that* [1970s + ; fr lock, "a wrestling hold"]

have a mind like a sieve v phr To be very forgetful (1893 +)

have a monkey on one's back v phr To be addicted to narcotics [1930s + Narcotics; perhaps related to the same phrase, meaning "to be angry," found by 1860]

have (or cop) an attitude (or a tude) v phr 1 To dislike and complain about one's plight; BITCH, KVETCH: *If you'd put up as many bonds for nothing as I have, you'd have a fucking attitude too/ "Go ahead, cop an attitude," she says and pulls away from him/ If you're going to cop a tude because I was a few minutes late, then I'll just go home* 2 To be arrogant or haughty (1980s + Black)

have an (or the) edge on someone v phr To have an advantage; enjoy a superior or winning position: *The slim and handsome will always have the edge on the rest of us* (1896 +)

have a (or one's) nerve v phr To be impudently aggressive: *You sure have your nerve, telling him off that way* (1890 +)

Have a nice day sentence A saying said upon parting, often by someone who is not an acquaintance: *store employees trained to say "Have a nice day"*

have another think (or thing) coming v phr To be wary of a fixed

opinion; be skeptical of one's certainty: *For lo! I have another think a-coming (1901 +)*

have ants in one's pants v phr To be nervous or anxious; to be fidgety: *he has ants in his pants waiting for the audition* **See** ANTS OR ANTS IN ONE'S PANTS

have any, not See NOT HAVE ANY

have a party v phr To do the sex act; SCREW (*mid-1930s +*)

◁**have a pot (or without a pot) to piss in, not▷ See** NOT HAVE A POT TO PISS IN

have a prayer v phr To have a chance; be able • Very often used in the negative: *The Eagles don't have a prayer, and neither will Murray (1941 +)*

have a problem with something v phr To find hard to accept; be unable to agree immediately: *I said we'll split it. You got a problem with that? (1970s +)*

have a red face v phr To be embarrassed; have a guilty and sheepish mien; HAVE EGG ON one's FACE: *The Chief had a red face when he was found in possession of stolen property (1937 +)*

◁**have a rod on▷ v phr** To have an erect penis; HAVE A BONE ON (*1900 +*)

have a screw loose v phr To be crazy; be eccentric: *that his brains, in her opinion, were twisted, or that he had a screw loose/ Sometimes I think she must have a screw loose (1810 +)*

have one's ashes hauled See GET one's ASHES HAULED

◁**have a shit fit▷ v phr** To become very upset or furious; SHIT A BRICK,

shit green: *Some people are going to have a shit fit when they read it*
(1970s +)

have a short fuse v phr To have a quick temper; be irascible; SHOOT
FROM THE HIP (1960s +)

have a soft spot for v phr To regard favorably; like; enjoy; approve
of (1902 +)

◁**have someone's ass**▷ **v phr** To punish someone; retaliate severely:
If you utter one word, I'll have your ass (1940s +)

have one's ass handed to one v phr To be decisively defeated: *If he
runs again he'll have his ass handed to him* (1990s +)

have one's ass (or tail) in a crack v phr To be in a bad situation; be
in trouble (1980s +)

◁**have one's ass in a sling**▷ **v phr** (Variations: *get* or *put* may replace
have; the locution may be one's **ass is, was, etc, in a sling**) To be
in serious trouble: *Allen has taken an introspective, but not innocent,
bystander, and put his ass in a sling* [1930s +; the similar *have one's
eye in a sling* is found by 1909]

have one's ass to the wind v phr To be vulnerable, as if naked:
*They're telling Harold he's wearing a beautiful suit, and he's got his ass
to the wind* (1980s +)

have a thing about v phr To be especially concerned with, in love,
hate, or fascination; be strongly emotional about: *She really has a
thing about pyramids* (1936 +)

have a tiger by the tail v phr To be in a nasty situation, esp

innocently or unexpectedly, that will get much worse before it gets better (1972+)

have oneself a time *v phr* To enjoy oneself hugely: *Everybody had himself a time* (1882+)

have a toehold *See* GET A TOEHOLD

have a turkey on one's back *v phr* To be drunk (1980s+)

◁**have (or get) one's banana peeled**▷ *v phr* To do the sex act; copulate (1889+)

have bats in one's belfry *v phr* To be crazy; be eccentric (1901+)

have brain one, not *See* NOT HAVE BRAIN ONE

◁**have brass (or cast-iron) balls**▷ *v phr* To have audacity; be foolhardy: *Which one of you worthless nits had the brass balls enough to cough when I was talking* (1970s+)

◁**have someone by the balls**▷ *v phr* To have someone in a very perilous and painful position; have a firm grip on someone; *HAVE someone BY THE SHORT HAIRS: I didn't want to do it, but they had me by the balls* (1940s+)

◁**have (or get) someone by the short hairs (or curlies or knickers)**▷ *v phr* To have someone in a painful and helpless situation; have absolute control over; *HAVE someone BY THE BALLS: When life gets you by the short hairs, it doesn't let go/ Someone nasty and ruthless has him by the short hairs/ You're in no position to make deals. We got you by the curlies/ We've got him by the knickers and he's hurting* [1891+; fr the short hairs growing on the scrotum]

have someone or something by the tail v phr 1 HAVE SOMEONE BY THE BALLS (1940s +) **2** To have control of: *I know all young people are sure they can have it by the tail (1796 +)*

have one's card punched See GET ONE'S CARD PUNCHED

◁**have one's cherry**▷ **v phr 1** To be a virgin (1889 +) **2** To be unproved or untried in the sense indicated: *He's never been bankrupt; still got his cherry (1970s +)*

have something cinched v phr (Variations: **iced** or **knocked** or **made** or **taped** or **wired** may replace **cinched**) To be entirely sure of a favorable outcome; be sure of success, well-being, etc: *Then you see the helicopter and you know you've got it knocked/ A veteran bank shot artist who has the back boards at West 4th Street wired, does anything he pleases/ I thought I had it iced* [entry form 1900 +, most others 1950s +; *have something cinched* is fr cowboy usage, referring to a tightly and securely *cinched* saddle; the variants *have something made, taped, and wired* fr poker terms, also fr cowboy use]

have one's claws out v phr To be intent on committing injury; be in a damaging or fighting mood: *Maggie Siggins certainly had her claws out when she wrote about Bill (1940s +)*

have (or get) cold feet v phr To be timorous or afraid; have second thoughts: *Ella was coming too, but she had cold feet (1893 +)*

have someone coming and going v phr To have someone in an inescapable situation: *What could I do? They had me coming and going (1903 +)*

have something coming out of one's ears v phr To have something in great abundance: *He's got talent coming out of his ears (1940s +)*

have deep pockets and short arms v phr To be rich and parsimonious (1980s +)

have dibs on v phr To have a claim or option on: *No, sorry. This guy has dibs on me (1930s +)*

◀**have one's dick in one's zipper**▶ **v phr** To be in a difficult and embarrassing plight: *And Buster's got his dick in his zipper now (1980s +)*

have something down pat (or cold) v phr To know something or be able to do something perfectly; be perfect master of something: *I had my story down pat, so I almost believed it myself (first form 1896 +, second 1915 +)*

have one's druthers v phr To have one's preference; have it one's way: *if George Bush had his druthers/ But personally, if I had my druthers, I would like nothing better than to run off to the country with some guy (1895 +)* **See** DRUTHERS

have (or get) one's ducks in a row v phr (Variations: **have [or get] one's ducks all in a row** or **have [or get] all one's ducks in a row**) To be fully prepared; to be organized; DO one's HOMEWORK: *You have five years to get all your ducks in a row/ Want to get all your ducks in a row? Get ChemPlus [1970s + Army; perhaps fr a mother duck's marshaling of her ducklings in a neat flotilla behind her; perhaps fr some game]*

have one's ears on v phr To have one's receiver turned on (1970s +)

Citizens band)

have egg on one's face v phr To be caught in an embarrassing or guilty plight; be rueful and embarrassed: *Steve Brill, the editor, should have egg on his face this week/ He left President Reagan with egg on his face (1950s+)*

have eyes for v phr To desire; wish for; have a lech for someone or something: *But the chick who has eyes for some cat would be uncool if she told him so directly/ Then suddenly she finds out he's got eyes for another woman (1810+)*

have (or eat) someone for lunch v phr To defeat and destroy someone; CLOBBER, EAT SOMEONE'S LUNCH: *Then Ronald Reagan had Walter Mondale for lunch (1980s+)*

have game v phr To have high skills; also, to bring spirit and heart into an activity: *his dunking showed he still has game*

have something going (or working) for someone or something v phr
To enjoy a certain advantage; have particular assets: *You've got more going for you with NTS home training/ The best thing this mall has going for it is it's just a test (1960s+)*

have something going with someone v phr To be amorously tied to someone (1970s+)

have one's hands full v phr To be occupied up to one's limit, esp in an emergency: *When the water main burst, the utility workers had their hands full (1546+)*

have (or need) one's head examined v phr To be crazy or seriously

consider that one is crazy: *you should have your head examined for making that decision (1949+)*

have one's head handed to one *v phr* To be severely punished: *The emir said nothing at all, and sped off to his palace. This is just the sort of thing that has gotten other rulers their heads handed to them (1980s+)*

have one's head pulled *v phr* (Variation: **out of one's ass** may be added) To be intelligent and sensible; be aware (1970+ *Army*)

have one's head screwed on right *v phr* To be sane and sensible: *No matter what he sounds like, he really has his head screwed on right (1821+)*

◁**have one's head up one's ass**▷ *v phr* To behave stupidly and blindly; be chronically wrong: *Why you gommy, stupid shit. Your head is up your ass/ He's one of the few bosses in this job who doesn't have his head up his ass (1970s+)*

have hot pants *v phr* To be very lustful; crave carnally: *He has hot pants for her and she for someone else, alas (1935+)*

have someone in the palm of one's hand *v phr* To have control of someone; have someone at one's command: *We had her in the palm of our hands (1940s+)*

have it *v phr* To be talented; be competent and effectual: *He tries hard, but he just doesn't have it [1940s+; probably a shortening of have it on the ball]* **See** LET someone HAVE IT

have it all *v phr* To enjoy everything life might offer: *These days*

women are telling her they can't have it all. You've spent so long getting where you are—how does a baby fit in? (1970s +)

have it all hanging out v phr To be concealing nothing; be entirely candid and undefensive; LET IT ALL HANG OUT: *As the current saying goes, NCR has it all hanging out (1960s +)*

have it all over someone or something **v phr** To be superior; surpass or outstrip: *In advanced technology, the North has it all over the South (1922 +)*

have (or get) it all together v phr To have one's life, feelings, energies, etc, satisfactorily arranged; be free of emotional and behavioral dysfunctions: *Dr Jung says we'll all be OK when we have it all together (1960s +)*

have it bad v phr To be very much in love; be powerfully infatuated: *They would say that mouse has got it for Joey but bad/ He warbled the old song, "I got it bad and that ain't good" (1872 +)*

have it both ways v phr To hold or esp to profit from two contrary positions; WORK BOTH SIDES OF THE STREET • Usu in the negative: *Make up your mind which one you'll support, because you can't have it both ways (1914 +)*

have it going on v phr To be attractive; be chic and up-to-date: *So you think you've got it going on, huh? (1990s +)*

have it good v phr To enjoy prosperity, health, regular meals, and pleasures, etc: *I had it real good up there, till they canned me/ We never had it so good! (1940s +)*

have it in for someone *v phr* To be angry with; feel vindictive toward; bear a grudge: *Hatfield had it in for McCoy (1849+)*

have it made *See* HAVE something CINCHED

◁**have it off**▷ *v phr* To do the sex act; copulate • Still chiefly British: *who has had it off with both of them* [1930s+ British; fr earlier use, “to achieve a crime or shady transaction, pull something off,” probably transferred to sexual activity on analogy with *cheating* and *hanky panky*, and by psychological suggestions related to *pull off* and *come off*]

have kittens or **cast a kitten** *v phr* (Variations: **a cat** or **a cow** or **pups** may replace **kittens**) To manifest strong and sudden feeling; have a fit of laughter, fear, anger, etc: *He got so mad I thought he was going to have kittens/ In addition to shy clients and those who don't want their parents to have a cow (1900+)*

have lead in one's pants (or ▷**in one's ass**▷) *v phr* To be very sluggish and lazy; move or work slowly; be unresponsive: *Frank's got lead in his ass, go jazz him up (1950s+)*

▷**have lead in one's pencil**▷ *v phr* **1** To be sexually potent; have an erect penis **2** To be keenly needful of sexual gratification (1916+)

have lockjaw *v phr* To be silent or reticent: *PUSH is not an organization that has lockjaw when it comes to issues (1980+)*

have loose lips *v phr* To be unable to keep a secret or keep quiet (1940s+)

have someone's lunch *See* EAT someone's LUNCH

have something made *See* HAVE SOMETHING CINCHED

have one's mind in the gutter *v phr* To be preoccupied with or devoted to crudeness and smut (1940s +)

have one's moments *v phr* To have intermittent success: *she has her moments singing in the shower* (1925 +)

have money to burn *v phr* To be wealthy; have more money than one needs: *Last year he was a bum, but he hit the lottery and has money to burn* (1896 +)

have no bones about *See* MAKE NO BONES ABOUT

have-not *modifier*: the have-not nations of the Third World **n** A poor person, region, etc (1919 +)

have nothing on *v phr* To be surpassed by: *I have nothing on her in the experience department* (1906 +)

have someone's number *v phr* To know the exact truth about someone, though it be disguised; know someone completely: *She knew what I meant, and she knew I had her number/ They'd all had Dixon's number for years* (1853 +)

have one foot in the grave *v phr* To be nearly dead; be doomed (1621 +)

have one in the hopper *v phr* To be pregnant; have a pregnant wife: *I've only been married a short time, but we've got one in the hopper* (1970s +)

have something on the ball *v phr* To be talented; HAVE IT [1912 +; fr the skill of a baseball pitcher, who puts speed, motion, etc *on the*

ball]

have something on the brain *v phr* To be obsessed with: *She's got folk-dancing on the brain (1862 +)*

have someone over a barrel *v phr* To have someone at a disadvantage or in an awkward position [1938 +; apparently in allusion to the state of someone placed over a barrel to clear the lungs of water after being rescued from drowning]

have papers (or papers on) *v phr* To be married, or married to: *I will not be number two; I got papers on you (1970s + Black)*

have one's plate full *See* HAVE ONE'S HANDS FULL

have pups *See* HAVE KITTENS

have rocks in one's (or the) head *v phr* To be wrong, stupid, crazy, etc: *Kid, you got rocks in your head (1940s +)* *See* ROCKS IN ONE'S HEAD

haves, the *n* The people who have money, wealth, etc: *the haves just keep on getting more*

◁**have shit for brains**▷ *v phr* To be very stupid (1940s +)

have something on someone *v phr* To know incriminating information about someone: *now I have something on her (1919 +)*

have the drop on *v phr* To get an advantage over someone; put someone in a disadvantageous situation [1867 +; fr an earlier more specific sense, beat someone to the draw with one's firearm]

have the edge on someone *See* HAVE AN EDGE ON someone

have the foggiest notion or idea, not *See* NOT HAVE THE FOGGIEST NOTION

have the goods v phr To be talented; be effective; HAVE IT, HAVE WHAT IT TAKES: *She had the goods to hold on to a tried and true audience*
(1980+)

have the goods on someone v phr To have incriminating evidence:
They can't convict him because they don't have the goods on him
(1913+)

◁**have the hots for someone**▷ **v phr** To desire someone sexually: *The stocky instructress was glaring at them. "Think she's got the hots for you"/ I know Grodin has the hots for you* (1940s+)

have the inside track v phr To have a strong advantage, esp one based on some fortuitous circumstance: *All the candidates look OK, but Hester has the inside track because she's single* [1857+; fr the advantage that a racer has by being nearest the *inside* of the *track* and having therefore the shortest distance to run]

have the jump (or jump on) v phr To enjoy a lead or advantage; be ahead of: *Who has the jump in this election?* (1912+)

have them in the aisles See LAY THEM IN THE AISLES

have (or get) the munchies v phr To be hungry, esp for sweets and starches after using marijuana: *I just smoked the smoke and got the munchies and I got real fat* (1960s+ *Narcotics & counterculture*)

◁**have the rag on**▷ **v phr** To menstruate; FALL OFF THE ROOF (1940s+)

have the shorts v phr To be short of money: *I told him I had the shorts/ This partnership still has a severe case of the shorts* (1930s+)

◁**have the world by the balls**▷ **v phr** (Variations: **by the tail** or **on**

a string may replace by the balls) To be in a very profitable and dominant situation; HAVE something CINCHED, SHIT IN HIGH COTTON: *Dunning had the world by the balls/ With a good agent, you've got the world by the balls (1970s +)*

have one's ticket punched v phr To be a legitimate member of something; be fully warranted in experience, qualification, etc; PAY one'S DUES: *These women have had their "tickets punched" in the corporate world (1970s +)*

◀**have one's tits in a wringer**▶ **v phr** To be in trouble; be distressed: *Even as she watched her tits being pulled into the wringer [1940s + ; referring to the old-fashioned wringer for wet laundry]*

have something to burn v phr To have something in great abundance; HAVE something COMING OUT OF one'S EARS: *This guy has chutzpah to burn (1896 +)*

have two left feet v phr Be clumsy: *you've got two left feet (1915 +)*

have what it takes v phr To have the right abilities, personality, etc, for success: *Do you have what it takes? Let me enhance your gifts! (1934 +)*

have one's work cut out v phr To have something difficult to do: *telling him the news, she has her work cut out for her (1862 +)*

Hawaiian n A kind of marijuana (1990s + *Narcotics*)

hawk¹ v To clear one's throat; cough up and spit: *let out of their cells to wash, hawk, stretch (1583 +)*

hawk² n 1 A person who advocates a strong and bellicose policy or

action: *Some were doves on Vietnam and hawks on Iran (1960s +)* **2**

A person who attracts and procures young men and boys for homosexuals, esp older men: *The police believe he was acting the role of a "hawk," finding "chickens" (young boys) for older men (1970s + Homosexuals)*

hawk³ n A imitation Indian haircut affected by punk rockers; MOHAWK: *egg or soap it into the hawk (1980s +)*

hawk or hawkins, the n phr The cold winter wind: *Well, looks like the hawk is getting ready to hit the scene and send temperatures down* [1900 + Black; origin unknown; perhaps fr the strong biting quality of such a wind]

hawking n To drive slowly and watchfully in the streets, walk about vigilantly in bars and parties, etc, looking for a sex partner; CRUISE: *If you're out searching for a date, you're "cruising," "hawking," or "macking"* [1990s + Teenagers; perhaps related to *hawk²*, "a pimp for homosexuals"]

hawkish adj Having the attitude of one who advocates strong action on national policy: *These people are as hawkish as Lyndon Johnson (1965 +)*

hawkishness n The quality of being an advocate of a bellicose policy; belligerence: *A few of the Republicans objected to Nixon's hawkishness (1967 +)*

hay n Marijuana; HERB [Narcotics; 1940s +] **See** HIT THE HAY, INDIAN HAY, THAT AIN'T HAY

hay, the n Bed: *He is in his hotel room in the hay (1912 +)* **See** HIT THE

HAY

haybag *n* A woman (1851 +)

hay burner *n phr* **1** (also **oat-burner**) A horse, esp a racehorse: *preferred the company of hay-burners to that of humans (1904 +)* **2** A person who smokes marijuana: *About half the guys in the troupe were hay burners (1940s +)*

haymaker *n* **1** A very strong blow with the fist: *smashes the kid with a wild haymaker* **2** Any powerful stroke or felling blow: *Having her arrested would be a haymaker to your father* **3** Any supreme or definitive effort, performance, etc; WINNER: *Her blues number was a haymaker [1912 + ; probably fr the wide swinging stroke of a scythe in cutting hay]*

hayseed *adj* Rural; provincial: *The bad actors perform worse plays in hayseed theaters* *n* (also **hayseeder**) A farmer; country person: *There's still a lot of hayseed in Senator Chance (1888 +)*

haywire *adj* **1** Functioning erratically; out of order; ON THE BLINK: *This meter's haywire* **2** Makeshift; precariously operative: *What sort of haywire gadget are you using for a pump?* **3** Crazy; confused; COCKEYED: *He never looked inside an almanac, and was sure that anyone who did was haywire (1905 + Loggers)* **See** GO HAYWIRE

haze **See** IN A FOG

HAZMAT *n* Hazardous material: *The ambulance crew checked the site for hazmats (1990s +)*

head *n* **1** A headache, esp as a component of a hangover; a BIG HEAD: *You won't believe the head I had next morning (1893 +)* **2** The foam

on a glass of beer (1893 +) **3** A person: *at twenty-five cents a head, no reserved seats/ One head that used to claim to sell stockings called* (1551 +) ◀**4**▶ Fellatio or cunnilingus; BLOW JOB, HAIR PIE: *Some quiff is going to give you head* **5** A narcotics user, esp an addict: *My trip is to reach as many heads in this country as I can, and turn them around* (1911 + Narcotics) **6** The feeling of euphoria produced by a narcotic; HIGH, RUSH: *I take two Tuinals and get a nice head/ much of the head, or psychic lift, that users experience* (1960s + Narcotics) **7** A toilet or restroom: *in the head, back in a sec* **See** ACID FREAK, AIRHEAD,

BALLOONHEAD, BANANAHEAD, BEANHEAD, BIGHEAD, **a** BIG HEAD, BITE **someone's** HEAD OFF, BLOCKHEAD, BLUBBERHEAD, BONEHEAD, BUBBLEHEAD, BUCKETHEAD, BULLHEAD, CHEESEHEAD, CHICKENHEAD, CHIPHEAD, CHOWDERHEAD, CHUCKLEHEAD, CLUNKHEAD, COKEHEAD, DEADHEAD, DOO-DOO HEAD, DUMBHEAD, FATHEAD, FLATHEAD, GARBAGE HEAD, GET **one's** HEAD OUT OF **one's** ASS, GINHEAD, GIVE HEAD, GOOD HEAD, GO SOAK YOURSELF, HARDHEAD, HASH HEAD, HAVE A HOLE IN ONE'S HEAD, HAVE **one's** HEAD PULLED, HAVE ROCKS IN **one's** HEAD, **one's** HEAD IS UP **one's** ASS, HEAD SHOP, HEADSHRINKER, HIT THE NAIL ON THE HEAD, HOPHEAD, HOTHEAD, IN OVER **one's** HEAD, JARHEAD, JUICEHEAD, KNUCK-LEHEAD, LUNKHEAD, MEATHEAD, METAL HEAD, METH HEAD, MUSCLEHEAD, MUSH-HEAD, MUTTONHEAD, NEED **someone or something** LIKE A HOLE IN THE HEAD, NOODLE-HEAD, NUMBHEAD, OFF **one's** NUT, OFF THE TOP OF **one's** HEAD, OUT OF **one's** HEAD, OVER **one's** HEAD, PIGHEAD, PILLHEAD, PINHEAD, POINTHEAD, POINTY-HEAD, POTATO-HEAD, POTHEAD, PUDDINGHEAD, PUMPKINHEAD, ROCK-HEAD, ROCKS IN **one's** HEAD, ROTORHEAD, SAPHEAD, SHITHEAD, SOFT IN THE HEAD, SOREHEAD, STAND ON ONE'S HEAD, TALKING HEAD, USE **one's** HEAD, WEEDHEAD, WHERE **someone's** HEAD IS AT, WOODENHEAD, WOODHEAD, YELL **one's** HEAD OFF

-head combining word Addicted to or using the narcotic specified:
acidhead/ pothead (1911 + Narcotics)

head, the *n phr* The toilet; CAN [1748 + Nautical; fr the location of the crew's toilet in the bow or *head* of a ship]

headache *n* Any trouble, annoyance, vexation, etc: *another headache for pro coaches (1934 +)*

headbanger *n* A devotee of heavy metal rock music, a style dating from the mid-1960s: *Hip headbangers, it seems, want nothing more than to see Bon Jovi fall off the face of the earth/ The show's naked emotionality feels as false and forced as an arena full of headbangers holding their lighters aloft during a power ballad [1970s + ; fr the frenetic reactions of such persons to the music, including actual banging of the head]*

headcase *n* An insane or very eccentric person; NUT: *dedication to a cause that marked them as fanatics of a sort, the wealthy headcases, and professional haters (1970s +)*

head cook and bottle washer *See* CHIEF COOK AND BOTTLE WASHER

-headed *combining word* Having a head, esp a mind, of the specified defective sort (1386 +) *See* AIRHEADED, BALLOONHEADED, BIGHEADED, BONEHEADED, BULLHEADED, FATHEADED, FLATHEADED, MEATHEADED, MUSH-HEADED, MUTTONHEADED, NUMBHEADED, PIGHEADED, PINHEADED, POINTY-HEADED, WOOLLY-HEADED

header *n* **1** A head-first dive, fall, or plunge (1849 +) **2** A pass, shot at the goal, etc, made by batting the ball with one's head (1906 + *Soccer*) *See* DOUBLEHEADER

head for *v phr* To start out for or toward; HIT FOR: *I headed for the door/ He's headed for a disappointment [1835 + ; fr the pointing of a ship's bow or head toward a destination]*

head game *n phr* A process of manipulation, something like brainwashing; MIND-FUCK: *I was playing head games/ Coach Riley is a*

head-gamer who uses players as pieces in a board game (1990s +)

headhunt *v* To act as a headhunter

headhunter *n* A person or agency that seeks out and recruits employees, esp business executives and highly paid professionals, as candidates for usu high-paying or prestigious jobs: *Headhunters head for Washington as a capital place to find executives (mid-1960s +)*

head in a bed *n phr* A patient with no chance of recovery: *In neurosurgery slang, Dimas would spend his life as a head in a bed, with a body that was more or less irrelevant (1990s + Medical)*

◁**head is up** one's ass, one's▷ *sentence* One is behaving stupidly and blindly: *were even saying that, skill-wise, the FBI's head was up its ass (1970s +)*

◁**head job**▷ *n phr* Fellatio or cunnilingus; oral sex: *receiving a listless headjob from an aging black prostitute (1960s +)*

head kit *n phr* The set of implements used for taking narcotics; drug apparatus; WORKS: *Head kits are constantly being found (1960s + Narcotics)*

headless chicken *n* A panic-stricken person who is behaving illogically: *running around like a headless chicken at holiday time [1993 +; alluding to a chicken's behavior after its head is cut off]*

headlight ◁*n*▷ **1** A light-skinned black person (1950s + *Black*) **2** A large diamond, esp in a ring or clasp: *A lurid "headlight" in his tie (1940s +)*

headlights *n* 1 The eyes (1920s+ *Prizefight*) <2> A woman's breasts (1940s+)

headline-grabbing *adj* Newsworthy; prominently publicized: *The science community is demoralized; the atmosphere has been fouled by a multitude of headline-grabbing incidents* (1980s+)

headliner *n* The main or chief performer; main attraction: *She was the headliner last week at the Seven Seas* (1896+ *Show business*)

head of all the heads *n phr* The highest-ranking chief; the big chief; CAPO DI TUTTI CAPI: *Head of all the heads, you understand my meaning?* (1970s+) *See* CAPO

head off, one's *adv phr* To one's utmost; extremely much; spectacularly; one's ASS OFF, one's BRAINS OUT: *one time when Joey was vomiting his head off* (1920+)

head someone or something off at the pass *v phr* To forestall or prevent by anticipation: *A single mother has to establish control fast, before the coercive cycle builds. You have to head it off at the pass* [1930s+; fr the stock situation in western movies, where typically the leader of a force pursuing thieves or rustlers through rough ground declares, "We'll head them off at the pass"]

head of steam *n phr* Full speed and impetus: *Stephanopoulos acknowledges a steady series of peaks and valleys: "You get up a head of steam and then—oops! What's coming around the corner?"* [1835+; the date refers to the actual boiler pressure of a machine]

headrush *n* The feeling of euphoria produced by a narcotic; HEAD, RUSH: *There are so many people packed into one place it almost gives you a*

headrush (1960s + Narcotics)

head shop *n phr* A shop selling various accessories of the drug culture and hippie culture, such as water pipes, holders for marijuana cigarettes, psychedelic posters, incense, etc (1960s + *Counterculture*)

headshrinker or **headpeeper** *n* Any psychotherapist, psychiatrist, psychoanalyst, etc; SHRINK: *with a good deal more understanding than any clergyman or headshrinker/ You lousy smug headpeeper (1950 + Medical)*

head south *See* GO SOUTH

heads-up *adj* Clever; alert; shrewd: *They're playing real heads-up football (1940s +)* **modifier:** *Daschle was on Mitchell's heads-up list for good reason* *n* A warning; a meeting where warning is given: *blamed Young for not giving regents a "heads up" about the controversy/ Altman called a brief heads-up designed to tell the White House what procedures the RFC would follow (1990s +)*

heads up *interj* A warning of some impending danger or need to be alert: *Heads up, for heaven's sake (1940s +)*

heads will roll *sentence* People will be dismissed, punished, ruined, etc: *If eventually the authorities catch up with you, no heads will roll/ I promise you: if this package is not delivered on time, heads will roll [1930 +; the source is a quotation from Adolf Hitler]*

head trip *modifier:* *The HeadTrip Dodge, verbalizing without involvement, the educated filibuster* **n phr 1** A mental exploration; an adventure of thought, esp of a new sort; a delectable fantasy:

Private head trips seemed to be adjuncts or companions of social movements **2** HEAD GAME, MIND-FUCK: *Considering the estrangements and head trips your family has put you through, it's a wonder you can still smile* **v phr**: *Man seeks companion for headtripping, studying together, Scrabble, etc*

head up v phr 1 To be the chief of; supervise; direct: *Stan Baker will head up our new Verbal Economy Division (1930s +)* **2** To confront or attack someone: *Fudgie wouldn't want to head up with him/ You niggers burn those ribs, I'm a head you up (1990s + Black)*

heap n 1 A car, esp an old ramshackle one; JALOPY: *I keep hoping somebody will steal this heap* **2** Any old vehicle [1924 +; a motorcyclists' shortening of *scrap heap*] **See** JUNK HEAP

heap, a adj phr Very much: *Thanks a heap, old buddy (1930 +)*

heaps adv Very much: *She loved him heaps, but kept mum* **n** Very many; a FLOCK, OODLES: *I've got heaps of scratch (1547 +)*

heart n A tablet of an amphetamine, esp Dexedrine™ (1960s + *Narcotics*) **See** BLEEDING HEART, CROSS MY HEART, HAVE A HEART, PURPLE HEART

hearted See CHICKENHEARTED

hear the birdies sing v phr To be knocked unconscious; be unconscious (1940s +)

hear the wheels going around v phr To be aware of another's thought process; notice cerebration: *Kennedy could hear the wheels going around (1970s +)*

hear things v phr To have delusions of hearing; hear voices: *she's*

hearing things again [1991, but certainly must be earlier]

hearts and flowers *n phr* 1 Sentimentality; maudlin appeals, etc: *I believed all the hearts and flowers you gave me about being in love with your husband* (1920s +) 2 A knockout (1940s + *Prizefight*) [fr the name of a mournful and sentimental song of about 1908]

heartthrob *n* One's deeply beloved: *Who's your heartthrob this week?* (1920s +)

heat *n* 1 Pursuit, prosecution, and other sorts of involvement with the law: *types of cash mark which do not involve federal heat* (1928 + *Underworld*) 2 (also **heater**) A good fastball (1980s + *Baseball*) 3 Any sort of trouble, pressure, or recrimination, esp the angry complaining of irritated persons; FLAK, STATIC: *We better expect heat when this report gets out* (late 1920s +) 4 (also **heater**) A firearm, usu a pistol: *I was packing about as much heat as you find in an icicle without a gun* (late 1920s +) 5 A round in boxing, inning in baseball, etc • *Heat*, "a horse race," is found by 1663 (1940s + *Sports*) **See** BITCH IN HEAT, DEAD HEAT, GIVE someone HEAT, PACK HEAT

heat, the *n phr* The police; a police officer: *Try operating an American city without the heat, the fuzz, the man/ until the heat pulls up in one of those super paddy wagons* (1937 +) **See** IF YOU CAN'T STAND THE HEAT STAY OUT OF THE KITCHEN, PUT THE HEAT ON someone, TAKE HEAT, TAKE THE HEAT OFF

heat is on, the *sentence* Extreme pressure and pursuit are afoot, esp by the police against criminals: *The heat is on dope. That's a big bust if they get hold of you* (1934 +)

heave *n* A shelter: *Heave. Any shelter used by a policeman to avoid the*

elements (1950s + Police) v To vomit; BARF (1868 +)

heave-ho, the, or the **old n phr** Forcible ejection; summary and emphatic dismissal; the BOUNCE: *If you make any noise, you get the heave-ho/ And he gave me the old heave-ho [heave and ho, the sailors' cry when hauling, is attested from the 1500s] See GET THE AIR, GIVE someone THE AIR*

heaven See BLUE HEAVEN, HOG HEAVEN, STINK TO HIGH HEAVEN, TO HELL

heaven dust n phr Cocaine (1940s + Narcotics)

heavenly blue n phr Morning glory seeds, used as a narcotic (1960s + Narcotics)

heavy adj 1 Serious; intense • The ancient sense was revived during the 1920s: *heavy petting/ heavy correcting (1971 +) 2* Excellent; wonderful; COOL: *These guys were not simply cool. They were heavy, totally hip, and totally trustworthy (1960s + Counterculture) 3* Important; consequential; prominent: *The heaviest art form on the planet is certainly films/ You said we were meeting this heavy actress/ He must have been blowing some heavy politics (1842 +) n 1* A thug; hoodlum; GOON (1920s +) **2** The villain in a play, movie, situation, action, etc; BADDIE, dirty heavy: *It mattered not at all that his employers were the heavies of the piece (1880 + Theater) 3* An important person; BIG SHOT, HEAVYWEIGHT: *will continue to stitch up the local heavies (1940s +) 4* A big wave: *good set of heavies (1970s + Surfers) See WALK HEAVY*

heavy artillery or big guns n phr The most impressive and persuasive arguments, evidence, persons, etc, available: *The*

*Republicans are rolling out their heaviest artillery for this debate/
Against these big critics' big guns I offered the author some shelter (first
form 1809+)*

heavy breather *n phr* BODICE-RIPPER (1970s+)

heavy breathing *n phr* Pompous opinionating; punditry: *Give us the
tabloids, and even transcripts in the serious newspapers, but spare us
the prime-time writhing and op-ed heavy breathing (1990s+)* **See** HARD
BREATHING

heavy click time *n phr* The moment when television viewers most
likely change the channel: *They ponder "pod positioning" and "heavy
click time" (the moments when most viewers reach for their remote
controls) (1990s+ Television)*

heavy date *n phr* **1** A very important rendezvous, esp with someone
of the other sex for sex: *A heavy date with a light lady* **2** One's
partner on a heavy date **3** Any important, urgent engagement: *a
heavy poker date for this afternoon (1923+)*

heavy-duty *adj* Very active; highly productive: *The sting identified 46
"heavy-duty taggers" [1940s+; fr the term for a particularly strong
and durable machine, found by 1914]*

heavy-foot *n* A habitually fast driver; speeder (1940s+ *Police*)

heavy (or long-ball) hitter *n phr* A person of achievement; an
expert; MAJOR LEAGUER: *There was no one-upmanship dealing with a heavy
hitter like Cifelli/ Hitler was a heavy-hitter if there ever was one/ I
knew immediately that Annette Bening was a long-ball hitter,
emotionally, intellectually and artistically [1980s+; fr a baseball*

term, “player who hits the ball hard,” found by 1883; *long-ball* variant found in baseball by 1950s]

heavy (or heavily) into *adj phr* Much engaged in; prominent in: *his family very heavy into potato chips/ Us niggers be very heavy into stockings over our faces doing houses and Seven Elevens (1970s +)*

heavy leather *modifier*: *A psychopathic killer cruises heavy-leather homosexual bars* ***n phr*** Leather clothing and various metal accoutrements as or in imitation of motorcycle gangs, esp by extravagantly masculine homosexuals: *He’s gone beyond butch, won’t wear anything but heavy leather these days (1970s +)*

heavy lifter *n phr* The one who does the heavy lifting: *The NRA is the heavy lifter (1990s +)*

heavy lifting *n phr* The hardest work: *Baker reckons that he has done most of the heavy lifting, whereas it is his friend who got first prize/ It’s going to be some really heavy lifting (1990s +)*

heavy metal *modifier*: *As the prototypical heavy metal band, Led Zeppelin has created its fair share* ***n phr*** A style of simple music characterized by extreme loudness, distortion, and pounding drums and played through great banks of amplifiers and speakers: *With all the sudden interest in heavy metal, Deep Purple has decided to give it a go once again/ a degree of internal intricacy that belies popular conceptions of heavy metal (1960s + Rock and roll)*

heavy money *n phr* (Variations: **big** or **important** or **real** may replace **heavy**; **dough** or **jack** or **sugar** may replace **money**) A large amount of money; impressive sums; MEGABUCKS: *Why did she*

walk out on a movie career which was paying her heavy money?/ I've been busy cleaning up some heavy dough/ So nobody's about to pay big money for the site fee of a Tyson versus Ribalta (1924 +)

heavy petting (or necking) n phr Very passionate kissing, fondling, etc, stopping short of the sex act proper (1940s +)

heavy scene n A serious or difficult state of affairs, often emotional:
heavy scene after the funeral

heavy sugar n phr A possession or condition indicating wealth: *Six Mercedeses is heavy sugar (1926 +)* **See** HEAVY MONEY

heavy up v phr To become obtrusively friendly: *After he won, people at the gym started to heavy up with him, so Mike began working out in a garage (1990s +)*

heavyweight n An important person; BIGGIE: *He's some sort of heavyweight in the rag trade (1890 +)*

heck interj HELL (1887 +)

heck, the See the HELL

hedge n Something that offsets expected losses: *People were buying gold as a hedge against inflation v (also **hedge off**)* To transfer part of one's bets to another bookmaker as a means of reducing possible losses if too many of one's clients were to win: *Big banks use derivatives to hedge their bets on which way the markets are going (1672 +)*

H-E-double toothpicks n phr HELL: *I caught H-E-double toothpicks for saying I liked the perfume-scented inserts in magazines (1940s +)*

heebie-jeebies, the (Variations: *the heebies* or *the jeebies* or *the leaping heebies*) *n phr* **1** A very uneasy and jumpy feeling; nagging frets; the WILLIES: *Mr Perot worked off his heebie-jeebies by trashing Mr Bush's chance for re-election/ His several disquisitions on the jeebies/ I always get the heebies there* **2** Delirium tremens [1923 + ; said to have been coined by a cartoonist named Billy De Beck]

heel *n* **1** A sneak thief; petty criminal; PUNK (1914+ *Underworld*) **2** A petty hawker; SHILL (1930+ *Carnival*) **3** A contemptible man; blackguard; BASTARD, PRICK, SHITHEEL: *His friend turned out to be a heel, and ran off with his wife and money* (1925 +) **4**: *They made a clean heel from Leavenworth* **v** **1** To escape from prison (1950s+ *Underworld*) **2** To get a gun for oneself or another person (1873 +) [last sense fr *heel*, "arm a fighting cock with a gaff or spur," found by 1755] *See* COOL **one's** HEELS, ROUNDHEEL, SHITHEEL, TARHEEL

heeled *adj* **1** Armed; carrying a weapon: *I can talk better when I know this guy isn't heeled* (1866 +) **2** Wealthy; in funds; FLUSH: *Having two bills in the kick I counted myself heeled* (1880 +) **3** Possessing narcotics; DIRTY, HOLDING (1960s+ *Narcotics*) *See* WELL-HEELED

heeler *n* An apprentice; novice reporter; CUB [1960s+ Newspaper office; perhaps fr the obedience of a trained dog who stays at the *heel* of the master] *See* WARD HEELER

heeltap *n* A few drops of liquor left in a glass: *drink three martinis, absolutely no heeltaps* [1780 + ; origin uncertain; a *heeltap glass* was one without a flat base, so that it could not be set down until entirely empty (such was presumably also a *tumbler*), and probably

so called because the narrow bottom resembled the narrow *tap* of a shoe *heel*]

heesh *n* Hashish (1960s + *Narcotics*)

hefty *adj* **1**: *a hefty matron over at the corner table* **2** Large; considerable: *not only romance, but a hefty dose of fantasy these days*
n A stout or obese person: *While other hefties count their calories, he counts the dollars* (1871 +)

heh *interj* A half laugh offered as a nonnegative response or to express surprise: *He said he'd call, heh*

◁**heifer**▷ *n* A young woman, esp an attractive one; FILLY (1853) *See*
ARMORED COW

height *adj* Excellent; unsurpassed; GREAT, way rad: *The gloves I got for Christmas are height* [mid-1980s + Hip-hop; probably a shortening of *the height of fashion*]

heimish *See* HAIMISH

heinie *n* The buttocks; ASS, BUTT, KEISTER: *I think it was her heinie. That high, insolent ass* [1930s + ; probably fr *hind end*]

heinous *adj* Bad; CRAPPY, GROSS, LAME (1980s + *Students*)

Heinz 57 variety *n phr* **1** A mutt; a dog of no discernible lineage; a mongrel: *Chloe's her dog, "a Heinz 57 variety," says Ivey* (1896 +) **2** Any mixture of variable or undetermined parts: *a Heinz 57 buffet*
See FIFTY-SEVEN VARIETIES

heist *n* A robbery or holdup: *Led Zeppelin was the victim of the heist* (1930 + *Underworld*) **v** **1** To steal; stick up; rob (1931 +

Underworld) **2** To highjack (1920+ *Underworld*) [fr an early and dialectal pronunciation of hoist; in an 1883 source *hoist* is defined as “to rob houses by climbing in a window,” because one thief climbs or hoists himself up over another] **See** SHORT HEIST

heister *n* A shoplifter or robber (1927+)

helium hands *n phr* A student who frequently volunteers in class:
There’s a nickname for people like that, “helium hands,” their hands are always in the air (1990s+)

hell *interj* **1** An exclamation of disgust, regret, emphasis, etc: *Oh hell, they’re back/Hell, darling, I didn’t mean it (1678+)* **2** An exclamation of strong denial, disbelief, defiance, etc; IN A PIG’S ASS, MY EYE: “*Retreat hell!*” *said the general (1893+)* *n* **1** Strong rebuke or punishment; MERRY HELL: *Your old man’ll give you hell/ I caught hell from the tax people (1851+)* **2** A bad experience: *Dinner with my in-laws is usually pure hell (1374+)* **v** **1** HELL AROUND (1897+) **2** To speed; BARREL: *An ambulance, helling out the state road (1929+)*

See ALL HELL BROKE LOOSE, BLAZES, BLUE HELL, CATCH HELL, COME HELL OR HIGH WATER, EASY AS PIE, EXCUSE ME ALL TO HELL, FOR THE HELL OF IT, FROM HELL TO BREAKFAST, GIVE **someone** HELL, GO TO HELL IN A HANDBASKET, HOT AS HELL, LIKE A BAT OUT OF HELL, LIKE HELL, PLAY HELL WITH **something**, RAISE HELL, A SNOWBALL’S CHANCE IN HELL, TAKE OFF LIKE A BIGASS BIRD, TO HELL

hell, the *adv phr* **1** (also ◀the fuck▶) Completely and immediately • A hostile intensifier: *The hell’re we doing sitting here?/ Anybody who hasn’t learned this yet had better grow the fuck up/ Kid, shut the fuck up* **2** (Variations: **deuce** or **devil** or ◀fuck▶ or **heck** may replace **hell**; **in God’s name** or **in hell** may replace **the hell**) In fact; really

• Mainly used for rhythmic fullness in a hostile question: *What the hell do you mean by that?/ What the deuce are you about, you blackguard?/ Tell me what the devil you have in mind/ How the fuck would he meet the taxes and pay so many salaries? [1911 + ; probably derived from expressions of incredulity like “in the world,” which altered to “in hell”]*

hellacious *adj* Excellent; wonderful; GREAT: *It was a hellacious picnic (1930s + College students)*

hell around *v phr* To lead a life of low pleasures; frequent bars, chase sex partners, etc: *I'd like to hell around a couple years, then settle down (1897 +)*

hell-bender *n* A wild spree (1889 +)

hell-bent *adj* Strongly determined; recklessly eager: *They are hell-bent to cut taxes again before election (1835 +)*

hell-bent-for-leather *See* HELL-FOR-LEATHER

hellcat *n* A volatile and dangerous woman (1605 +)

heller *n* An energetic and aggressive person, esp one who is mischievous and menacing: *He was quite a heller when young (1895 + Students)*

hell-for-leather or **hell-bent-for-leather** *adv* Rapidly and energetically; ALL-OUT, FLAT OUT: *Frank and Pat had gone hell-for-leather over this territory [1889 + ; origin unknown; perhaps related to British dialect phrases go hell for ladder, hell falladerly, hell faleero, and remaining mysterious even if so, although the leather would*

then be a very probable case of folk etymology with a vague sense of the *leather* involved in riding tack]

hellhole *n* Any unpleasant or morally degenerate place; DUMP: *I was so glad to get out of this hellhole/ Emerson is a hellhole (1866 +)*

hellish *adj* 1 Very; extremely: *hellish expensive* 2 Unpleasant; deplorable: *hellish noise coming from the vacuum*

hell of a, a or helluva or one hell of a *adj phr* Very remarkable, awful, admirable, distressing, etc; a BITCH OF A, SOME KIND OF: *They could have done a helluva lot better than cold cereal (first form 1776 +)*

hell of a note, a *n phr* Something amazing, disgusting, surprising, etc: *She drank it, ain't that a hell of a note?/ What a hell of a note this is, a lousy flat tire (1940s +)*

hell of a (or no) way to run a railroad, a *n phr* An incompetent, overcomplex, or disastrous way of doing something; a flawed and botched methodology: *When she saw how our department was organized she told us it was a hell of a way to run a railroad, and she suggested some improvements (1940s +)*

hell of it, the *n phr* The worst part of something; what makes something very nasty: *The hell of it is that I tried all week to renew my license before they caught me (1940s +)* **See** FOR THE HELL OF IT

hell on wheels *n phr* A very impressive, nasty, violent, etc, event, person, etc: *This house is going to be hell on wheels in six months/ And considering what hell on wheels she'd been during our divorce [1843 +; origin uncertain; said to be fr mid-1800s characterization of the gambling places and houses of prostitution loaded on flatcars for*

railroad workers in the West, but the first instances predate this; perhaps fr earlier *on wheels*, “smooth, rapid, impressive”]

hell or high water *See* COME HELL OR HIGH WATER

hell-raiser *n* **1** A person likely to cause trouble and disturbance, esp by an active and defiant spirit: *This town needs a few hell-raisers to liven it up* **2** A person who leads a life of low pleasures; profligate; libertine; HELLER: *He was barred from the Muskie train after lending his press pass to a drunken hell-raiser (1914 +)*

hell's bells *interj* An exclamation of impatience, anger, emphasis, etc: *Hell's bells, Maude, I did that two whole years ago (1912 +)*

hell to pay *n phr* A very large fuss with dangerous implications; violent repercussions: *Hell to pay, in other words, for anyone who was unyielding (1901 +)*

helmet *n* The foreskin of the penis or the end of the penis (glans penis) • Fr its shape: *clipped helmet*

helper *See* BOILERMAKER

he-man *modifier*: *a regular he-man cop* *n* A very masculine man; HUNK, MACHO (1859 +)

hem and haw *v phr* To hesitate; tergiversate; temporize: *Stop hemming and hawing and do something (1580 +)*

hemp *n* Marijuana; Indian hemp (1940s + *Narcotics*) *See* INDIAN HAY

hen *modifier* By, of, and for women: *hen party/ hen talk* *n* **1** A woman, esp a fussy or gossipy woman • This and other senses regarded as offensive by some women: *That old hen made him sick* **2**

A young woman; CHICK (1626 +)

hencoop or **hen ranch** *n* or *n phr* A woman's dormitory (1900 +
College students)

hen fruit *n* Eggs (1854 +)

hen party *n phr* A party for women only: *Men have stag parties; girls have hen parties* (1887 +)

henpecked *adj* Dominated by women, esp by one's wife; PUSSY-WHIPPED (1690 +)

hen-pen *n* A girl's school, esp a private boarding school (1940s +
Students)

hen tracks *n phr* (Variations: **chicken** may replace **hen**; **scratches** or **scratchings** may replace **tracks**) Illegible handwriting; scrawl (1907 +)

hep *adj* Aware; up-to-date; HIP, WITH IT • Taken up by jazz musicians to the extent of being identified with them: *By running with the older boys I soon began to get hep/ But I'm hep, man; for example, I had my vasectomy already* [1908 + Underworld; origin unknown; a 1914 source says it is based on the name of "a fabulous detective who operated in Cincinnati"] **See** UNHEP

hepcat *n* A man who appreciates the right sort of music, leads a life of fashionable pleasure, etc; CAT, DUDE: *a big-timer, a young sport, a hep cat, in other words, a man-about-town* [1920s + Jive talk; fr *hep cat*; a possible supplementary origin fr Wolof *hipicat*, "man who is aware," has been suggested]

hepster *n* A hep person; HEPCAT (1930s + *Jive talk*)

hep to *adj phr* Aware of; cognizant of: *How little we've been personally hep to what's actually going on* (1908 + *Underworld*) **See** HEP

hep to the jive *adj* Aware; informed; initiated; WITH IT: *I commenced getting hep to the jive* (1915 + *Jazz musicians*)

herb¹ *n* A tedious, contemptible person; DORK, GEEK, NERD: *think you're a couple of reality-impaired herbs* (1990s + *Students*)

herb² or **herbs** *n* Marijuana; POT: *So you get fines to pay and you've lost your herbs* (1960s + *Narcotics*)

herd **See** RIDE HERD ON someone

here **See** UP TO HERE

here goes *interj* Let's begin: *Ready to jump. Here goes* (1829 +)

here's mud in your eye **See** MUD IN YOUR EYE

Here's the deal *interj* Here is the plan or the way it is: *You want in? Here's the deal*

here's your hat what's your hurry *sentence* Why are you leaving so soon? but leave at once • Ironic and jocular combination of a polite question and rude request (1940s +)

Herkimer Jerkimer *n phr* Any rustic, fool, or eccentric [1940s + ; based on a *jerk from Herkimer*, that is, from a distant provincial place]

herky-jerky *adj* Jerky; spasmodic; not smooth: *bellow and quiver with those herky-jerky spasms/ herky-jerky instability of Shepard's plays/*

producing a herky-jerky style of governing (mid-1950s +)

hero sandwich or **hero** or **Hero** *n phr* or *n* A sandwich made with a loaf of bread cut lengthwise and filled with a variety of cheeses, sausages, vegetables, etc; GRINDER, HOAGIE, POOR BOY, SUBMARINE, TORPEDO (1955 +)

herpie *n* A person infected with genital herpes (1970s +)

◁**herring choker**▷ *n* **1** A Scandinavian (1940s +) **2** A New Brunswick native or ship (1899 +) *n phr* **3** A Nova Scotian person or ship; BLUENOSE: *No price for lobster, cause of the Herring-Chokers* (1899 +)

Hershey bar *n phr* A yellow stripe, worn on a military uniform to indicate units of time spent on overseas service [WWII armed forces; fr a *bar* of *Hershey*[™] chocolate, some of which have yellow wrappers; probably influenced by the name of General Lewis B *Hershey*, director of the selective service system from 1941 to 1970]

hess *See* MELL OF A HESS

hetero *adj* Heterosexual (1933 +)

hex *n* A jinx or curse; the Indian Sign, Whammy: *I lose every time, must be a hex on me* [1909 +; ultimately fr German *Hexe*, “witch”]

hey *interj* An exclamation used to underscore mildly what is said: *Pennzoil has been arguing that, hey, they are reasonable people/ I tried explaining that, hey, basically a goose is just a big duck/ Hey, I’m only human* [1980s +; the use is attenuated from the ancient call for

attention found by 1225]

hey Rube *n phr* The traditional warning and rallying cry of circus and carnival people, used esp when they are attacked by righteously indignant citizens [1935 + Carnival; fr *hay-rube*, “hayseed, rube, rustic,” found by 1908]

hi or **hiya** *interj* A salutation upon meeting: *The staccato cry of “Hi!” which we judged to be the almost universal greeting* [first form 1862 +, second 1940 +; probably based on *hi*, “hey,” exclamation used to call attention, found by 1475]

hiccup *n* A brief interruption; spasmodic stoppage: *The violence in Moscow is another hiccup in Russia’s drive for democracy (1980s +)*

hick *modifier*: *wasn’t bad looking in a hick way/ that hick chief of police *n* A rural person; a simple, countrified man or woman; APPLE-KNOCKER, RUBE: *The automobile largely nullified the outward distinctions between hick and city slicker* [1565 +; fr a nickname of Richard, thought of as a country name, as Reuben is the base of “rube”]*

hickey or **hickie** *n* **1** Any unspecified or unspecifiable object; something one does not know the name of or does not wish to name; DOODAD, DOOHICKEY, GADGET: *We have little hickeys beside our seats (1909 +)* **2** A blackhead, pimple, or other minor skin lesion; ZIT (1915 +) **3** A mark on the skin made by biting or sucking during a sex act: *line of hickeys, or love bites/ Violet came home from the mall with a leather bustier and a hickey (1956 +)*

◁**hickory dick**▷ *See* DOES A WOODEN HORSE HAVE A HICKORY DICK

hick town *n phr* A small or rural town: *any hick town in Kansas*

(1920+)

hickville or **hicksville** *adj* **1** DULLSVILLE **2** CORNY (1940s+)

hicky *adj* Rural; mean and meager: *This man is from some hicky farm in Shit Creek, Georgia (1940s+)*

hide *n* HORSEHIDE (1940s+ *Baseball*) *See* TAKE IT OUT OF someone's HIDE, TAN

hideaway *n* **1** A private retreat; personal refuge; HIDEOUT (1930+) **2** A small, remote place, esp a small nightclub, restaurant, etc: *The vaudeville performer on the two-a-day has played to punks in the hideaways (1929+)*

hide or hair *n phr* (also **hide nor hair**) No sign or part of the person mentioned: *No one has seen hide or hair of him since (1830+)*

hideout *n* **1** An inmate who hides with the intention of escaping at night (1915+ *Prison*) **2** A place of relative obscurity and safety; HIDEAWAY: *The gang had a hideout in a ruined warehouse near Hoboken (1885+)*

hide out *v phr* To hide, esp from the police or other pursuers (1884+)

hide the weenie *See* PLAY HIDE THE WEENIE

hidey hole *modifier*: *conceal themselves in one of the hidey hole apartments of their proliferating step-parents* *n phr* A place to hide; HIDEAWAY (1817+)

higgledy-piggledy *adj* Confused; chaotic; MESSY: *I was walking in dark corridors that were all higgledy-piggledy [1598+; origin uncertain; perhaps fr the disorderly herding configuration of pigs]*

high *adj* **1** Drunk, esp slightly so: *high, slightly alcoholic, above the earth* (1627+) **2** Intoxicated by narcotics, esp in an easy and lighthearted condition induced by drugs; GEEZED: *An actor has less license to get high during working hours than does a musician/ the smoker uses them in big puffs getting high* (1932+ *Narcotics*) **3:** *The congregation was all high on gospel enthusiasm* (1960s+) **n** **1:** *He took a few tokes and got a pretty good high* (1960s+ *Narcotics*) **2** A non-intoxicated feeling of exhilaration or euphoria; LIFT: *Weddings are a high* (1960s+) *See* MILE-HIGH CLUB, SHIT IN HIGH COTTON

high and dry *modifier* Abandoned; being in a helpless condition: *thought he was helping out, but left me high and dry* [as a beached vessel]

high as a kite *adj phr* Intoxicated or exhilarated to an important degree (1939+)

highball *n* **1** A signal denoting a clear track or clearance to start or accelerate (1897+ *Railroad*) **2** A train running on schedule, or an express train (*Railroad*) **3** An iced, mixed alcoholic drink taken in a high glass: *He quaffed a couple of rye highballs and left* (1898+) **4** A military salute (*WWI Army*) **v** To speed; rush: *A train was thirty yards away, highballing down the track/ One New York distributor highballed 30 trucks through the Holland Tunnel* (1925+ *Railroad*) [fr the former use of a railroad trackside signal using a two-foot globe, raised or lowered, to instruct the engineer; the military sense fr the use of a railroad conductor's raised hand or fist as a signal to the engineer to start, the term transferred from the mechanical signal; the drinking sense is probably fr a *ball*, "drink of whiskey" in a *high*

glass]

highbrow *adj* **1** (also **highbrowed**) Idealistic; snobbish: *all them highbrow sermons* (1891 +) **2** Impractical; unrealistic: *another silly highbrow scheme* **n** An intellectual; person of notable education and culture; DOUBLE DOME, EGGHEAD: *One does not need to be a “highbrow” to read this book* (1902 +) [said to have been coined by the humorist Will Irwin as a back formation fr *highbrowed*]

high camp *n phr* Artwork, theater performance, items of decoration, etc, that are so outrageously old-fashioned, so blatantly injurious to good contemporary taste, as to assume a sort of special value by their very egregiousness: *His way of lisping Shirley Temple lyrics is high camp* (1954 +) **See** CAMP

high cotton **See** SHIT IN HIGH COTTON

higher-up *n* One of the persons in charge; a member of the upper echelon; BIG SHOT • Most often in the plural: *A conference with the Higher-ups and Tammany Hall/ She always fought with the movie higher-ups* (1916 +)

highfalutin or **highfalutin'** or **hifalutin** *adj* Overblown and pretentious; bombastic; stilted: *take one with ideas less “highfalutin”/ stilted, overstrained, and as the Americans would say, hifalutin* [1848 +; origin unknown; originally a gerund, seemingly based on a verb *high falute*, suggesting a humorous alteration of *flute*; perhaps fr a blend of *highflown* with some other element; perhaps fr Dutch *verlooten*, “stilted”]

high five *n phr* A way of greeting or congratulating by slapping

raised palms together • Chiefly used by and adopted from athletes, who themselves adopted the style from black colleagues:

handshaking, even a few high-fives from the younger alums v phr GIVE someone FIVE: Roberts is not the kind to engage in trash-talking or high-fiving

highflag *v* To convey a customer and collect the fare without using the meter; ARM IT, RIDE THE ARM (1970s+ *Cabdrivers*)

high flyer *n phr* A very adventuresome and impressive person (1690+)

high gear *See* IN HIGH GEAR, SHIFT INTO HIGH GEAR

high-hat *adj* (also *high-hatty*): *his high-hat posturings/ high-hatty pretensions* (1925+) *n* **1** (also **high-hatter**) A person who behaves arrogantly and snobbishly; a putatively important person: *a lot of lowbrows pretending to be intellectual high-hats* (1925+) **2** A set of two cymbals, the upper of which is crashed on the lower by operating a foot pedal; SOCK (1932+ *Jazz musicians*) *v*: *How come you're high-hatting me, old buddy?* (1925+)

high-hatter *n* HIGH-HAT (1930+)

high heaven *See* STINK TO HIGH HEAVEN, TO HELL

high horse *See* GET OFF one's HIGH HORSE, GET ON one's HIGH HORSE

highjack *See* HIJACK

high-jinks *See* HIJINKS

high-maintenance *adj* Requiring much care and effort to maintain:

high-maintenance hair/ high-maintenance girlfriend

high muckety-muck *n phr* (Variations: **muck-a-muck** or **mucky-muck** may replace **muckety-muck**) A very important person, esp a pompous one; BIG SHOT, HIGHER-UP: *I'm gonna meet a couple of the high muckety-mucks at the university tomorrow* [1856+ Western; fr Chinook jargon *hiu muck-amuck*, "plenty to eat," transferred to the important individual who has plenty to eat]

high-octane *adj* Forceful; energetic; HIGH-POWERED, PUNCHY: *A pompous classical overture gives way to a jittery, high-octane beat and frayed guitar riffs* [1980s+; fr the *octane* rating of motor fuels, from about 1930]

high old time, a *n phr* A very pleasant occasion; a BALL: *They had them a high old time on that trip* (1834+)

high on someone or something *adj phr* **1** Very favorable toward; enthusiastic about: *I'm not as high on Wallace Stevens as I once was* (1942+) **2** Intoxicated by; exhilarated with: *He says he's high on Jesus/ She gets high on wine and pot* (1932+)

high on the hog *See* EAT HIGH ON THE HOG

high-powered *adj* Forceful; energetic; HIGH-OCTANE, PUNCHY: *George is a real high-powered salesman* [1930s+; used of cars by 1903]

high puller *n phr* Frequent and inveterate players at slot machines: *the "high pullers" at the dollar machines* [1980s+ Gambling; modeled on *high roller*]

high-rent *adj phr* Chic and expensive; CLASSY, high-class: *with some kind of high-rent bitch from a women's magazine (1970s +)*

high-res or hi-res *adj* High-resolution; of satisfyingly high quality: *a high-res monitor*

high rider *n phr* A car or truck that has been fitted with very large tires: *A high rider is a normal sized car, camper, or pickup that is mounted on oversized, "monster" tires (1980s +)*

high roller *n phr* **1** A person who gambles for high stakes: *for the high rollers in the mysterious world of wheat and corn futures (1902 + Gambling)* **2** BIG-TIME SPENDER (1881 +) [gambling sense probably influenced by the idea of *rolling* the dice in craps]

high sign, the *n phr* A signal to an associate, esp one given inconspicuously by gesture: *waiting by prearrangement in the dark blue Lincoln Town Car, and George gave him the high sign (1903 +)*

hightail or hightail it *v* or *v phr* **1** To leave quickly; LIGHT OUT: *She took one look and hightailed for home* **2** To speed; rush; HIGHBALL: *We better hightail it if we want to make the first show (1925 + Cowboys)*

high ticket *See* BIG TICKET

high-toned or high-tony *adj* Very refined and genteel; aloof and superior; TONY: *Look at the high-tony bum [1888 +; the term had meant "excellent, superior" by 1855]*

high-up *n* An important person; BIG SHOT, HIGHER-UP • Most often plural: *Rico got in touch with some of the high-ups (1868 +)*

high water *See* COME HELL OR HIGH WATER

high waters *n phr* (also **high water pants** or **high waders** or **flood pants**) Trousers that are shorter than current fashion dictates, esp that end above the ankles: *Look at his high waters!* [fr the notion that the trousers have been chosen or rolled up for walking through *high water*]

highway robbery *n phr* An unconscionable price asked by a merchant: *Highway robbery is no name for it/ 100 bucks? That's highway robbery!* (1886+)

high, wide, and handsome *adj phr*: *a high-wide-and-handsome win*
adv phr Easily, triumphally, and masterfully; WITH FLYING COLORS (1907+)

high-wire act *n phr* A perilous policy, procedure, etc: *Nixon remained skeptical of Kissinger's high-wire act in Vietnam* [1970s+; fr *high wire*, an 1880s term for the funambulist's high tightrope]

◁**high yellow (or yaller)**▷ *n phr* A light-skinned black person, esp an attractive young woman: *I mean high-yellow girls/ took some little high-yaller girl in the closet one day* (1923+ *Black*)

hijack or **highjack** *v* **1** To rob, esp to rob a vehicle of its load: *Hijack the truck* (1923+) **2** To commandeer a public vehicle, esp an airliner, for some extortionary or political purpose: *Two more planes were hijacked to Cuba last week* (1960s+) **3** To appropriate unjustifiably; annex; steal: *The 40th anniversary of D-day was hijacked by Reagan's PR men/ When Petersen, the director, is stuck, he just hijacks an idea or two from Hitchcock to get him to the next point*

in the picture/ How was the Bharatiya Janata Party able to hijack Hinduism? (1980s +) [origin uncertain; said to be fr the command *High, Jack*, telling a robbery victim to raise his hands; an early 1900s hobo sense, “traveling hold-up man,” is attested, which suggests that the source may be railroad and hobo slang; said to have originated in the California wheat fields and among the Wobblies; the name of the 1875 skit *High Jack the Heeler* is interesting but probably coincidental] **See** BALL THE JACK

hijinks or **high-jinks** *n* Boisterous fun; uninhibited jollification; pranks and capers: *the dashing hijinks of the Katzenjammer Kids/ The out-of-towner cuts the hijinks here* [1861 + ; fr the name of a dice game played for drinks, found from 1690]

hike *n*: *The government got a big tax hike* *v* 1 To raise; increase; boost: *They won't hike our wages this year (1867 +)* 2 hike a check [fr mid-1800s term *hike up*, “go or raise up,” related to *hoick* of the same meaning, both probably fr the basic dialectal sense “go, go about”] **See** TAKE A HIKE

hill *n* The pitcher's mound (1908 + *Baseball*) **See** DRIVE someone OVER THE HILL, GO OVER THE HILL, OVER THE HILL

Hill **See** SAM HILL

Hill, the *n phr* 1 Capitol Hill in Washington, DC: *They're all over the Hill, and can frighten members* 2 The US Congress: *Republicans or Democrats on the Hill (1970s +)*

hillbilly *adj* 1: *hillbilly music/ hillbilly crafts* 2 Countrified; unsophisticated; HICK: *This ain't no hillbilly joint. We got some class*

here **n** 1 A southern Appalachian hill dweller • Regarded as offensive by some (1900+) 2 A country bumpkin

hill of beans, a **See** NOT GIVE A DAMN

hi-lo **n** A forklift vehicle (1970s+)

himbo **n** A male bimbo; a male who uses his good looks but is superficial and unintelligent [1988+; a blend of *him* and *bimbo*]

hincty (Variations: **hinkty** or **hinktyass** or **hankty**) **adj** 1 Snobbish; aloof; STUCK-UP: *hinkty motherfucker/ like you do a hankty heifer in the bed and make her like it* 2 Pompous; overbearing 3 HINKY ◀**n**▶ A white person; OFAY [1924+ Black; origin unknown]

hind end **n phr** The buttocks; ASS, HEINIE (1915+)

hinders or **hind legs** **n** or **n phr** The legs • Often in phrases connoting resistance or defiance: *He stood up on his short little hinders and got himself a lawyer/ The Packer defense rose on its hind legs again* (1940s+)

hindsight **See** TWENTY-TWENTY HINDSIGHT

◀**hind tit**▶ **See** SUCK HIND TIT

hinge **n** A look or glance; GANDER (1930s+) **See** GET A HINGE AT

hinky **adj** Suspicious; curious: *Something hinky is going down/ driver of the pimpmobile looks hinky* [1970s+; origin unknown] **See** DOODAD

hip **adj** 1 HEP (1904+ Black) 2 Being and/or emulating a hipster, hippy, beatnik, etc; COOL, FAR our: “I’m hip” means Cool/ to be hip

is to be “disaffiliated” (1951 +) **v** To make aware; inform: *educating the masses of America, hipping black people to the need to work together* (1932 +) [fr *hep*] **See** SHOOT FROM THE HIP

hip cat or **hipcat** **n phr** or **n** **1** HEPCAT **2** HIPSTER (1944 + *Beat & cool talk*)

hip chick **n phr** An alert and up-to-date young woman, esp in matters of popular culture, music, etc; FLYCHICK (1944 + *Beat & cool talk*)

hipe **See** HYPE

hip-hop or **Hip Hop** **adj** or **adj phr** Of or pertaining to contemporary black urban youth culture **n** or **n phr** **1** RAP SONG **2** BREAK DANCING **3** The activities that are emblematic of contemporary black urban youth culture: *What is “hip-hop”? That phrase includes such activities as break dancing, rap music, and graffiti art/ Most of them are young Hispanics, more connected to Hip Hop than High culture* [1980s +; echoic, said to have originated with a New York disc jockey called Hollywood]

hip-huggers **n** Pants having a low waistline, usu below the navel (*mid-1960s* +)

hipped **See** UNHEP

hipped on **adj phr** Enthusiastic about; obsessed with: *I ain’t hipped on her, sort of hypnotized by her, anymore/ I’m hipped on Freud and all that* [1920 +; ultimately fr *hip* or *the hip*, “hypochondria,” hence obsession]

hipper-dipper *adj* Excellent; superb; SUPER-DUPER: *a hipper-dipper display* *n* A prizefight where the result is prearranged; tank fight: *the last fight being a “hipper-dipper” (Prizefighting)* [1930s +; the boxing sense perhaps related to *dipper*, “small swimming pool,” in which one goes up to the hips; modeled on *take a dive* and *tank*]

hippie or **hippy** *modifier*: *Saigon has acquired an elaborate hippie culture* *n* One of a group of usu young persons who reject the values of conventional society and withdraw into drifting, communes, etc, espouse peace and universal love, typically wear long hair and beards, and use marijuana or psychedelic drugs; BEAT, BEATNIK [1960s + Counterculture; fr *hip*]

hippie-dippy *adj* Hippie; of the 1960s hippie culture: *None of that hippie-dippy, war-protesting, free-loving, drug-chugging stuff for him* [fr HIPPIE + *dippy*, “weird, crazy”]

hippiedom or **hipdom** *n* 1 Hippies collectively 2 The hippie movement, world, culture, etc (1960s + Counterculture)

hippity-clippity *adj* Rapidly; at once: *I ran hippity-clippity down the siding* (1980s +)

hip-pocket bookie *n phr* A betting agent who has only a few large bettors as clients (1960s + Gambling)

hippy *adj* Having wide and prominent hips (1919 +) *See* HIPPIE

hip shooter *n phr* A person inclined to act and respond impulsively and aggressively; HOTHEAD, QUICK DRAW [1904 +; fr the habit of shooting as one draws from the holster, rather than taking aim]

hipster *n* 1 HEPCAT, HEPSTER, HIP CAT 2 BEATNIK, HIPPIE
(1941 +)

hip to *adj phr* Aware of; knowledgeable and informed of: *Why don't you get hip to yourself?/ They were hip to me too and just waiting for the right moment (1920s +)*

hired gun *modifier*: elaborated on his "hired gun" reference in an interview *n phr* 1 A professional killer; HIT MAN (1958 +) 2 An employee or agent, esp in some aggressive capacity: *We're not just "hired guns" out to raise a few bucks for the place/ Keith is not going anywhere as a hired gun for one year (1970s +)*

hissing match *n phr* A disagreeable confrontation; spat: *refused to get into a hissing match with former union director Marvin Miller [1990s +; probably a euphemism for pissing contest]*

hissy fit *n phr* A noisy fit of anger; catfit, CONNIPTION FIT, DUCKFIT: *the vile, know-nothing hissy fit loose in our land/ and write that memo before the boss has a hissy fit that registers on the Richter scale [1990s +; hissy in the same sense is found by the 1940s as a Southwestern usage]*

hist or histed *adj* HISTORY: *Hist! Goodbye!*

history *adj* Finished; done with; HIST: *It's been history, I'd say, four months (1980s + Students)*

hit *modifier*: *a hit musical/ a hit song* *n* 1 Anything very successful and popular, esp a show, book, etc: *He wrote two Broadway hits (1815 +)* 2 A stroke of good fortune at gambling, on the stock market, etc; LUCKY BREAK: *a big hit on the commodities exchange*

(1666 +) **3** A premeditated murder or organized-crime execution, esp one contracted for with a professional killer: *“He can order a hit,” a police officer says/ There is no set price for a hit (1970 + Underworld)*

4 A stroke of severe criticism; attack; assault: *the club hired the firm to counter the hits it was taking in the media/ Zavala took a double hit because her husband also refused to cross the picket line (1668 +)*

5 A dose, inhalation, etc, of narcotics; **FIX** • *Hit the pipe, “smoke opium,” is found by 1886: The current price of cocaine was about \$10 a “hit”/ He held a long hit in his mouth, then expelled it slowly (1951 + Narcotics)*

6 A drink; swallow; **SNORT**: *a tall glass of thick, slightly green fluid, and said, “Take a big hit off this, Felix” (1950s +)*

7 A pleasurable sensation; **RUSH**: *People jockeyed for position around the foyer to get a little hit of darshan (1960s + Narcotics)*

8 A cigarette into which heroin has been introduced: *GIs sit smoking the mixed tobacco-and-heroin cigarettes called “hits” (1960s + Narcotics)*

9 A dilution or “cutting” of a narcotic: *You give it a full hit, you already double your price (1970s + Narcotics)*

10 Each separate occasion; each time; **POP, SHOT**: *You should be on a tour, where you can get 2,000 people a hit (1980s +)*

11 An unwanted, unwarranted, hospital admission: *The ambulance people asked which hospital would take the hit (1980s + Medical)*

12 A match between a search item and an item in a database: *That year, Popcorn racked up 58 Nexis hits (1990s + Computer)*

13 An interpretation; idea; **TAKE**: *My hit on this is he heard about Brian (1990s +)*

v 1: *I think this show will hit*

2: *She hit real big at the track last week*

3 **RUB OUT, WHACK**: *The mob figure got hit last night in his car (1955 +)*

4 To reach; visit; attain: *His new book hit the best-seller*

list/ The market hit a new high today (1888 +) **5** To pass an examination, esp with a good grade; ACE: *I really hit the eco final (1950s + Students)* **6** To cause a strong reaction; have a strong impact: *The injection hit the heart like a runaway locomotive (1891 +)*
See BANJO HIT, MAKE A HIT, PINCH HIT, SMASH

hit someone v phr 1 (also **hit someone up**) To solicit money, a favor, etc: *I'll hit Joe for ten bucks/ She hit him up for a big raise (1882 +)* **2** To have a strong impact on; distress; overwhelm: *Kennedy's death hit me pretty hard (1891 +)* **3** To present; reveal: *I wanna hit you with a very profitable idea (1960s +)* **4** To deal another card (1940s + *Cardplaying*) **5** To serve another drink: *He signaled the bartender. "Hit us again" (1940s +)* **6** To administer a narcotic, esp by injection (1940s + *Narcotics*)

hit a brick wall v phr To encounter an insuperable obstacle:
Negotiations seem to have hit a brick wall this week [1960s +; brick wall in this sense is found by 1886]

hit someone below the belt v phr To hurt or exploit unfairly, esp with words: *calling her white trash was really hitting below the belt*

hit by a Mack truck adj phr Astonished; stunned; bowled over:
What's up? You look like you been hit by a Mack truck [1940s +; Mack is a trademark make of truck]

hitch n 1 A problem or difficulty; delaying defect; CATCH, GLITCH:
Everything went off without a hitch (1748 +) **2** A period of enlistment: *42 percent have "reupped" for another hitch (1835 + Armed forces)* **3** A ride, esp one gotten by hitchhiking; LIFT

(1923+) **v 1 HITCHHIKE** (1940s+) **2** To marry; be married
(1844+)

hitch a ride (or a lift) v phr To get a free ride, esp by hitchhiking
(1940s+)

hitched adj Married (1857+)

hitchhike v To get free rides by standing beside a road and signaling
drivers; HITCH, THUMB (1923+)

hitfest n A baseball game with many hits and runs; SLUGFEST:
pathetic parodies of the old hitfests (1950s+)

hit for (or out for) v phr To start for or toward; HEAD FOR: *One time
we hit for K C* (1905+)

hit for the cycle v phr To hit personally a single, a double, a triple,
and a home run all in one game (1960s+ *Baseball*)

hit it v phr To begin playing music; attack (1930s+ *Jazz musicians*)

hit it a lick v phr To hit something very hard (1940s+)

hit it big v phr To succeed splendidly: *Pitchers who hit it big as soon as
they escaped from the Trappers'pocket-sized park* (1940s+)

hit it off v phr 1 To like one another: *The pair hit it off right from the
start 2* To work well together **3** To succeed with others: *He hit it off
with the whole class* (1780+)

hit someone like a ton of bricks v phr To have a great sudden
impact on, esp by surprise: *Then the answer hit me like a ton of bricks*
[1920s+; based on the mid-1800s term *fall upon someone like a*

thousand bricks]

hit list *n phr* A putative or actual list of persons who are to be removed from office, punished, murdered, etc: *EPA officials maintained a “hit list” of employees (1976 +)*

hit man *n phr* An assassin, esp a professional killer; HIRED GUN, MECHANIC: *Like every professional hit man I’ve ever known, I’ve always used a gun/ A State Police detective, posing as a hired killer “flown in as a hit man” (1970 +)*

Hit me *interj* **1** Please deal me another card **2** Please serve me another drink **3** Give me a high five

hit on someone *v phr* **1** To ask for a favor; solicit; pester; HIT someone: *Everyone’s been hitting on her lately to help save something or other (1970s +)* **2** To make advances to; PROPOSITION: *What if muscle-bound jocks hit on her all day long?/ I fired my last studio manager for hitting on one of the girls/ It’s amazing that a man of my own age would be hitting on me (1980s + Students)*

hit on all six (or on six) *v phr* To do very well; operate smoothly and effectively: *He’s sure hittin’ on all six [1916 +; fr the smooth operation of a six-cylinder engine]*

hit pay dirt *v phr* To find what one is looking for or needs; garner profit; STRIKE OIL: *I didn’t hit pay dirt until near the bottom of the second box (1850s +)*

hit (or slap) skins *v phr* To do the sex act; SCREW: *She’d be like, “Did you ever hit skins?” (1990s + Black teenagers)*

hit squad n phr A group of assassins, severe critics, “hatchet men,” etc: *André Breton commanded and organized literary hit squads, practicing intimidation in the name of Surrealist dogma (1976 +)*

hitter n HIT MAN (1970 +) *See* CREAM-PUFF HITTER, NO-HITTER, SWITCH-HITTER

hit the books v phr To study, esp in an intensive way (1920s + *Students*)

hit the bottle (or the booze or the sauce) v phr To drink liquor, esp rapidly and to excess; BOOZE: *If he keeps hitting the bottle they’ll have to dry him out (1889 +)*

hit the bricks v phr **1** To go out and start walking on a street or sidewalk **2** To be released from prison: *He’ll hit the bricks tomorrow, having been paroled (Prison)* **3** To go out on strike: *Teachers won’t be as quick to hit the bricks* **4** To live in the streets because one is homeless (*Hoboes*) (1931 +)

hit the bullseye v phr HIT THE NAIL ON THE HEAD (1940s +)

hit (or kiss) the canvas v phr To be knocked down in a fight (*entry form 1922 +, variant 1919 +*)

hit the ceiling (or roof) v phr To become violently angry; BLOW UP: *according to one source, hit the ceiling with rage (1914 +)*

hit the deck v phr **1** To be knocked down (1940s +) **2** To get down on the ground quickly; duck down flat: *When I heard that airplane shoot, I hit the deck (1940s +)* **3** To get out of bed; rouse oneself (*WWI armed forces*)

hit the dirt (or gravel) v phr 1 To slide into a base (*Baseball*) **2** (also **hit the grit**) To jump off a train, esp a moving one (*Hoboes*) **3** To get down and take cover, esp from gunfire

hit the Dixie highway v phr To be dismissed from a team: *Five major league managers have already been told to hit the Dixie Highway this season* [1960s+ Baseball; the *Dixie Highway* is US Route 1, going south; when the term was first used, the only teams in the South were minor league]

hit the dope v phr To use narcotics [1920s+; *hit the pipe*, “smoke opium,” is found by 1886]

hit the fan v phr To cause or experience extensive trouble and chaos: *A month later it all hit the fan/ Meanwhile the mailings had hit the fan*
See the SHIT HITS THE FAN

hit the ground running v phr To make a quick and eager start; not waste time: *Boot camp legislation hits the ground running/ The new Administration should hit the ground running* (1950s+ *Marine Corps*)

hit the hay (or the sack) v phr To go to bed; CRASH, FLOP, SACK OUT (*first form 1912+ , second 1943+*)

hit the hump v phr To escape from prison, desert from military service, etc; GO OVER THE HILL (1940s+)

hit the jackpot v phr To win or succeed spectacularly; get the most available: *I hit the jackpot with this new job* (1944+)

hit the nail on the head v phr To be exactly right; say precisely the most accurate thing: *His few quiet remarks hit the nail on the head*

(1574+)

hit (or push) the panic button v phr To give way to alarm and terror; declare a general emergency: *He hit the panic button when he saw the month's figures/ a move characterized by many as pushing the panic button (1950s+ Air Force)*

hit the pipe v phr To smoke a narcotic, esp opium (1886+)

hit the road interj An irritated request that one leave: *Hit the road, Jack, and don't you come back no more v phr* To leave; get on one's way: *We better hit the road, it's a long way home (1873+)*

hit the roof v phr To become very angry: *hit the roof over finding beer in his car (1925+)*

hit the sauce See HIT THE BOTTLE

hit the sheets v phr 1 To go to bed: *After the long day, I watched TV and hit the sheets 2* To have sexual relations with someone: *hit the sheets after the fraternity party*

hit the silk v phr To make a parachute jump (WWII paratroops & Army Air Forces)

hit the skids v phr 1 To fail; GO BELLY UP: *But if HBJ hit the skids, could the building ensure the integrity of retirees' pensions? 2* To show a precipitous decline; fall disastrously: *Home sales are down and sales of large cars have hit the skids/ Eventually they had hit the skids [1918+; skids are various planks or rollers used to move heavy objects]*

hit the spot v phr To be very satisfying, esp to some appetitive need:

That cup of coffee really hit the spot (1940s +)

hit the trail v phr To depart, leave: *hit the trail before it gets dark*

hit the wall v phr To come to one's limit of energy and capability, esp in a marathon or other arduous race: *I hit a wall of shock and pain/ Sampras Slams Into the Wall/ if he wears down and "hits the wall" as Avent did last season (mid-1980s + Sports)*

hit up v phr To inject a narcotic; SHOOT UP [1940s + Narcotics; an earlier related sense, "to drink to excess," found by 1900]

hit someone up v phr To request something, esp a loan; importune: *I'm sure your only salvation is to hit up your rents (1917 +)*

hit upside one's face (or head) *See* GO UPSIDE one's FACE

hit someone where one lives or hit someone where it hurts v phr
To deliver a very painful blow, insult, insinuation, etc; have a strong impact: *The Third Movement hits me right where I live (1860 +)*

hit someone with something v phr To present an idea, plan, etc, esp with great enthusiasm and spontaneity: *I hit them with my idea to go to Camden*

hive v To understand (1935 + *West Point*)

hivey adj Sharp-witted; perceptive (1935 + *West Point*)

hiya *See* HI

hizzoner n The mayor: *Hizzoner, looking game but a tad uncertain*

◀**HMFIC**▶ (pronounced as separate letters) **n** Commanding officer;

officer in charge: *HMFIC can be rendered politely as “head military person in charge”* [Persian Gulf War Army; fr *head motherfucker in charge*]

ho¹ or hoe n A prostitute or other disreputable woman: *like many of her sisters of the streets (she calls them “hos”)/ The bar was a hangout for players and hos* [1960s +; fr Southern or black pronunciation of *whore*]

ho² See the HEAVE-HO, RIGHT-O

hoagie n HERO SANDWICH (1967 +)

hoary-eyed or orie-eyed or orry-eyed adj Drunk: *He would be orry-eyed before nightfall* [1940s +; origin uncertain; perhaps fr *hoary*, “frosty, hence icy, glazed,” with later dropping of the *h* to avoid *whore*]

hobnob with someone v phr To be on friendly terms with someone [1866 +; fr earlier *hob and nob*, “to drink familiarly together,” suggesting two men calling each other by nicknames]

hobo n A person who wanders from place to place, typically by riding on freight trains, and who may occasionally work but more often cadges sustenance • The hobo is sometimes distinguished from bums and tramps by the fact that he works [1889 +; origin unknown; perhaps fr the call “Ho, boy,” used on late 1800s Western railroads by mail carriers, then altered and transferred to vagrants; perhaps putative *hoe-boy*, a migrant farm worker in the West, who became a *hobo* after the harvest season]

hock¹ n The state of pawn: *I’ve got to get my typewriter out of hock v*

To pawn: *I hocked my diamond ring (1878 +)* [apparently fr Dutch *hok*, “prison”; the earliest US use was *in hock*, “in prison”; perhaps also fr the underworld phrase *in hock*, “caught,” fr the notion that one is taken “by the heels,” or *hocks*] **See** IN HOCK

hock² or hok *v* To pester; nag; chatter incessantly: *whom my mother kept hocking my father to promote to director/ Stop already hocking us to be good/ with her hocking and her kvetching [1940s +; fr Yiddish *hok* in the idiom *hok a chynik*, “knock a teapot,” meaning “chatter constantly, talk foolishness,” perhaps because such talking resembled the loud whacking of a pot]*

hockable *adj* Pawnable: *The “ice” was always hockable (1878 +)*

◁**hockey or hocky**▷ *n* **1** Feces; excrement; SHIT: *Great big blooming hunks of dog hockey/ But it’s a lot of horse hockey, on both sides* **2** Empty and pretentious nonsense; BULLSHIT: *any of that hocky about being a white man* **3** Semen; CUM [1923 +; origin unknown; perhaps fr a variant pronunciation of the *hokum*, *hokey*, *hocus-pocus* cluster, suggested by some spellings, and hence originally “falsehood, pretentious exaggeration, etc,” whence “bullshit,” whence “shit”];

hockshop *n* A pawnshop (1871 +)

hocktooley *interj* An imitation of hawking and spitting, taken as a sign of machismo: *masculine in a cigar-smoking, crotch-grabbing, hocktooley! way (1990s +)*

hocus *v* To falsify or misrepresent; also, to adulterate: *hocus the presentation/ hocus the punch*

hocus-pocus *n* Sleight-of-hand; trickery; MONKEY BUSINESS

[1694+; originally a term for a juggler, and probably derived fr a juggler's spoken formula imitating the Church Latin phrase *hoc est corpus*, "this is the body"]

◀**hod**▶ *n* A black passenger; Scuttle [1920s+ Cabdrivers; probably because a *hod* is a container for coal]

ho-dad (also **hodad** or **ho dad** or **ho-daddy**) *n* **1** A person who claims knowledge and authority he or she does not possess; BLOWHARD, WISE GUY: "ho-daddy" (*intruding wise guy*) **2** A nonparticipant who seeks the company of athletes and performers; hanger-on: *The true surfer is scornful of the "ho-daddies"* **3** An obnoxious and contemptible person; JERK, PHONY, WIMP [1960s+ Surfers; origin unknown; perhaps fr a surfer's cry *Ho, dad!*]

hoe *See* a HARD ROW TO HOE

hoedown *n* **1** (also **hoe-dig**) A country square dance (1807+) **2** A lively and noisy argument (1950s+) **3** A riotous fight; brawl: *Mr Clinton has put more energy into such old-politics hoedowns* (1950s+) **4** A fight between gangs; RUMBLE: *Anything can start a hoedown* (1950s+ *Street gangs*)

hog *n* **1** A locomotive, originally a heavy freight engine (1915+ *Railroad & hoboes*) **2** HOGGER (1915+ *Railroad & hoboes*) **3** A Harley-Davidson™ motorcycle: *Harley, perhaps best known for its big-engine "hogs"/ a hundred Hell's Angels on their Hogs* (1960s+ *Motorcyclists*) **4** A large car, esp a Cadillac™: "I got a Hog, a

Cadillac” (1950s + *Black*) **5** (also **the hog**) PCP or a similar addictive drug: *climbed on stage and threw thousands of caps of “the hog” into the crowd* (1960s + *Narcotics*) **6** A sexually appealing male; Adonis, HUNK (1980s + *Students*) **v** To take or eat everything available for oneself; claim and seize all: *appeared simultaneously with ET and suffered as the little fungiform geek hogged the box office/ Mara had deliberately hogged the spotlight* (1884 +) [railroad and hobo senses fr the fact that large locomotives consumed a great deal of coal] **See** EAT HIGH ON THE HOG, ON THE HOG, WHOLE HOG

hogger *n* (also **hog** or **hog-head** or **hogshead** or **hog-jockey**) A railroad engineer; GRUNT (1915 + *Railroad & hoboes*)

hog (or **pig**) **heaven** (or **paradise**) *n phr* A place of total bliss, esp for the gluttonous; FAT CITY: *For the sports junkie, this is Mecca. For the gambler, it is hog heaven/ It doesn’t put Wisconsin in pig heaven/ Jesse Helms must be in pig paradise* (1940s +)

hogs *n* Dollars, esp only a few dollars (1940s +)

◁**hog’s-breath**▷ *n* A despicable person; disgusting wretch; CRUD, GEEK, SCUMSUCKER: *The unshaven hog’s-breath of a transient thief stands out like a green-glowing extraterrestrial* (1990s +)

hogster *n* An owner, admirer, etc, of Harley-Davidson™ motorcycles, which are called “hogs”: *The unlikely collection of hogsters arrived in Milwaukee last month* (1980s +)

hogwash or **hogslop** *n* Empty and pretentious talk; nonsense; BALONEY, BULLSHIT: *It’s hogwash. There’s no such thing/ Bradley is*

too soft, too fragile. Hogslop [first form 1882 + , second 1990s + ; fr the house waste fed to hogs; the date of *hogslop* is probably earlier; *hog-slosh* in the same sense is found by the 1940s]

hog-wild *See* GO HOG-WILD

ho-hum *adj* Unexciting; mediocre; dull: *ho-hum sex and the dregs of countless six-packs/ After a ho-hum second quarter, stocks have perked up* (1960s +) *interj* An expression of boredom (1924 +) **n** Boring matter; dull tripe (1960s +) **v** To be bored with; be indifferent to: *On the other hand, we shouldn't ho-hum the situation* (1960s +)

hoist **n**: *Crooks speak of a job of hold-up as a "hoist"* **v** 1 To rob; steal; HEIST: *The stall distracts the sales force while the hoister hoists* (1708 + *Underworld*) 2 To drink some beer or liquor: *Let's stop at Harry's and hoist a few* (1940s +)

hoisted *adj* Stolen: *among the hoisted articles recently* (1708 + *Underworld*)

hoister **n** A shoplifter (1847 +)

hoity-toity *adj* Snobbishly exclusive; haughty; uppish; SNOOTY: *in the hoity-toitiest of Fifth Avenue shops/ Will he go all hoity-toity on us?* (1668 +) *interj* (also **highty-tighty**): *Highty tighty! What a debil of a rage* (1695 +) [fr earlier *highty-tighty*, "peremptory, quarrelsome," perhaps related to the notion of being *high* in the sense of "superior"]

hoke **n** HOKUM (1921 +) **v** (also **hoke up**) To make fun of; treat insincerely; overplay: *But don't hoke it too hard, Beatrice/ It's all right to hoke the incident, but not the theme/ Halaby hoked up a*

special ceremony (1935 +)

hoked-up *adj* False; dishonestly confected; PHONY: *hoked-up or fictionalized biographies/ a zest for hoked-up violence (1940s +)*

hokey *adj* False and meretricious; very dubious; PHONY: *hokey confessions that public taste ought to repudiate/ The radio is jammed with hokey copies of US and European rock and roll songs (1927 +)*

hokey-dokey *See* OKEY-DOKE

hokey-pokey or **hoky-poky** *adj*: *It might sound weird or hokey pokey, but it works* **modifier**: *candy bars on the hokey-pokey counter* **n** 1 Cheap ice cream and sweets made primarily to attract children (1884 +) 2 False and meretricious material; deception; HOKUM: *too much of "Hollywood hokey-pokey" (1840s +)* [fr an earlier sense of *hokey-pokey*, "cheat, swindle," ultimately fr *hocus-pocus*; the ice cream is said to have been named in Italian, *O, che poco*, a child's cry at the paucity of the portion]

hokey-pokey, the **n phr** A simple, informal sort of circle dance: *People across the globe will join hands, form huge human circles. The hokey-pokey (1960s +)*

hokum **n** 1 Pretentious nonsense; inane trash; BUNK: *more hokum from the Department of State* 2 A trick, gag, routine, etc, sure to please a gullible public: *There is some hokum in "King Penguin" (Theater)* 3 HOKEY-POKEY [1917 +; origin unknown; perhaps a blend of *hocus-pocus* and *bunkum*]

hokus **n** Any narcotic (1930 + *Narcotics*)

hold v 1 To have narcotics for sale **2** To have narcotics in one's possession (1930s + *Narcotics*) *See* ON HOLD

◀**hold someone by the nuts**▶ **v phr** HAVE someone BY THE BALLS:
Would you rather have the cops holding you by the nuts? (1940s +)

hold someone's coat v phr To stand back and let others fight: *A lot of people are willing to hold our coats and let those 200,000 soldiers in the Persian Gulf go to war (1940s +)*

holder *See* ROACH CLIP

hold everything sentence Stop what you are doing; let's stop right now: *Hold everything, here's new evidence! (1924 +)*

hold someone's feet to the fire v phr To subject someone to strong and painful persuasion; use maximum pressure: *helping hold the President's feet to the fire (1980s +)*

hold one's horses v phr To be patient; stop importuning; HOLD one's WATER • Often an irritated command: *Wait a second, Bradley, hold your horses (1844 +)*

holding adj 1 Wealthy: *Respect for people who are "holding" (1940s +)*
2 Possessing narcotics (1930s + *Narcotics*)

holding pattern *See* IN A HOLDING PATTERN

hold one's liquor v phr To be able to drink a quantity of alcohol and have one's wits about them: *can hold her liquor at home, but not in public*

hold onto your hat v phr To get ready for trouble; take precautions; BUCKLE YOUR SEAT BELTS: *Hold onto your hats for the craziest ride*

through the truth that's ever been done on television (1970s+) **See**
HAT

holdout *n* **1** A person, esp a professional athlete, who refuses to sign a contract until the salary is raised (1911+) **2** A person who refuses to agree to something: *coerce reluctant holdouts into "kicking in"* (1940s+) **3** A playing card sneakily kept from the deck by the dealer (1894+ *Gambling*)

hold out or **hold out on** *v phr* **1** To refuse to do something until one gets certain conditions; to refuse to give information: *The union held out for a 10 percent raise/ he's holding out on me about the girlfriend* (1907+) **2** To endure; persist: *This tire won't hold out another mile* (1593+)

holds **See** NO HOLDS BARRED

hold the fort *v phr* To remain at a location and handle matters: *Can you hold the fort while I go downtown for a walk*

hold the phone *v phr* To wait a minute; delay; HOLD EVERYTHING
• Often a request for respite and thinking space: *body jerked back in a kind of W C Fields double take. "Hold the phone," I said* (1930s+)

holdup *modifier: the full-fledged hold-up business* *n* **1** A robbery, esp the armed robbery of a person, bank, store, etc; STICKUP: *Give us no nonsense. This is a holdup* (1851+) **2** The demanding of exorbitant prices, wages, etc: *That was no sale, it was a holdup* **3** A delay; stoppage; cause of delay: *a brief holdup in our magnificent progress/ What's the holdup?* (1843+)

hold up *v phr* **1** To rob, esp at gunpoint: *They were holding an old*

man up at the corner (1851 +) **2** To extort or demand higher prices, wages, etc: *That shop held me up!* **3** To delay; cause a delay or stoppage: *The strike held up our flight for six days (1843 +)* **4** To point to; single out: *Is this the one you held up as such a great example? (1602 +)*

hold one's water v phr To be patient; stop importuning; HOLD one's HORSES • Often an irritated command : *I know that, fuckface. Just hold your water/ Hold your water, Mr McAllister!*

hole n 1 Any nasty or unpleasant place; DUMP, JOINT: *The restaurant turned out to be a loathsome little hole (1616 +)* <2> The vulva or anus (1340 +) **See** ACE IN THE HOLE, BIG HOLE, BROWN, BUNGHOLE, CORNHOLE, IN A HOLE, IN THE HOLE, the NINETEENTH HOLE, NOT KNOW one's ASS FROM one's ELBOW, RATHOLE

hole, the n 1 Solitary confinement or a cell used for it; BING: *I was slapped with the organizing label and put in the "hole"/ I was thrown in the hole for it (1535 + Prison)* **2** A subway (1950s + *Underworld*) **See** ACE IN THE HOLE, IN THE HOLE

hole card n phr A card dealt face down in stud poker (1908 + *Poker*)

hole in the doughnut, the n phr What is lacking; an obstacle of omission: *The hole in the doughnut in helping the homeless is substance-abuse treatment (1990s +)*

hole in the ground **See** NOT KNOW one's ASS FROM one's ELBOW

hole in the (or one's) head, a **See** HAVE A HOLE IN one's HEAD, NEED someone or something LIKE A HOLE IN THE HEAD

hole in the wall *n phr* A small and usu unpretentious dwelling, shop, etc: *Nothing fancy, just a hole in the wall on Park Lane* (1822 +)

hole out *v phr* To finish a hole by putting the ball in the cup (1867+ *Golf*)

hole up (or in) *v phr* **1** To hide; take refuge; HIDE OUT: *Long Island, where he might hole up for a day or two* **2** To stay for a time; lodge; CRASH: *thinking about holing up for the night* (1875 +)

-holic *See* -AHOLIC

holiday *n* **1** A small area missed while painting **2** A forgotten or neglected task (1935+ *Navy*)

holier-than-thou *modifier* Condescending; thinking one is superior to others: *holier-than-thou attitude gains him no friends*

holler *n* (also **holler-song**) A Southern black folk song with spoken or shouted words, a precursor of the blues song: *You find hollers in many of Leadbelly's recordings and songs* (1930s +) *v* **1** To shout (1699 +) **2** To inform; SING, SQUEAL: *You think he wouldn't holler if they turned the heat on him?* (1940s +) **3** To complain; BITCH: *What's he hollering about now?* (1904 +)

hollow *See* BEAT ALL HOLLOW

holy cow *interj* (Variations: **cats** or **gee** or **mackerel** or **moley** or **Moses** or **schmuts shit** or **smoke** or **sox** may replace **cow**) An exclamation of surprise, wonder, dismay, admiration, etc; Wow!: *All he could manage to say upon seeing the nude blonde was "holy*

cow!"/ Holy shit, the police/ And I think holy shit, this could be a Hitler/ Holy schmuts, that would be the pride and glory [entry form 1940s +, cats 1900 +, gee 1895 +, mackerel 1903 +, Moses 1900 +, schmutz 1990s +, shit 1940s +, smoke 1889 +, sox 1909 +; euphemisms for *holy Christ*; *moley* is from comic-book character Captain Marvel]

holy hell *n phr* Vehement rebuke; severe punishment; HELL, MERRY HELL: *I caught holy hell when the thing broke (1940s +)* **See** CATCH HELL, GIVE someone HELL

Holy Joe *modifier*: *these Holy Joe voices* *n phr* 1 A clergyman; chaplain: *needs twelve Holy Joes to get him past them Pearly Gates (1874 +)* 2 A sanctimonious, pietistic person: *In the east they're all holy Joes and teach in Sunday schools (1889 +)*

holy terror *n phr* A troublesome, energetic, and aggressive person: *He's a holy terror around the house (1887 +)*

hombre (HAHM bray, AHM bray) *n* 1 A Hispanic person 2 A man; fellow; GUY: *a real cool hombre* [1846 +; fr Spanish, "man"] **See** WISE GUY

home **See** BRING HOME THE BACON, HOME BOY, MONEY FROM HOME, NOBODY HOME, NOTHING TO WRITE HOME ABOUT

home boy or **homeboy** or **home girl** or **homegirl** *n phr* or *n* 1 A person from one's hometown (1940s + *Black*) 2 A simpleton; naive bumpkin: *Youse just a home boy, Jelly. Don't try to follow me (1940s + Black)* 3 (also **home**) A close friend, or someone accepted like a friend • Used also by Chicanos in Los Angeles, some of whom

apparently dispute the black origin: *Home boy, them brothers is taking care of business! / He stormed outside with two homeboys: one called "Gino," and Kevin Baca, 17, whom he'd met a month before* (1970s + Black) 4 A black male; BRO, BLOOD, HOME SLICE: *black faces, fucking home boys with skin the color of bunker oil and the threat coming off them in waves* (1980s +) 5 An easygoing, unpretentious person (1970s + College students)

homebuddy *n* HOME BOY: *Don't want what you can't have, or what your homebuddy has* (1980s + Black)

home-court advantage *n phr* The psychological and other favorable elements that come from being in familiar surroundings, with a sympathetic audience, etc: *Yojimbo is less than sympathetic here (it's clear who has the home-court advantage)* (1970s + Sports)

home free *adj phr* Successfully arrived or concluded; at or assured of one's goal; out of trouble: *I hear things been a little tight. Well, you home free now / I think you're home free. If you'll forgive me for saying this*

home guard *n* A resident of a place; native; LOCAL (1900s + Circus & hoboes)

home in on someone or something *v phr* To approach purposefully; go straight toward: *I saw these two guys homing in on her at the bar* [1950s + ; fr the movement of an airplane, ship, missile, etc, that follows a radio beam or other signal to approach a destination or target; *home* is found by 1920; perhaps reinforced by the behavior of a *homing* pigeon]

home plate *n phr* The landing field, aircraft carrier, etc, where an aircraft is based [1950s+ Air Force; fr the baseball sense, regarded as a goal and safe haven] **See** GET TO FIRST BASE

homer *n* **1** A home run; CIRCUIT BLOW (1891 + Baseball) **2** An official who favors the home team: *A lot of refs get reputations as "homers", which means they give all the tough calls to the home team* (1980s+ Sports) *v*: *Kaline homered in the sixth*

Homes or Holmes *n* Close friend; HOME BOY • Most often as a term of address: *Put a charge on his head, Homes/ What's happenin', Holmes?* [mid-1980s+ Black & students; second form fr *Sherlock Holmes* by homophony] **See** SHERLOCK

homeskillet *n* A good friend; HOME BOY: *a "homeskillet," a good friend* (1990s+ Students)

homeslice or **home slice** *n* or *n phr* **1** A good friend; one's best friend; BUDDY, HOME BOY: *That's my homeslice out on the court (1980s + Teenagers)* **2** A black person; BROTHER, BLOOD: *And "home slice" is a black person (1990s + Black)*

homework *See* DO one's HOMEWORK

homie modifier: and "homie love," the camaraderie among members of his gang *n* **1** (also **homey**) A close friend or a fellow townspeople; BUDDY, HOME BOY: *is expecting more than her homies to support her/ Then get yourself a job, homie (1970s + Black)* **2** A male homosexual; FAGGOT, QUEER (1940s +)

◁**homo**▷ *modifier:* homo slang/ a homo bar *n* A homosexual man or woman: *I knew nothing about "homos" at that time (1929 +)*

hon (HUHN) *n* Sweetheart; honey • Used in direct address: *What's that, hon? (1906 +)*

Hon, the (HAHN) *n phr* The Honorable: *I want you to meet the Hon P Jensen, our mayor (1873 +)*

honcho (HAHN choh) *n* The person in charge; chief; BIG ENCHILADA, BOSS: *better known as the honcho of Scientific Anglers, Inc (1947 +)* *v:* *honcho a staff* [fr Japanese *hancho*, "squad leader"; *han*, "small group," and *cho*, "leader"]

hondo *adj* Excellent; desirable; CHILL, COOL, way rad: *froody and hondo also get high marks at some schools/ If a guy is better than cool "he's really hondo" [1980s + Students; fr Spanish, "deep"]*

honest-to-God *adj* Genuine; real; NO-SHIT: *What is certain is the*

damage of an honest-to-God fight to the finish involving the debt ceiling
(1916+)

honey *n* **1** One's sweetheart, beloved, spouse, etc (1880+) **2** Any pleasant, decent person; PUSSY-CAT, SWEETIE (1880+) **3** A person or thing that is remarkable, wonderful, superior, etc; DILLY, HUMDINGER: *Ain't this a honey of a show?* (1888+)

honey bucket *n phr* A chamber pot or other container for excrement
(1931+ *Canadian*)

honeycakes *See* BABYCAKES

◀**honey-fuck**▶ *v* **1** To do the sex act in a romantic, idyllic way **2** (also **honeyfuggle**) To do the sex act with a very young girl: *mysterious pains and penalties attached to "honeyfuggling"* [1950s+; fr the early 19th-century *honeyfuggle*, of obscure origin, which meant "cheat, swindle"; the present sense must come fr assimilation with *fuck*]

honey man *n phr* A kept man; pimp (1940s+)

honeymoon burger *n phr* A sandwich made with only bread and lettuce [1980s+ Lunch counter; fr *lettuce alone*, heard as *let us alone*]

honeymoon or **honeymoon period** (or **stage**) *n* An early stage in a project or activity before there are problems and disagreements: *honeymoon is over when the new employee has his bearings*

◀**honeypot**▶ *n* The vulva or vagina (1719+)

honey wagon *n phr* **1** A manure wagon or manure spreader

(1915 +) **2** A garbage truck (WWII Army)

honk v 1 To sound the horn of a car (1895 +) **2** To make a sexual, esp a homosexual, advance by handling or pressing a man's genitals: *He's making a move to honk you, just grab his hand* (1960s +) **3** To vomit; BARF, HURL (1990s +)

honked or honked off adj Angry; PISSED OFF: *I'm going to have people really honked at me no matter what I do/ a honked-off Torcivia wrote to Wineke* (1980s +) **See** HONK OFF

honker n The nose; SCHNOZZ: *and she has a honker as big as yours* (1940s +)

honking adj Large; HUMONGOUS: *We have a honking textbook in my management class* (1980s + *Students*)

honk off v phr To anger; PISS OFF: *He honked off some natives, who thought the Veep was being more than a tad condescending/ While that's honking off some bird lovers* [1980s +; origin unknown; perhaps fr the annoyance shown by *honking* the horn of a car]

◀**honky or honkie**▶ **modifier**: *No talkin' or we'll bust your honky heads* **n** A white person; Gray, OFAY (1967 + *Black*) [fr *hunky*¹, as often normally pronounced in black English]

honky-tonk modifier 1 Gambling and drinking: *wisely emphasizes Brown's down-and-dirty honky-tonkin' side* **2** Prostitution: *the honky-tonk district* **n 1** A cheap, usu disreputable saloon and gambling place; JOINT: *rode to my honky-tonk on a bus* **2** A cheap, small-town theater: *playin' the sticks, the honky-tonks* **3** A brothel **v**: *his honky-tonking ended, naturally, at Filly's, the urban cowboy saloon* [1894 +;

origin unknown]

hoo-boy *interj* An exclamation of surprise, consternation, amazement, etc: *Hoo-boy! The cheapest way to have your family tree traced* [1950 +; perhaps a blend of *hoo ha* with *oh boy*; popularized by Walt Kelly's comic strip "Pogo"]

hooch¹ *n* Liquor; strong drink; BOOZE: *and the bottles of hooch, and the free food on the job/ or guzzles hooch that he hides inside a big toy duck* [1897 +; fr the liquor made by the *Hoochinoo* Indians of Alaska]

hooch² or **hootch** *n* **1** A Korean house, room, shack, etc: *giggle timidly and plead: "Come on to my hooch"* **2** A Vietnamese village hut **3** An American barracks, esp a Quonset-style barracks in Vietnam [Korean & Vietnam War armed forces; fr Japanese *uchi*, "house"]

hooch³ *See* the HOOTCHIE-COOTCHIE

hood¹ (H^{oo}D, H^{oo}D) *modifier*: has been in the hood hierarchy for decades *n* HOODLUM: *those St Louis hoods/ the procession of hoods on the witness stand* (1930 +)

hood² or **'hood** *n* Neighborhood • First associated with black Los Angeles neighborhoods: *Who know the defendant from the 'hood. It's part of the job* (mid-1980s +)

hoodge *v* To take someone's nipple between thumb and forefinger and squeeze it painfully; RAT (1980s +)

hoodie *n* A hooded sweatshirt or top: *hoodies in every color and style*

hoodlum *n* A petty criminal; a street tough [1868 + ; origin unknown, although many suggestions have been made; the term appears to have originated in San Francisco]

hoodoo *n* A person or thing that brings bad luck; JINX: *A mascot and a hoodoo, meaning one who brings ill fortune, are terms invented in the theater* [1882 + ; said to be an alteration of voodoo]

hoody *adj* Hoodlumish; like a hood: *imitating a hoody Tony Curtis* (1970s +)

hoey *n* Nonsense; foolishness; BALONEY: *lip-smacking imps of mawk and hoey write with us what they will/ a dangerous mix of electioneering hoey and religious clap-trap* [1889 + ; origin unknown]

hoof *n* A foot: *Take your goddam hoof the hell off my fender* (1598 +) **v**
1 To walk; HOOF IT: *I better hoof over to the garage* (1888 +) **2** To dance: *She's hoofing in that show about cats* (1921 +) **See** SHAKE A WICKED CALF

hooper *n* A dancer, esp a professional dancer in nightclubs, musical plays, etc: *The hoofers and the chorines of a cabaret* (1921 +)

hoof-in-mouth disease *n phr* A tendency to speech before thought; the habit of opening one's "big fat mouth": *Among the most notable practitioners of hoof-in-mouth disease in the past year* [1960s + ; fr *put one's foot in it* with a pun on the *hoof-and-mouth disease* of farm animals, so designated by 1887]

hoof it *v phr* **1** To walk: *Get off the bus and hoof it home* (1728 +) **2** To dance: *then hoofed it a bit herself with old friend Gene Kelly* (mid-

1920s +)

hoo-ha¹ *interj* An exclamation of astonishment, admiration, envy, scorn, deflation, etc: *Does she gossip? Hoo-ha* [1930s + ; fr Yiddish]

hoo-ha² *n* **1** Disturbance; brouhaha; uproar: *What was I supposed to do in the middle of such a hoo-ha?/ In case you're wondering what all the hoo-ha is about* **2** A noisy celebration; a raucous fete: *But Northampton, Mass, held a week-long hoo-ha for its favorite son* [1931 + ; perhaps influenced by *hoo-ha¹*; first attested in early 1900s British armed forces as “an argument; an artillery demonstration,” and probably echoic-symbolic of a loud fuss, like *hoopla, to-do, brouhaha, foofooraw, and hooley*]

hoohaw *n* An important person; POOH-BAH: *and the rest of the town's hoohaws* (1970s +)

hook *n* **1** An anchor (1940s + *Nautical*) **2** A curveball (1910 + *Baseball*) **3** A hypodermic needle or bent pin used for injecting a narcotic (1950s + *Narcotics*) **4** A narcotic, esp heroin (1950s + *Narcotics*) **5** A prostitute; HOOKER: *Janie Ruth looked at the hook* (1915 +) **6** Something that strongly attracts, esp something catchy in the lyrics or music of a song: *The musicians push a good hook, a high, ragged guitar line/ You just won't tell me much at a time about life. It's your hook/ There are no hooks, either, like the mechanical bull or dancing* (1930 +) **7** A patron; a helpful connection: *Why have I been in a radio car for over twenty years? Because I don't have a hook* (1980s + *Police*) **8** A grade of C (1960s + *Students*) **v** **1** To steal, esp to shoplift: *Hooking merchandise from department stores requires no training* (1615 +) **2** To get; find: *Where can we hook a good meal*

around here? (1940s +) **3** To arrest; stop and ticket: *My cab driver got hooked for speeding (1920s +)* **4** To entice successfully; procure more or less against one's will: *They hooked me for the main speech (1764 +)* **5** To cheat; deceive • Most often in the passive voice: *He got hooked into paying the whole bill (1940s +)* **6** To work as a prostitute; whore: *They stress the fact that they strip and don't hook/ Carl supplemented their income by hooking from the notorious bus bench (1959 +)* **7** To drink, esp quickly at a gulp: *You pour a half-glass of Dewar's, hook it down and fan out the flames with a bottle of beer (1880s +)* *See* BUTTONHOOK, ON one's OWN HOOK, SHITHOOK, SKYHOOK

hook, the *n phr* A violent football tackle in which the head of the ball-carrier is caught and held in the crook of the tackler's arm (1970s + *Football*) *See* GET someone OFF THE HOOK, GET THE HOOK, GIVE someone THE HOOK, GO ON THE HOOK FOR someone or something, LET someone OFF THE HOOK, OFF THE HOOK, ON THE HOOK, RING OFF THE HOOK

hooked *adj* **1** Addicted to a narcotic: *Once a week wasn't being hooked/ I was the pusher who got you hooked (1925 + Narcotics)* **2** Captivated as if drug-addicted: *a shock to discover my wife was hooked on needlepoint/ Once you buy his preposterous premise and get to know his pleasantly insane characters, you're hooked (1960s +)* **3** Married; HITCHED (1889 +)

hooker *modifier*: hooker district **n** **1** A prostitute: *drunken sportswriters, hard-eyed hookers, wandering geeks and hustlers/ The thirtyish ex-hooker was answering questions (1845 +)* **2** A person who

recruits, enlists, snares, etc: *Hooker, a person who induces union members to act as spies (1850s +)* **3** A drink of liquor; SNORT: *It took a stiff hooker of whiskey to thaw her (1887 +)* [first noun sense apparently fr the notion that such women are “hookers of men”]

hook someone for v phr To cheat someone out of; take away, esp by shady means: *At Atlantic City they hooked him for everything he had (1940s +)*

hook (or rook) someone into something v phr To obligate or involve someone by force or trickery: *They hooked me into paying for everybody’s lunch/ She got rooked into a very boring cocktail party (1940s +)*

hook, line, and sinker modifier Totally; completely: *she’s got you hook, line, and sinker*

hook a ride v phr To get or beg a ride: *Since Swede had no car, he either hooked rides from the waiters who did, or walked [1940s +; probably fr hobo hook a rattler, “get a ride on a freight train,” where hook means “seize with the hands”]*

hooks n The hands (1846 +) *See* FISHHOOKS, GET one’s HOOKS INTO, LUNCH-HOOKS, MEATHOOKS, POTHOOKS

◁**hookup**▷ **n** A sex act; SCREW, PIECE OF ASS (1990s +)

hook up v phr 1 To do the sex act; DO THE WILD THING, SCREW: *We didn’t do nothing wrong, ‘cause it’s not illegal to hook up (1990s +)*
2 To meet and become associated, or cause somebody to meet and become associated, with somebody else

hook someone **up v phr** To arrest someone; COLLAR, PINCH
[1990s+ Police; probably fr the act of handcuffing someone]

hooky adj Captivating; very attractive; catchy: *It's also more insinuatingly hooky than Led Zep ever was/ After the first few merely hooky tracks (1930s+)* **v** PLAY HOOKY (1950s+)

hooligan n 1 ruffian; street tough; GOON, HOODLUM: *Beat me up with your hooligans (1898+)* **2** GUN **3** The Wild West tent of a circus or show (1940s+ *Circus*) [origin unknown; perhaps fr a rowdy Irish family named *Hooligan* of Southwark, London, England; perhaps fr Irish *Uillegán*, a nickname for William, with confusion by Americans over vocative "Oh, Willie," spread to all Irishmen; circus sense perhaps related to Western *hoolian* or *hooley-ann* or *hoolihan*, "throw a steer by leaping on its horns, bulldog"; all senses perhaps related to Irish *hooley*, "noisy party, carousal"]

hoop modifier Having to do with basketball: *a hoop team/ hoop scores (1940s+ Basketball)* **n 1** A finger ring: *the old hoop on that finger (1859+ fr underworld)*; **2** The basketball net or basket; BUCKET (1930s *Basketbal*) **3** A basketball goal; BUCKET: *He made six hoops last night (1940s+ Basketball)* **v** To vomit; BARF, OOPS: *One of the guys from Emergency Services hooped into his boots over it (1980s+)*
See FLAT TIRE

hoop-a-doop or **hoop-de-doop** or **hoopty-do** **See** WHOOP-DE-DO

hooperdooper or **hooperdoo modifier**: we got a hooperdoo quarter hour left **n 1** A person or thing that is remarkable, wonderful, superior, etc; HONEY, HUMDINGER: *Next Saturday's Barn Dance is*

going to be another hooperdoo (1940s +) **2** A very important person;
BIG SHOT: *He may be a Hooperdooper to Ann, but he's not to me*
(1920s +)

hoopla or **whoopla** **n** **1** A joyous and boisterous clamor; HOO-HA: *Is this hoopla for my birthday?* **2** A noisy fuss; a commotion: *His arrival started a big hoopla* **3** Advertising or promotion; BALLYHOO, FLACK: *I say this is a lot of unnecessary hoopla* [1877 +; perhaps fr *hoop-la!*, the stagecoach driver's exhortation to his horses]

hoop-man or **hoopster** **n** A basketball player (1940s + *Basketball*)

hoops **n** The game of basketball: *meet to play hoops at the Y* **See** JUMP THROUGH HOOPS

hoopy-doo **See** WHOOP-DE-DO

hoopy **n** A hopelessly defective car; LEMON [1990s + *Used-car sales*; fr 1920s *hoopie*, "an old car, jalopy"]

hoosegow (HOOZ gou) **n** A jail [1911 +; fr Mexican Spanish *juzgao*, "tribunal, court"]

hoosier **n** **1** A rustic; HICK (1846 +) **2** A prison guard (1930s + *Prison*) [origin uncertain; perhaps related to southern Appalachian *hoozer*, "anything unusually large, humdinger"]

Hoosier **n** A native or resident of Indiana (1826 +)

hoot, a **n** **1** Something or somebody very funny and pleasant: *Life is a hoot/ Wouldn't it be a hoot to wake up one morning and find yourself in Gracie Mansion?* (1915 + *Students*) **2** A person; COOT **See** NOT GIVE A DAMN

hoot and a holler, a *n phr* A short distance: *The gas station's just a hoot and a holler that way (1940s+)*

hootch *See* HOOCH

◁**hootchee** or **hotchee**▷ *n* The penis (*Korean War armed forces*)

hootchie-cootchie (or **hootchy-kootchy** or **hooch**), the *n* **1** An erotic dance in which the woman rotates her hips, etc **2** A woman who dances the hootchie-cootchie [1890+; origin unknown; “The Hootchy-Kootchy” was the name of a song associated with the dancer Little Egypt at the Chicago World’s Fair of 1893, but the term is found several years earlier in the context of the minstrel show]

hootenanny (HOO-T ən annee) *n* **1** Any unspecified or unspecifiable object; something one does not know the name of or does not wish to name; GADGET, GIZMO: *He took a little hootenanny off the shelf and blew into it (1925+)* **2** A folk-music entertainment, esp one where the audience participates (1940s+) [one of many fanciful coinages for something unspecified; probably related to *hooter*, “anything trifling,” found fr the mid-1800s, and to *hewgag*, “an indeterminate, unknown mythical creature,” similarly found; the syllable *hoo-*, which is prominent in such coinages, probably represents the interrogative pronoun *who*; the folk-music sense is based on this, in spite of a fanciful explanation by the singer Woody Guthrie, involving a loud singer called *Hootin’ Annie*]

hooter *n* A marijuana cigarette (1960s+ *Students*)

◁**hooters**▷ *n* A woman’s breasts: *Hooters (a synonym, I learn, for*

knockers) is a nice little play (1980s +)

hoot it up *v phr* To laugh; cackle: *Goodman and Francie were hooting it up* [1980s +; *hoot*, “to laugh,” is found by 1925]

hooty *adj* Excellent; delightful; amusing: *Wasn't that a hooty rendition?* (1980s +)

hoover *v* **1** To eat or drink up, esp greedily: *instead of the moussaka and lamb that everyone else was hoovering* <2> To do fellatio or cunnilingus with or to; EAT: *Will you hoover me immediately, before I pay any attention to you* **3** To elicit information from: *a chance to hoover your brains* [1980s +; fr the Hoover™ vacuum cleaner]

Hooverville *n* A slum of makeshift shacks where unemployed workers live [1930s +; fr President Herbert Hoover, who was president during the early years of the Great Depression]

hop¹ *n* **1** A dance or dancing party: *We went to a hop* (1731 +) **2** A hotel desk porter; BELLHOP: *The hop was tall and thin* (1940s +) **3** A trip; stage of a journey; airplane flight: *a long hop to Singapore* (1909 +) **4** A beer: *a hop with those quesadillas* *v* **1**: *They hopped over to Brussels* **2** To board: *to hop a plane* (1909 +) **See** CARHOP, SEAGOING BELLHOP, SOCK HOP, TABLE-HOP

hop² *modifier*: a hop fiend/ hop dream *n* **1** Opium: *So long as any smoker can obtain his hop* (1887 + *Narcotics*) **2** Any narcotic; DOPE: *A little hop or dope was slipped to an anxious prisoner* (1898 + *Narcotics*) [fr a shortening of Cantonese Chinese *nga pin*, pronounced HAH peen, “opium,” literally “crow peelings,” a Chinese folk etymology for English *opium*; in a subsequent US folk

etymology this was changed to *hop* by assimilation with the plant used to make beer, with its suggestions of intoxication]

hope to die *See* CROSS MY HEART

hop fiend (or fighter) *n phr* A drug addict; HOPHEAD (1898 + *Narcotics*)

hophead *n* A drug addict; HEAD: *deprive a “hophead” of narcotics/ the bench with its bittersweet words: winos, hopheads, the omnipresent graffiti* (1911 + *Narcotics*)

hop it *v phr* To leave; depart hastily; BEAT IT (1914 + *British*)

hopjoint *n* An opium den (1887 +)

hop on the bandwagon *See* GET ON THE BANDWAGON

hopped up *adj phr* 1 Intoxicated by narcotics; GEEZED, GOWED UP: *The newer generation of “coked” or “hopped up” gunmen* (1924 + *Narcotics*) 2 Excited; highly stimulated: *What are you so hopped up about?* (1923 +) 3 Made very exciting; deliberately intensified; JAZZED UP: *those hopped-up novels in which passion is named but not felt* (1940s +) 4 SOUPED UP (1942 +)

hopper *n* A ground ball that hops along (1940s + *Baseball*)

hopper, the *n phr* The imagined place where proposed ideas, actions, etc, are placed; the place where proposed bills are filed for legislative consideration; PIPELINE: *Can’t look at it now, put it in the hopper* [1950s + ; fr the *hopper* device that feeds mills, etc, so called fr its shaking]

hopping mad *adj phr* Very angry; livid; STEAMED (1840 +)

hops *n* Beer (1930+) **See** FULL OF BEANS

hopscotch *v* To leap about; make long and diverse transits: *The show hopscotches from Toronto and Boston to Lake Tahoe and Las Vegas* [1970s+; fr the children's game]

hopup (HAHP up) *modifier* Used to increase the power and speed of a car engine: *a pretty good selection of hopup and speed equipment* (1950s+ *Hot rodders*)

hop up *v phr* **1** To administer narcotics: *He hopped himself up on heroin* (1940s+ *Narcotics*) **2** To drug a horse for speed; DOPE: *to hop up or slow down their horses* (1940s+ *Horse racing*) **3** To increase the speed and power of a car; SOUP UP: *How to Hop Up Chevrolet and GMC Engines* (1940s+)

horizontal bop, the *n phr* (Variations: **mambo** or **rhumba** may replace **bop**) The sex act; copulation: *while he did the horizontal bop with this girl/ Clark, you can do the horizontal rhumba with the entire Metnet cheerleading squad if you want* [1980s+; *horizontal refreshment* in the same sense is found by 1893]

hork *v* To vomit; BARF, HURL: *It's enough to make you hork* [1980s+; echoic]

horn *n* **1** Any wind instrument (1940s+ *Jazz musicians*) **2** The trumpet (1900+ *Jazz musicians*) ◀**3**▶ A penile erection; HARD-ON: *I could have beat up five guys with the horn I had on* (1785+) **4** The telephone: *I get straight on the horn to Eckert* (1940s+) **See** GRUNT-HORN, LIKE SHIT THROUGH A TIN HORN, TINHORN, TOOT one's OWN HORN

horn, the *n phr* The telephone: *Regional representatives got on the horn with the Louisville headquarters (1940s+)*

horner *n* A person who has a tender, runny nose from inhaling cocaine (1960s+ *Narcotics*)

horn in *v phr* To intrude; thrust oneself in; BUTT IN: *Some wallie tried to horn in on our gang (1912+)*

horniness *n* Sexual craving; lust and lustfulness; HOT ROCKS: *the lure of High Art to mask the visceral odors of simple human horniness (1960s+)*

hornswoggle *v* To cheat; swindle; dupe; CON (1829+)

◁**horny**▷ *adj* Sexually excited and desirous; keenly amorous; lustful; HOT • Of recent years applied to women as well as men, despite being derived fr *horn*, “erect penis”: *his horny teenage daughter/ At first it eased my head and made me less horny/ a few scenes between a horny housewife and a guy in a Lone Ranger mask (1889+)*

horrors, the *n phr* Delirium tremens; the SHAKES (1860+) *See* CHUCK HABIT

horse *n* 1 Heroin; SHIT: *They shoot horse in the john at the local high school/ After about 1952, nobody called it horse any more (1940s+ Narcotics)* 2 A hard-drug addict (1940s+ *Narcotics*) 3 A prison guard paid by inmates to smuggle letters and other contraband in and out • See *mule*, “a person paid to carry smuggled drugs” (1960s+ *Prison*) 4 A truck or a tractor (1940s+ *Truckers*) 5 An honest, hardworking police officer: *We know who the horses are around here, every cop in the department knows (1960s+ Police)* *v* 1

To play and idle; FOOL AROUND, HORSE AROUND: *He wasn't just horsing now/ The Badgers lapse into their old ways, horsing up shots* (1927+) <2> To do the sex act with or to; SCREW: *there ain't goin' to be any immoral horsin' goin' on* 3 To fool; ridicule; trick (1901+) [the sense "heroin" may have derived fr *shit*, "heroin," by way of *horseshit*, although the derivation might well have gone in the other direction; or perhaps the sense is based on the sobriquet of a Damon Runyon character *Harry the Horse* by way of the partial rhyme of *Harry* with *heroin*; second verb sense used of stallions and mares by 1420] **See** DARK HORSE, DEAD HORSE, DOES A WOODEN HORSE HAVE A HICKORY DICK, ENOUGH TO CHOKE A HORSE, FROM THE HORSE'S MOUTH, GET ON one's HIGH HORSE, GET ON one's HORSE, IRON HORSE, ONE-HORSE, ONE-HORSE TOWN, WARHORSE

horse-and-buggy *adj* Old-fashioned: *a horse-and-buggy leisureliness* (1927+)

horse apple *n phr* 1 A ball of horse feces 2 Pretentious trash; HORSESHIT: *all that particular pile of horseapples boiled down to* (1940s+)

horse around *v phr* To joke and caper pleasurably; indulge in horseplay; FOOL AROUND: *He was horsing around and he got caught* (1927+)

horsefeathers *interj* An exclamation of disbelief, rejection, contempt, etc: *Mail comes urging that something be done to "rescue children from guns, daggers, and soldier worship."* *Horsefeathers!* *n* Nonsense; BALONEY, BUNK, HORSESHIT: *Don't give me that*

horsefeathers about your saintly momma (1928 +)

horsehide *n* A baseball (1895 + *Baseball*)

horselaugh, the *n phr* A loud, nasty, and dismissive laugh at someone; the MERRY HA-HA: *When I asked for more time I just got the horselaugh (1738 +)*

horse opera (or **opry**) *n phr* **1** A cowboy movie; western; OATER (1927 +) **2** A circus show featuring horses (1857 + *Circus*)

horseplay *n* Rough and boisterous playing; coarse physical merriment (1589 +)

horseplayer *n* A person who bets on horse races (1940s +)

horse race *n* A serious contest; a hard-fought competition: *Suddenly what looked like a shoo-in turned into a real horse-race (1970s +)*

horses *n* A pair of dishonest dice, esp of mismatched dice that can produce only specific combinations: *Karnov explained the use of "horses" (1940s + Gambling) See HOLD one's HORSES*

◁**horse's ass** (or **derriere**)▷ *n phr* A contemptible person; a persistent and obnoxious fool; JERK: *I just regard the critic privately as being the biggest horse's ass in the western world/ If, however, he wanted to present himself in Texas as a real horse's ass, none of us would dispute him/ We just hope history will prove we were visionaries and not horses' derrieres*

horse sense *n phr* Good sense and shrewdness: *horse sense needed before taking on something like that (1832 +)*

◁**horseshit**▷ *interj* An exclamation of disbelief, disapproval, and

contempt: *Horseshit! I'll never believe that modifier* (also **horsebleep**): *Superstar! What a horseshit idiot!/ and the overall horsebleep pitching* **n 1** Nonsense; pretentious talk; bold and deceitful absurdities; BALONEY, BULLSHIT: *You give me all that horseshit about the conditions here* **2** Something of very poor quality; DRECK, GARBAGE: *I'm not a cheerleader; if we're horseshit, I'll say so* **3** Trivialities; nonessentials; CHICKENSHIT: *Don't bother me with that niminy-piminy horseshit* **v**: *He was horseshitting about what a great sailor he is* (1940s +)

◁**horseshit and gunsmoke**▷ **n phr** Excitement and confusion; chaos [1970s + Army; fr an evocation of a cavalry skirmish or a cowboys-and-Indians battle]

horse's mouth *See* FROM THE HORSE'S MOUTH

horse-trading **n** Negotiating reciprocal concessions and benefits, esp of a political sort: *Vintage Washington politics as usual was not good enough anymore, that horse-trading, your bill for mine, was part of the old-time religion* (1940s +)

hose **n 1** A sexually promiscuous woman (1980s + *Students*) ◁**2**▷ The penis **v** ◁**1**▷ To do the sex act with or to; BONK, JAZZ, SCREW: *Do you still want to hose her some more tonight?* (1940s +) **2** To cheat; deceive; dupe; SCREW, SHAFT: *He's not going out of his way to hose Nico/ I got news for you. You got hosed* (1940s +) **3** To turn down; reject; snub: *They're afraid of getting hosed* (1960s + *Students*) [origin uncertain; perhaps fr a rare but found *hose*, "penis," whereupon the term would be analogous to *diddle*, *fuck*, *screw*, *shaft*, etc]

hosed *adj* Being in a bad spot or unfortunate situation; screwed:

hosed on the shipping cost

◀**hose job**▶ *n phr* BLOW JOB: *Looks like the hooker was doing a hose job on one of the truckers (1980s+)*

◀**hoser**▶ *n* **1** A contemptible and obnoxious person, esp a man; DORK, JERK: *Reagan is a hoser (1980s+ Students)* **2** (also **hosehead**) A Canadian, esp a simple and durable northern type • Originated by comedians Dave Thomas and Rick Moranis for the television skits called “The Great White North,” where it was used by the mentally challenged Mackenzie brothers: *unavailable to us hosers, but can be bought down south/ unlike their hoser cousins (1980s+ Canadian)* **3** A very sexually active male; COCKSMAN, Swordsman: *Bill has slept with three girls this week. What a hoser! (1980s+ Students)*

hosing *n* Abuse, esp a beating with a hose (1931+ *Prison*) *See* TAKE A HOSING

hoss *n* A strong and dependable person; superior person; strong man; PISSER: *We didn't have a hoss in the bullpen until Mark Littell started coming through for us (1940s+)*

hostess with the mostest, the *n phr* The most successful, lavish, and well-connected party-giving woman [1950s+; fr a popular song fr the 1950s show *Call Me Madam*, “The Hostess with the Mostest on the Ball”]

hot *adj* **1** Capable of high speed; moving very fast: *Hot crate, a fast plane (1868+)* **2** Selling very rapidly and readily, hence very much

in demand: *paralleled the rise of the “hot” ticket/ Xaviera Hollander is the hottest thing in the business promoting her own work (1960s +)* **3** Performing extremely well; certain to win: *When you’re hot you’re hot/ The big fork-baller is real hot today, folks (1895 +)* **4** Angry; furious; PISSED OFF: *Don’t get so hot about it, it was just a goof (1225 +)* **5** Lively; vital; vibrant: *This is a hot town/ A “hot” magazine is one that’s sizzling and bubbling with activity (1911 +)* **6** Sexually excited; afire with passion; lustful; HORNY: *Hot faggot queens bump up against chilly Jewish matrons/ the hottest little devil I ever met (1500 +)* **7** Pornographic; salacious; DIRTY: *a real hot movie (1892 +)* **8** Eager; ANTSY: *Why so hot to get started? (1971 +)* **9** Exciting, rapid, strongly rhythmical, eliciting a visceral response: *The old jazz was mostly hot, then it was cool, and now even cool cats blow hot licks now and then (1920 + Jazz musicians)* **10** Stolen, esp recently stolen; contraband: *Stolen bonds are “hot paper” (1925 + Underworld)* **11** Wanted by the police: *Where would a hot can of corn like Dillinger hide out (1931 + Underworld)* **12** Dangerous; menacing; potentially disastrous: *Things were getting too hot/ It’s so hot out there, man, I’m thinking about getting into another game (1618 +)* **13** Extremely infectious; having lethal potential: *The garbage bags held seven dead monkeys, and they were hot as hell. Presumably lethal (1990s + Medical)* **14** New, esp both brand-new and interesting: *a hot tip/ the hot news from upstairs (1908 +)* **15** Having electrical potential; live; switched on: *Is this mike hot?/ Can I touch this wire, or is it hot? (1925 +)* **16** Radioactive (1942 +) **17** Excellent and very good-looking: *Hot means cool and extremely good-looking (1980s + Teenagers)* [stolen-goods sense may derive fr

hot, “too well known,” found by 1883] **See** BLOW HOT AND COLD, NOT SO HOT, RED HOT

hot, a *n phr* A meal: *He might have staked him to a hot* (1940s + *Jive talk*)

hot air *n phr* **1** Nonsense; pretentious talk; bold and deceitful absurdities; BALONEY, BULLSHIT: *The Jefferson family tree will never be blown down by any hot air from me* **2** Pomposity and vanity; bombast: *The old fraud talks a lot of hot air* (1900 +) **See** FULL OF HOT AIR

hot and bothered *adj phr* Angry; fiercely indignant; PISSED OFF, STEAMED UP: *Now don't get all hot and bothered just because he didn't call* (1921 +)

hot and cold *n phr* A mixture of heroin and cocaine; H AND C, SPEEDBALL (1960s + *Narcotics*) **See** BLOW HOT AND COLD

hot as a three-dollar (or **two-dollar**) **pistol** *adj phr* Very hot; red-hot: *The rumor is hot as a three-dollar pistol* (1940s +)

hot as blazes (or **hell**) *adj phr* Very hot indeed (*first form* 1849 +, *second* 1912 +)

hot bed or **hotbed** *n phr* or *n* **1** A bed used both day and night, by shifts of sleepers (1945 +) **2** A place that produces or is prominently rich in specified things: *College these days is a hotbed of sobriety* (1768 +)

hot button *modifier*: *his subtle tilts to the center on hot-button issues such as abortion and gun control *n phr* An inflammatory topic or*

area; a tender public nerve: *The Horton spot hit a “hot button”/ more low-income housing, a political hot button in town* [1980s+; perhaps fr the earlier *hot button*, “the clitoris”; perhaps fr the button or key of a news teletype that sounded a bell to announce “hot” news]

hotcha *adj* Sexually attractive and energetic: *He run Sternwood’s hotcha daughter, the young one, off to Yuma* **interj** (also **hotcha-cha** or **ha-cha-cha**) An expression of pleasure, approval, relish, etc [1933+; a derivation fr Yiddish *hotsa*, “hop!” has been suggested, based on the joyous repetition of the word as one bounces an infant on one’s knees; perhaps fr *hot*; according to Gelett Burgess, *hot-cha-cha* was coined by the comedian Jimmy Durante, with whom one identifies the utterance]

hot corner *n phr* **1** Any very dangerous and crucial place: *The North African front is a “hot corner”* (1854+) **2** Third base, esp as a fielding position (1889+ *Baseball*) [baseball sense reflects the time when most sluggers were right-handed hitters]

hot damn *interj* An exclamation of pleasure, gratification, etc; HOT DOG, HOT SHIT (1936+)

hot diggety (or **diggity**) *interj* (Variations: **dog** or **doggety** or **damn** may be added; **ziggety** or **ziggity** may replace **diggety**) HOT DOG (1924+)

hot dog *interj* An exclamation of delight, gratification, relish, etc; HOT DAMN, HOT SHIT: *Did you have a good time? “Hot dog!”* (1906+) **modifier** **1**: *a hot-dog stand/ embattled hot-dog vendor **2**: *I don’t appreciate that hot-dog garbage in my ball park* *n phr* **1** A*

frankfurter or a frankfurter sandwich (1900+) **2** HOT SHOT (1900+) **n 3:** *Walter is one of the good guys, not a hot dog (1966+)*
v phr 1 To perform in a brilliant, spectacular way, esp in order to seize the admiration of an audience; GRANDSTAND, PLAY TO THE GRANDSTAND, SHOW OFF: *a little careless against Bob Cousy's Royals, hot-dogging their passes and loosening their defenses (1960s+)*
2 To surf spectacularly: *Surfers may "hot dog," do acrobatics (1960s+ Surfers)* **3** To do hot-dog skiing (1970s+ *Skiers*)

hot dogger n phr GRANDSTANDER, HOT SHOT (1960s+)

hot-dog skiing n phr Free-style skiing that features somersaults, midair turns, balletlike figures, and other feats rather than speed: *A whole new style of baroque skiing has developed. Known as "free-style," "exhibition," or "hot-dog" skiing (1970s+ Skiers)*

hotfoot adv At once; immediately: *I'll walk hotfoot to the doctor's office (1835+)* **v 1** (also **hotfoot it**) To go fast; hurry: *The boys would hotfoot back when they heard the mess call/ Tell him to hotfoot it to the sheriff's office (1838+)* **2** GIVE someone A HOTFOOT

hot for adj phr 1 Very desirous of; lusting for; wishing to possess: *She seemed hot for you/ a young outfielder everyone in the Mets' organization was hot for 2* Very eager over; enthusiastic about: *He's real hot for the new promotion policy (1667+)*

hothead n 1 An irascible person; one quick to anger; **2** A fanatical, emotional person; fiery militant (1660+)

hot iron n phr HOT ROD (1950s+ *Hot rodders*)

hot item n 1 An item that sells very well: *reading glasses are a hot*

item 2 A fairly new and serious romantic couple: *they became a hot item after the prom* **See** HOT NUMBER

hot knife through butter **See** LIKE SHIT THROUGH A TIN HORN

hot line or **hotline** *n phr* or *n* An emergency telephone line or number: *Clearly, hot lines are no cure for the complex, overall problem of drug abuse/ a community "hot line" to head off gang wars* [mid-1950s + ; popularized by the telephone line between the White House and the Kremlin]

hot-load *v* To poison or otherwise treat a drug dose to render it fatal; give someone a "hot shot": *You hot-loaded the cocaine, knowing it would kill her* (1980s + *Narcotics*)

hot number (or **item**) *n phr* **1** A very sexy man or woman; **HOT PANTS** **2** Something that is selling rapidly and well (*Salespersons*) (1930s +)

hot on *adj* Very fond of; enthusiastic for: *hot on renting movies from Blockbuster* (1865 +)

hot one *n phr* **1** A very funny story, piece of news, etc (1913 +) **2** A despised person; ASSHOLE, JERK: *You are a hot one, you are* (1919 +)

hot pants *n phr* **1** Strong sexual desire; lust; carnal craving: *His hot pants will get him in trouble* (1927 +) **2** A very passionate, lustful, and potentially promiscuous person: *Catherine the Great was apparently an imperial hot pants* (1966 +) **3** Very brief women's shorts (1960s +) **See** HAVE HOT PANTS

hot patootie n phr A sexually attractive and sexy woman: *He calls the object of his affection a "hot patootie" [1928 + ; fr hot potato, with a play on potato as used, like tomato, to mean "a person"]*

hot poo n phr or **interj 1** HOT SHIT **n phr 2** (also **hot poop**) Recent and authoritative information; the latest word (1950s +)

hot potato n phr Something embarrassing and troublesome; a tricky and sticky matter: *Everyone can see how the boss looks when he handles a hot potato (1846 +)* **See** DROP someone or something
LIKE A HOT POTATO

hot property n phr Someone or something very valuable and marketable, esp an athlete, desirable executive, entertainer, etc: *Timmons and Co, knowing a hot property when it signs one up (1958 +)*

hot rock n phr HOT SHOT

◁**hot rocks (or nuts)**▷ **n phr** Male sexual craving; powerful lust; HORNINESS

hot rod modifier: hot-rod manual/ hot-rod club n phr 1 A car specially modified and fitted with a powerful or rebuilt engine so as to be much faster than one of the same stock design; A-BOMB, CAN, ROD: Special Racing Cars and Hot Rods, *a technical book explains the principles of supercharging, carburetion, suspension, shock absorbers. A complete speed manual (1945 + Hot rodders)* **2** (also **hot rodder**) A driver or devotee of hot rods: *Right away he thinks he's a hot rod (1949 + Hot rodders)*

hots, the n phr 1 Strong liking; predilection: *I'd never got the deep*

undying hots for that rah rah collitch boy/ If a girl calls and asks me out, she's got the hots for me **2** Lust; HOT PANTS: *A bare-chested photograph of this guy can give 2,300 women the hots (1947+)* **See** HAVE THE HOTS FOR someone

hot seat, the *n phr* **1** The electric chair: *He draws the hot-seat for taking that rat (1925+)* **2** A place where one is under uncomfortable scrutiny and pressure, esp the witness stand: *Deane was succeeded in the hot seat by a very small pot from the State Department/ always on the cutting edge, always in the hot seat (1942+)* **See** ON THE HOT SEAT

hot sheet modifier Catering to quick assignments; permitting short-term occupancy: *The "Strip Tease" murder includes a brief, touching appearance of the forlorn manager of a hotsheet place called the Flightpath Motel/ Investigating shady insurance claims lands Jack in the usual hotsheet motels in North Dallas [1980s+; modeled on hot bed]*

◁**hot shit**▷ *modifier*: *Thought he was a hot shit basketball player/ to get the hot-shit, thick-book education he could well afford* *n phr* or *interj* **1** HOT DOG *n phr* **2** Someone or something very remarkable and attractive, irresistible, etc; HOT STUFF: *He thinks he's real hot shit* **3** An aggressive, self-assured person; BIG SHOT: *something sensitive and probing like all the rest of these hot shits (1940s+)*

hot shot modifier 1: *In just a year I'm claiming to be a hot-shot Columbia man myself/ a young, hot-shot second lieutenant* **2**: *a hot-shot freight* *n phr* **1** An especially gifted and effective person; a notably successful person; BALL OF FIRE, WINNER • Often used

ironically: *What has been written about executives has usually dealt with the hot shots/ You're not pushing around some crummy client to show him what a hot-shot you are (1933 +)* **2** A fast train or express train (1930+ *Railroad*) **3** A news bulletin; a news flash: *When that hot-shot came in about Monahan's death (1940s +)* **4** A narcotics injection that is fatal because of an impurity or poison: *You got a hot shot! You're dead (1950s + Narcotics)*

hot spit *n phr* or *interj* HOT SHIT (1960s +)

hot spot *n phr* **1** TIGHT SPOT (1932 +) **2** A dangerous place, esp a combat zone: *Sarajevo is a hot spot again (1941 +)* **3** A popular nightclub, esp one with sexy entertainment: *became 52d Street's hot spot (1931 +)*

hot stove league *n phr* The off-season entity of devotees, arguments, etc, that keeps baseball serious and topical from October to April [1912 +; as applied to horse racing, the term is found by the 1870s]

hot stuff *n phr* **1** A person of exceptional merit, talents, attractions, etc; HOT SHOT • Almost always used ironically: *I guess they think they are hot stuff/ Don't you think I'm hot stuff (1889 +)* **2** Material, entertainment, etc, that is very exciting, esp salacious: *Those magazines are real hot stuff (1904 +)* **3** Stolen goods; contraband (1924+ *Underworld*) **4** News or information that is very important, fresh, sensational, forbidden, etc: *I peeked in your briefcase, and that's hot stuff! (1931 +)* **5** Food, drinks, etc, that are very hot: *Hot stuff coming through (1940s +)*

hotsy-totsy or **hotsie-totsie** *adj* Satisfactory; fine; COPACETIC: *All's hotsie-totsie here, thank you so much* (1926 +)

hot ticket *modifier*: *Willenson is a hot ticket item in the media these days* *n phr* A very popular show; HIT: *Mr. Martins's staging of Sleeping Beauty was such a critical success at its premiere that it became an instant hot ticket* (1960s +)

hottie *n* An attractive person; BEDDY, DISH: *if a guy or girl is cute, they're a "hottie" or "fine"* (1990s + Teenagers)

hot to trot *adj phr* Afire with craving, esp for sexual activity; lustful: *to ask her bluntly if she was hot to trot/ Somebody was hot to trot for a Japanese sedan/ who claims her hot-to-trot boss gave her a chase around the office* (1950s + Black)

hot under the collar *adj phr* Very angry: *The Puerto Ricans who get hot under the collar and curse aloud if anyone should question their being Puerto Rican* (1895 +)

hot up *v phr* **1** To become more exciting and dangerous; heat up: *Then things really hot up and January falls in love with an aging macho novelist* (1936 +) **2** To make something hot or hotter: *I'll just hot up some soup for lunch* (1903 +)

hot walker *n phr* A person who walks a horse after a race or strong exercise in order to cool it off gradually: *She has worked at the King Ranch and at Churchill Downs as a "hotwalker" grazing thoroughbreds* (1960s + Horse racing)

hot war *n phr* A war with combat and killing; SHOOTING WAR • An isolated use in 1768 means "a vigorous war," lacking the modern

contrast with *cold war* (1947+)

hot water *n phr* Difficulty; trouble; embarrassment: *got herself into hot water by marrying a Siamese prince* (1875+) **See** IN HOT WATER

hot-wire *v* **1** To start a car, truck, etc, by electrically bypassing the ignition lock: *He could hot-wire any car in about 20 seconds* (1961+)
2 To activate illegally; tamper with: *let the affected corporations hot-wire the regulatory process* (1970s+) [fr the notion of attaching an electrically *hot wire* to the starter-motor relay]

Hot ziggety! *interj* Wow!: *A babysitter for junior? Hot ziggety* **See** HOT DIGGETY

hound *v* To harass, pester, or annoy someone; BURN: *I hounded him. Oh fuck, what a loser I was* (1605+) **See** BOOZEHOUND, CHOW HOUND, GAS HOUND

-hound *combining word* A person devoted to or addicted to what is indicated: *autograph hound/ boo-zehound/ newshound/ nicotine hound/ thrill-hound*

Hound, the, or the Dog *n phr* A Greyhound™ bus (1960s+)

hound dog *n phr* A contemptible man, esp a woman-chaser [1940s+; a Southernism popularized by an Elvis Presley song lyric: “Ain’t nothin’ but a hound dog”]

hounds *adj* Very satisfying; wonderful; great; NEAT (1950s+ *Teenagers*)

hound the beef *v phr* To cruise for sex: *Me and Stick were out*

hounding the beef (1980s +)

hour *See* DEAD HOUR

house *n* **1** A brothel; CATHOUSE, WHOREHOUSE • Earlier occurrences, from 1726 on, have modifiers: *of ill repute, of ill fame, of assignation, of accommodation, etc: A House is not a Home (1865 +)* **2** The audience at a theater (1921 +) **3** A kind of dance music derived from soul, rock, and jazz, with a strong percussive beat, originally a black Chicago style • Comes in many varieties: deep house, garage, tribal, progressive, etc: *to introduce Southern California to “house,” the technologically sophisticated dance music that has taken the country by storm/ For years, dance-club regulars have been expecting the boom-chucka-boom beat of house music to conquer pop (mid-1980s +)* [third sense fr the Warehouse, a Chicago club] *See* BARRELHOUSE, the BIG HOUSE, BRING DOWN THE HOUSE, BUGHOUSE, CALL HOUSE, CAN HOUSE, CATHOUSE, CHIPPY HOUSE, CRACK HOUSE, DOSS, FLEABAG, FLOPHOUSE, FUNNY FARM, GRIND-HOUSE, HASH-HOUSE, JUKE HOUSE, NOTCH-HOUSE, NUTHOUSE, ON THE HOUSE, POWERHOUSE, ROUGHHOUSE, ROUNDHOUSE, SPORTING HOUSE, STROKE HOUSE, WHEEL-HOUSE, WHOREHOUSE

house ape *n phr* A small child; an infant; curtain climber, RUG RAT (1980s +)

housebroken *adj* To be generally observant of the amenities; tame [1932 +; fr the condition of a pet who will soil the house with excreta]

house-cleaning *n* A reorganization of a business or government department, esp with dismissal of incompetent or dishonest employees; SHAKE-UP: *Honest cops, instead of welcoming a house-cleaning, resent it (1928 +)*

house moss *n phr* The tufts and whorls of dust that accumulate under beds, tables, etc; BEGGAR'S VELVET, GHOST TURDS, slut's wool (1940s +)

house-sit *v* To live in and care for a house free of charge or for a fee while the owner is away [1970s +; modeled on *babysit*]

how *See* AND HOW, KNOW-HOW

how about (or what do you know about) that *interj* An exclamation of surprise, pleasure, admiration, etc: *We've only got a year to go. How about that!/ I should worry. What d'yuh know about that?* [first form 1939 +, second 1920s +; first form popularized by the baseball announcer Mel Allen]

how something can you get *sentence* It is impossible to be or behave to a more extreme degree; this is the utmost: *"How tacky can you get?" Maddie said disgustedly/ He did? How stupid can you get?* (1951 +)

how come *sentence* What is that? what is the reason?: *"Change of plans. We move today" "How come?"* (1848 +)

how do you like (or how about) them apples *interj* An exclamation of pleasure and triumph, usu inviting admiration for something one has done or acquired: *How do you like them apples, huh, Ma?!/ How about them apples, Goodman?* (1940s +)

howdy *interj* An exclamation upon greeting: *Howdy, pardner, what's up?* [1843+; fr *how do you do*]

Howdy Doody *See* DOES HOWDY DOODY HAVE WOODEN BALLS

how it shakes out *adv phr* The consequences; the fate of an idea, experiment, endeavor, etc: *This may or may not fly; we'll just wait and see how it shakes out* (1990s+)

howl, a *n* **1** Something amusing; a funny event; a HOOT (1934+) **2** BEEF, STINK: *I do not want any friends to make a howl through the press* (1886+)

howler *n* A very funny mistake, esp in something written or spoken rather solemnly; also, a serious and obvious mistake: *His misuse of "Rappaport" for "rapport" was the season's howler* (1844+)

howling *adj* Conspicuously successful: *The Peoples' theatre is doing a howling biz* (1887+)

how's about *prep phr* What do you feel or think about: *How's about a drink?* (1925+)

how's tricks *sentence* How are you? how are things going for you? (1904+)

how're they (or **how they** or **how's it**) **hanging?** *sentence* How are you? • A genial greeting, usu from one man to another; an inquiry as to the condition of the genitals: *Dude, how's it hangin'* (1940s+)

HUA (pronounced as separate letters) *adv phr* Stupidly; blindly; inattentively: *You're driving pretty HUA today* [1980s+; fr *head up ass*]

hubba-hubba *adv* Quickly; immediately; ON THE DOUBLE *interj* An exclamation of delight, relish, etc, esp at the sight of a woman [WWII armed forces; origin unknown; perhaps a version of a Chinese greeting *how-pu-how*, apparently adopted by US airmen from Chinese pilot trainees; perhaps originally a bit of gibberish used to imitate the clamor of conversation, esp when soldiers get the command “Parade rest,” after which one can talk, as distinct from the command “At ease,” after which one must remain silent and contribute to no *hubbub*]

hubby *n* Husband (1798 +)

huck *v* To throw; CHUCK: *We’d each huck a dart standing on one foot, gulping a beer* (1990s +)

huckleberry *n* 1 A man; fellow; GUY: *Well, I’m your huckleberry, Mr Haney* (1883 +) 2 A sweet, agreeable person, hence sometimes a dupe • A very mild and affectionate insult (1895 + *Students*)

huckster *n* An advertising person or publicity agent: *so the television hucksters can peddle their shaving cream* [1945 +; popularized by the 1946 novel about advertising, *The Hucksters*, by Frederick Wakeman]

huddle *n* A conference; closed and intense discussion: *He went into a huddle with his aides* *v*: *We’ll have to huddle on that one* [1929 +; fr the *huddle*, esp of the offensive team, before most plays in football]

Huey *n* A US military helicopter, model HU—1B: *The Huey, a combination of shuttle bus, supply truck, ambulance, and weapon of war* (Vietnam War armed forces)

huff *v* To inhale glue, gasoline, or aerosol fumes for intoxicating effect: *The deaths of three Wisconsin teenagers after they inhaled aerosol fumes to get high, the practice known as “huffing” (1980s + Narcotics)* *See* IN A HUFF

huffer *n* **1** An automobile supercharger; BLOWER (1950s + *Hot rodders*) **2** A person who inhales various chemical fumes for intoxicating effect: *Huffers: Youngsters who inhale gasoline, hair spray, butane or any of a variety of household products to get high (1980s + Narcotics)*

huffy *adj* Angry; petulant; irritable; IN A HUFF: *I didn’t mean to get huffy (1848 +)*

huggy-huggy *adj* (also **kissy-huggy** or **kissy-kissy**) Very affectionate; BUDDY-BUDDY, PALSY-WALSY: *We are all very huggy-huggy with each other/ This is not gonna be a kissy-huggy book/ The kissy-kissy socials had all but disappeared (1980s +)*

hug the porcelain god(dess) (or throne) *v phr* To vomit in the toilet: *Memorial Day weekend hugging the porcelain god*

hulking *adj* Large: *hulking muscles bulging (1700 +)*

hum (or hmmm) babe *interj* An utterance of various meanings, often of encouragement: *Piece of cake, can of corn, hum babe [1980s + Baseball; perhaps fr exhortations to the pitcher to throw a devastating hummer]*

humdinger *n* A person or thing that is remarkable, wonderful, superior, etc; BEAUT, LOLLAPALOOZA: *Arnold Moss gave us a humdinger of a talk (1905 +)*

humdinging *adj* First-rate; superior: *a real, humdinging comer*
(1930s +)

hummer *n* 1 A person or thing that is remarkable, wonderful, etc;
HUMDINGER: *This is Mason's first book, and it's a hummer* (1907 +)
2 A fastball (1940s + *Baseball*)

hummy *adj* Content; happy; ignorant of danger (1970s + *Black*) *adv*:
She lives real hummy

humongous (h^{oo} MAWN gəs) *adj* Very large; gigantic: *a humongous chain* [1960s + *Students*; perhaps a sort of echoic-symbolic blend of *huge* with *monstrous*]

hump *n* A contemptible constable; an incompetent • Apparently sometimes used jovially to mean simply “cop”: *I don't believe that hump! I'm trying to develop a case, and he acts like I'm a hysterical old maid looking for rapists under the bed* (1990 + *Police*) *v* 1 (also **hump it, hump along**) To move or go, esp with difficulty; slog: *lack the nerve to hump it through to the end/ put on that pack and hump for miles through the boonies* <2> To do the sex act with or to; FUCK: *from the brave pilots who hump the nubile hostesses to the dialect-spouting steerage passenger* (1785 +) 3 To exert oneself mightily; work hard • To work as if carrying something on one's back, or *hump*: *and humped the big tractor trailer right off 128 and down ramp/ The groundskeepers have been humping to prepare the stadium for the big game* (1835 +) **See** BUST ONE'S ASS, BUST HUMP, DRY FUCK, GET A HUMP ON, GET A MOVE ON, HIT THE HUMP, OVER THE HILL

hump oneself v phr To hurry: *You better hump yourself over to the police station and explain (1883+)*

hump and bump v phr To work hard and progress or propel haltingly: *He says it costs him \$10,000 a month to hump and bump his business along (1970s+)*

hump day n The middle of the workweek, usu Wednesday, seen as the hill to get over in moving toward the weekend and time off (1965+)

◁**humper**▷ **n** The sex act; coupling; FUCKING: *refused to change the X rating on Fritz the Cat on the ground that it depicted “anthropomorphic humper” (1970s+)*

humpin’ adj Attractive; good-looking; DISHY (1990s+ *Black*)

◁**humper**▷ **adj** Sexually arousing; lubricious; sexy: *flashy, precise, and humper as in a Czardas (1970s+)*

humvee or hummer n A small military vehicle: *She and others were traveling in a humvee when one of the Jeep-like vehicles rolled over a mine/ Some 20,000 Humvees were used in the Persian Gulf War [1990s+; fr high mobility multipurpose wheeled vehicle]*

hunch modifier: *This was too good a hunch play to let drop n* An intuitive premonition; a shrewd idea or notion: *I gotta hunch she won’t come back v: As I hunch it, the answer is triple [1904+; said to be fr a gamblers’ belief that touching a hunchback’s hump would bring good luck]*

hung adj 1 HUNG OVER (1958+) 2 In love (1955+ *Rock and roll*) ◁

3▷ Having impressive male genitals; HUNG LIKE A BULL, WELL-HUNG (1641 +)

hunger *See* FROM HUNGER

◁**hung like a bull (or a horse)**▷ *adj phr* Possessing large genitals; HUNG, WELL-HUNG (1960s +)

hung over *adj phr* Suffering the ill effects of a hangover: *looking as hung over as you can get* (1940s +)

hungries, the *See* GET THE HUNGRIES

hungry *adj* Very ambitious; extremely eager to succeed: *He won't make it because he's not hungry enough*

hung up *adj phr* 1 Limited by conventional beliefs and attitudes; SQUARE, UNCOOL: *Either you're way out, pops, or you're hung up* (1940s + *Jazz musicians*) 2 Agitated or immobilized by emotional disturbance; stalled: *She suddenly got all hung up around Christmas* (*fr beat & cool talk*) 3 Delayed; detained: *He got hung up with a phone call as he was leaving* (1712 +)

hung up on *adj phr* Obsessed with; stalled or frustrated by; suffering a hangup over: *I'm hung up on fried rice* (1957+ *Beat & cool talk*)

hunk *n* 1 A man or woman considered primarily as a sex partner; PIECE, PIECE OF ASS: *He came back to the hot little hunk he used to run around with* (1940s +) 2 A very attractive man, esp a muscular and sexually appealing one; STUD MUFFIN: *Wherever she goes she always manages to pick up a hunk* (1945 +)

hunker down *v phr* 1 (also **hunker**) To squat on one's haunches: *He*

heads for the inevitable mariachi square, hunkers down in the dark, wet and shivering/Fiona had just hunkered down, abandoned all caution/Jon was hunkered in the dark, silently chain-smoking (1720 +) **2** To get into the mood and posture for hard work: *Now that summer's gone we must hunker down and get that report finished* (1970s +) **3** To take a sturdy defensive attitude; become hard to move: *As the public responds, the defense lawyers hunker down/"We'll just have to hunker down," said Jody Powell (1970s +) [fr southern US fr northern British dialect hunker, "haunch"]*

hunk of change *See* PIECE OF CHANGE

hunk of cheese *n phr* A stupid, obnoxious person (1940s +)

hunkorama or **hunkster** *n* A very attractive man, esp a muscular and sexually appealing one; HUNK, STUD MUFFIN: *all 6 feet 2 inches of blond hunkorama/Holy Hunksters! It's Batman forever! (first form mid-1980s +, second 1990s +)*

◀**hunky**¹▶ (also **hunkie** or **Hunky** or **Hunkie** or **Hunk** or **hunks**) *modifier*: *hunky talk/dumb hunkie brain* **n 1** A foreigner, esp a Hungarian, Slavic, or Baltic laborer; BOHUNK, GINZO (1910 +) **2** HONKY: *99 white workers got killed in a coal-mine disaster, man! Do you know what I mean? So I can't call everybody no Hunkie (1960s + Black) [fr bohunk]*

hunky² *adj* Attractive, esp sexually desirable; MACHO: *hunky, bearded actor-troubadour/the hunky blond who cranks the ferry* [1978 +; the related sense, "thick-set, solidly built," is found by 1911]

hunky-dory *adj* Satisfactory; fine; COPACETIC: *That may be hunky-dory*

with the jumping and jiving youngsters [1866 + ; origin uncertain; *hunky* was a generalized term of approval by 1861; as to *dory*, according to one proposal of 1876 it was brought back by sailors from Yokohama, Japan, where *Honcho dori* is a street where they found their diversions; the term was popularized by a Christy Minstrels song of about 1870]

hunter *See* HEADHUNTER, POTHUNTER

hunt up *v phr* To search for diligently; search out: *Let's see if we can hunt up a place to get this fixed* (1791 +)

hurl *v 1* To pitch: *after hurling five frames in three games* (1908 + *Baseball*) *2* To vomit: *Somebody hurled, which was so gross it made somebody else hurl* (1992 +)

hurler *n* A pitcher (1908 + *Baseball*)

hurrah's nest, a *n phr* Confusion; chaos; SNAFU (1829 +)

hurry *See* HERE'S YOUR HAT WHAT'S YOUR HURRY

hurry up and wait *v phr* To be rushed only to then have to wait: *another hurry up and wait situation before the kids' soccer game*

hurt *adj* Ugly; ill-favored; PISS-UGLY: *I never saw anyone as hurt as her boyfriend* (1980s + *Teenagers*)

hurting for certain *adj phr* HURTING (1980s + *College students*)

hurting *adj* In great need; in distress: *Guys, the last thing we want is to seem to be hurting for money* (*Armed forces & students fr black* 1940s +)

husband *n* **1** A pimp: *She has a pimp she calls her “husband” (1960s + Prostitutes)* **2** The dominant, masculine member of a homosexual couple, male or female (1960s + *Homosexuals*)

hush-hush *adj* Very secret; classified: *a hush-hush border meeting* *n*: *Why all the hush-hush about Walden? (1916 +)*

hush money *n phr* Money paid to ensure silence: *You can’t give “hush money” to someone who’s already talked (1709 +)*

hustle *n* **1**: *Put a little hustle in it now* **2**: *I guess one man’s “hustle” is another man’s “promotion” (1963 +)* **3** A swindle: *You know I can’t pay out five bills for a wash if I wasn’t planning a hustle* *v* **1** To hurry: *We better hustle, the thing leaves in five minutes (1844 +)* **2** To behave, play, perform, etc, very energetically and aggressively: *The reason they’re losing is they don’t hustle (1888 +)* **3** To beg: *You’ll hustle for an overcoat (1891 +)* **4** To work as a prostitute; HOOK: *whores that hustle all night long (1930 +)* **5** To cheat; swindle; victimize; CON: *It took a hell of a caddy to hustle a pro and a greenskeeper/Larabee, he decided, was trying to hustle him (1887 +)* **6** To steal: *We must hustle us a car (1915 +)* [criminal senses may be related to early 19th-century *hustle*, “do the sex act, fuck”] **See** GET A HUSTLE ON, GET A MOVE ON, ON THE HUSTLE

hustler *n* **1** A thief or a dealer in stolen goods: *and sells to hustlers like Tommy at about one-third its retail value (1825 +)* **2** A confidence trickster or swindler, esp one who pretends ignorance of a game where he or she is in fact an expert and sure to win; CON MAN, SHARK (1914 +) **3** A prostitute; HOOKER: *I ain’t nothing but a hustler (1924 +)* **4** An energetic, aggressive performer or worker: *An active and*

successful businessman achieves the honorable distinction of a “hustler” or a “rustler” (1882 +)

hutzpa or hutzpah *See* CHUTZPA

◀**Hymie**▶ *n* A Jewish male • Apparently chiefly black use: *A little curly-haired Hymie pleading his case [1980s +; fr the Jewish given name Hyman]*

hype¹ *n* **1** A hypodermic needle; HYPE-STICK (1913 + *Narcotics*) **2** An injection of narcotics (1925 + *Narcotics*) **3** An addict who injects narcotics: *and heroin substitutes don’t work with a stone hype (1924 + Narcotics)* **4** A seller of narcotics; CONNECTION: *any hype that wants to get you hooked [fr hypodermic referring to a needle or an injection]*

hype² *n*: *without any advance* PR **hype** v **1**: *exercises no stock options, hypes no quick secondary stock offering/unless Margaret’s hyping the gate for a rematch (1937 +)* **2** To trick; deceive; originally, to shortchange (1914 +) **3** HYPE UP (1938 +) [origin unknown; perhaps related to *hyper*, “hustle,” of obscure origin, found from the mid-1800s; recent advertising and public relations senses probably influenced by *hype*¹ as suggesting supernormal energy, excitement, etc, and by *hyper*² and *hyperbole*; verb sense **3** supported by a 1914 glossary: “*Hyper*, current among money-changers. A flim-flammer”]

See MEDIA HYPE

hype, a *n phr* **1** A high-pressure advocacy or urging; a publicity or public relations invention: *The nostalgia for the Fifties is not entirely a media hype/This is gonna sound like a hype (mid-1960s +)* **2** A person or thing promoted by hype (mid-1960s +) **3** A swindle; CON,

SCAM (1962 +)

hyped-up *adj* **1** False; fake; HOKED-UP, PHONY: *no hyped-up glamour/the woman's archly hyped-up language (1940s +)* **2** Excited; overstimulated; HYPED-UP: *I leave early, hyped-up, impressed, nauseated/The game gets him "hyped up," and "releases energy" in the same way that football does (1938 +)*

hyper¹ or **hype** *artist n* or *n phr* A publicist; promoter; advertiser; FLACK [1960 + ; fr *hype*²]

hyper² *adj* **1** Overexcited; manic; overwrought; HYPED-UP: *She tells how the grownups gave her Nembutal when she was eight years old, because "I was hyper"/It's this flaky hyper hour/She's a hyper-person, accustomed to constant activity (1942 +)* **2** Exceeding most; very superior; *with harem cushions, a hyper-hi-fi set, ha-ha candles (1970s +)* [fr Greek *hyper*, "super," and in the first sense probably fr medical terms like *hyperactive*, *hyperkinetic*, *hyperthyroid*, etc; in some sources this term is associated with *hipped* and *hippish*, fr *hypochondriac*, "melancholic," first found in the early 18th century]
See THROW A FIT

hype-stick *n* A hypodermic needle (1940s + *Narcotics*)

hype up *v phr* **1** To fake; manufacture; invent; HOKE: *They had to hype up a convincing story* **2** To promote or advertise by blatant, obnoxious means **3** To give something a false impact, appeal, energy, etc: *other chemicals to hype up the produce and fool the buyer (1940s +)*

hypo *n* **1** A hypodermic needle **2** A hypodermic injection **3** A drug

addict who injects narcotics; HYPE¹ (1940s + *Narcotics*) v To
stimulate or strengthen; BEEF UP: *a wilted record player hypoed by a
pooped-out public address system (1960s +)* [1904 + ; fr *hypodermic*,
referring to a needle or an injection]

I

I bet or I'll bet *interj* I doubt it: *You're ready to go? I'll bet* (1857+)

ice *adj* Excellent; fine; COOL (1960s+ *Cool talk*) **n** **1** Diamonds; a diamond: *a two-carat hunk of ice* (1906+) **2** Gems and jewelry in general: *Gonna wear your ice?* (1906+) **3** Extra payment given for a desirable theater ticket: *a slight fee, say \$100 worth of tickets for \$120. The \$20 is the "ice"* (1927+) **4** Protection money; bribery; PAYOFF: *syndicate that paid out \$1,000,000 in ice to the police* (1948+) **5** Methamphetamine crystals (1980s+ *Narcotics*) **v** **1** To make something certain; CINCH, SEW something UP: *They iced the game in the ninth with two more runs* (1930s+) **2** (also **ice** someone **out**) To ignore someone; snub; cut; COLD SHOULDER: *how women were "iced" by peers during corridor conversations/I've had doors closed and I've been iced out* (1836+) **3** To defeat utterly; trounce; CLOBBER: *Nebraska iced Kentucky 55 to 16* (1960s+ *Sports*) **4** To kill; OFF • Probably a shortening of *put on ice*: *Ice a pig. Off a pig. That means kill a cop* (1960s+ *Underworld*) **See** BREAK THE ICE, CUT NO ICE, GREEN ICE, ON ICE

iceberg *n* An unemotional, chilly person; COLD FISH (1840+)

icebox *n* **1** A solitary confinement cell; the HOLE: *When a prisoner is sent to the "icebox"* (1920s+ *Prison*) **2** A prison (1920s+ *Prison*) **3** The imagined place where persons and things are held in reserve;

ON THE BACK BURNER: *I got a left-hander in the icebox (1940s +)* 4 A very cold place: *This building's an icebox (1940s +)*

ice cream n phr The crystalline form of a narcotic: *the ice cream eaters, who chewed the crystal (1910+ Narcotics)*

ice cream (or snow) cone n phr A ball that is caught but can be seen protruding from the glove or mitt; a barely caught ball (*1980s + Baseball*)

ice cream habit n phr The occasional, nonaddicted, use of narcotics (*1960s + Narcotics*)

iced *See* HAVE something CINCHED

ice maiden (or queen) n phr A very cool and composed woman; a chilly woman; ICEBERG: *Margaret Thatcher, the Ice Maiden, branded the conservative Gorsuch "the Ice Queen"/Ms Stone plays Sally, a powerful woman, another ice queen whose roiling emotions remain contained [1970s +; perhaps modeled on the title of Hans Christian Andersen's tale *The Snow Queen*]*

iceman n 1 A jewel thief (*1940s +*) **2** A very calm person, performer, etc: *An iceman is a gambler who never loses his head (1940s +)* **3** A professional killer; HIRED GUN, HIT MAN: *Maybe I hadn't seen the iceman with Bobb/Go play iceman (1970s + Underworld)*

ice princess modifier: *Blond, beautiful, smart, impeccably dressed, ice-princess cool and very direct n phr* A chilly, reserved woman; ICEBERG, ICE MAIDEN: *the travails of growing up with a politician for a father and an ice princess for a mother (1970s +)*

ice (or **put the icing on**) **the cake v phr** To put a victory beyond question; ensure a favorable result: *He iced the cake with a knockdown in the seventh (1940s +)*

icing on the cake n phr An enhancement; a bonus: *going out to dinner and a movie is icing on the cake*

ick interj An exclamation of disgust; GROSS, YECCH, YUCK (1948 +)

icky (Variations: **ickie** or **icky-poo** or **icky-sticky** or **ickey-wickey**)

adj 1 Overly sentimental; maudlin; SCHMALTZY: *That music pleased my icky, lachrymose sensibility/The prose gets a mite too icky-poo for comfort (1939 + Jive talk) 2* Unpleasant; revolting; nasty; GROSS,

GRUNGY: *Those cool comedies and quizzes became dumb, boring, icky, weird/refuse to get involved in anything outside their own little ickey-wickey bailiwicks/The acting is icky (1960s +) n* A conventional, tedious person; SQUARE: *She turned out to be an icky (1935 +)* [fr baby talk, “sticky, nasty”; although perhaps fr Yiddish *elken* or *iklen*, “to nauseate, revolt”]

icy adj Excellent; good; COOL: *The old Valley Girl terms “rad” and “icy” still describe the very cool (1980s + Teenagers)*

ID (pronounced as separate letters) **n 1** An identity card **2**

Identification; evidence for one’s identity: *You can’t cash it here without ID v* To identify: *Police ID driver killed in chase (1950s +)*

idea See WHAT’S THE BIG IDEA

idiot box n phr A television set; television; the BOOB TUBE (1959 +)

idiot card (or **board**) **n phr** A large sheet of heavy paper held up out

of range of the television camera to prompt actors or speakers; cue card: *“Idiot boards” are held out of camera range/The scripts are gone, but now there are idiot cards (1952 + Television studio)*

idiot light *n phr* A usu red light on a car’s dashboard that glows to announce some sort of fact, such as the discharge of a battery, overheating, etc: *replaced by too-late-to-react idiot lights (1968 +)*

-ie (also **-ey** or **-y** or **-sie** or **-sey** or **-sy**) **suffix used to form adjectives** Having the quality indicated: *comfy/creepy/swanky*
suffix used to form nouns 1 Diminutive, affectionate, or familiar versions of what is indicated: *auntie/cubby/thingy/tootsie/folksy* 2 Coming from the place or background indicated: *Arky/Okie/Yalie* 3 A person of the sort indicated: *weirdie/hippy/sharpy*

if bet *n phr* A bet on two or more horses, stipulating that part of the winnings be wagered on one or more later races (1940s + Gambling)

iffy *adj* 1 Uncertain; doubtful; improbable: *His chances were a bit iffy/Would the DA take the case, knowing the chances of a conviction would be iffy?* 2 DICEY (1937 +)

-ific or **-iffic** **suffix used to form adjectives** Extremely marked by what is indicated: *horrific/beautific* [fr *terrific*]

if I had a nickel (or dime) for every time something happens *adv clause* A somewhat rueful complaint about the frequency of the named event: *If I had a nickel for every time I’m called homophobic, I could buy New York (1970s +)*

if it ain’t broke, don’t fix it *sentence* If it is functioning, don’t meddle; leave well enough alone: *The economy ain’t broke, so don’t*

fix it (1970s+)

if looks could kill *adv clause* The extreme fanciful gauge of a disapproving look: *If looks could kill, she would have been guilty of my murder (1922+)*

If the shoe fits, wear it *sentence* If the statement applies to you, admit it or do something about it

if you can't stand the heat, stay out of the kitchen *sentence* Do not undertake a hard job if you lack the stamina and thick skin to endure sharp criticism [1940s+; a favorite saying of President Harry S Truman, referring to the presidency]

ig or **igg v** *To ignore; refuse to notice (1940s+ Jive talk)*

I kid you not *sentence* I am perfectly serious; I am not misleading nor joking with you: *There were daily departures of a yacht called, I kid you not, the Alter Ego/It's rough out there, I kid you not [1950s+; popularized by the television comedian Jack Paar]*

ill *adj* **1** Arrested or detained on suspicion; jailed (*1960s+ Underworld*) **2** Very good; excellent; *cool*: *Ill: very good or bad (1980s+ Black teenagers)* **3** Very bad: *Ill: very good or bad (1980s+ Black teenagers)*

I'll be damned *sentence* (Variations: **danged** or **darned** or **ding swizzled** or **dipped** or **◀dipped in shit▶** or **◀fucked▶** or **jiggered** or **jigswiggered** or **hanged** or **hornswoggled** or a **monkey's uncle** or **switched** may replace *damned*; *damned* may also be omitted) May I be maltreated, confounded, accursed, etc; an exclamation of surprise or determination: *I'll be damned, we*

made it!/I will be dipped in shit/I'll be a monkey's uncle if you put that over on me!/Well I'll be, he made it! [entry form 1920s + , *ding swizzled* 1940s + , *dipped* 1940s + , *jiggered* 1837 + ; *dipped* forms fr 1600s British *be dipped* or *dipped in wing*, “get into trouble; be defeated”]

I'll drink to that *sentence* I agree; you are quite right; I approve (1960s +)

I'll eat my hat *sentence* I am absolutely convinced that a given statement is true, a named event will occur, etc: *I'll eat my hat if he doesn't come back tomorrow* (1837 +)

illegitimi (or illegitimi) non carborundum *sentence* Don't let the bastards grind you down • Offered as a proposed motto or a pearl of wisdom [1939 + ; fr mock-Latin *illegitimus*, “bastard,” and *Carborundum*, trademark of a brand of abrasives]

illin or illen *adj* 1 Really terrible or really good; ILL: *Illin: Vague term meaning something really terrible or really cool* **2** Stupid; insane (1980s + *Teenagers fr rap groups*)

I'll tell the world (or the cockeyed world) *sentence* You are absolutely right; it is entirely correct: *I'll tell the cockeyed world he's a crook* (1900s + *esp WWI armed forces*)

I love it *sentence* Believe it or not: *They want to search us on the way out. I love it* (1990s +)

I may be stupid, but I'm not dumb *sentence*: *From a distance, Brett looked as if he would run right over McClelland, but the umpire stands 6 foot 6, weighs 250 pounds, has protective equipment on and is*

holding a bat in his hand. As Brett said, "I'm stupid, but I'm not dumb"
(1990s +)

IMHO *adv phr* In my humble opinion: *The roast quail with polenta was dynamite, IMHO* (1990s + *Computer network*)

I'm outta or outa here *sentence* I am leaving now: *If it gets into blamin' me or stuff like that, I'm outta here/"So what are you going to do?" "I'm outa here"* (1984 +)

import *n* An out-of-town date brought to a dance, party, etc (1940s + *Students*)

important *adj* Impressive; imposing; HEAVY, SERIOUS: *wear short dresses made of metal and leather and have important hair* (1980s +)

important money *See* HEAVY MONEY

I'm sideways *sentence* I'M OUTA HERE (1990s + *Teenagers*)

I'm there *sentence* I am ready and willing to go someplace; your invitation is accepted: *Cubs game? I'm there*

in *adj* **1** In fashion at the moment; now preferred: *Violence is in, sentiment is out* (1960 +) **2** Accepted; acceptable; belonging to a select group; IN LIKE FLYNN: *one of the in people/Bullock made it to the "in" crowd a few years later* (1960 +) **n** **1** An advantage, esp through an acquaintance; entree: *Get me an in with the skipper of that precinct* (1920s + *Underworld*) **2** A person who holds office or other power or position: *Will the Democrats ever be the ins again?* (1768 +) *See* GET IN, HAVE IT IN FOR someone

-in combining word A communal occasion where one does what is

indicated: *be-in/lie-in/love-in/pray-in* (1960s +)

in a bad way *adj phr* In great difficulty; badly damaged or injured:
I'm afraid our poor friend is in a very bad way after the wreck
(1809 +)

in a big way *adv phr* Very much; extremely: *The soldiers went for pin-ups in a big way* (1903 +)

in a bind (or **box**) *adj phr* In a very tight and awkward situation; stalled by a dilemma; IN A BOX: *I'm in a bind, damned if I do and damned if I don't* [1940s + Loggers; fr the situation of a logger whose saw is caught and held tight by the weight of a tree or branch]

in a box *adv phr* In an awkward situation; IN A BIND: *No, and don't put me in a box* [1913 +; the related and perhaps original sense "short of money" is found by 1891] **See** GO HOME FEET FIRST

in a bucket **See** FOR CRYING OUT LOUD

in a fix *adv phr* In difficulty; in a tight spot: *under a cloud, up a tree, quisby, done up, sold up, in a fix* (1837 +)

in a fog (or **haze**) *adj phr* In a dazed, disoriented, confused state; inattentive: *He was so tired he was walking around in a haze*
(1888 +)

in a funk *adj phr* Depressed; melancholy: *Steve's been in a funk since he lost his dog *adv phr* In a depressed, nervous, or frightened state: *Jackson left San Francisco in a funk, he looked tired and sounded like a morose, defeated candidate* (1743 + *British*)*

in a holding pattern *adv phr* In abeyance; not in an active status; ON THE BACK BURNER [1950s +; fr the aviation term, found by 1948, for airplanes that are flying a prescribed circling route while awaiting clearance to land]

in a hole *adj phr* In grave and probably insurmountable difficulties; UP SHIT CREEK: *The death of my brother leaves me in a deep legal-financial hole* (1762 +)

in a huff *adj phr* Angry; petulant; grumpy [1694 +; fr a *huff* or gust of anger]

in a jam *adj phr* In trouble, esp serious trouble: *If you're in a jam, he'll fight for you* (1914 +)

in a jif(fy) *See* JIFFY

in a lather (or lava) *adj phr* Angry; upset; IN A SWEAT: *this business of your being in a lather about it/The editors say they are not in a lava over the coincidence* [1828 +; fr the resemblance between an agitated sweat, esp the frothy sweat of horses, and frothy washing *lather* thought of as the result of vigorous agitation; found by 1660 in the form *lavour*]

◁**in-and-out** or **in-out**▷ *n* The sex act; copulation; FUCKING: *The pages of romances offered less in-and-out than a downtown parking garage/Her refreshing answers about the old in-and-out bluntly demystified any last glitches/the endlessly hypnotic spectacle of the old in-out* [first form 1620 +; fr the 1600s idiom *play at in-and-out*, “do the sex act, copulate”]

in-and-outer *n* An erratic performer: *30 knockouts among his 52*

victories, but he has been an in-and-outer (1905 +)

in an uproar *See* NOT GET ONE'S BALLS IN AN UPROAR

in a pickle *adj phr* In a disagreeable situation; in a sad predicament:
Today I find myself in a pickle, bind, and jam (1585 +)

◁**in a pig's eye**▷ (or **ass** or **asshole** or **ear**) *adv phr* Not at all;
never; LIKE HELL • Used for vehement denial: *In a pig's ass, I did/Yeah,
well get it back. In a pig's eye/In a pig's asshole!*

in a pinch *adv phr* **1** If necessary; if need be: *In a pinch we could
make that do* **2** IN A JAM (1903 +)

in a poke *See* BUY A PIG IN A POKE

in a row *See* HAVE ONE'S DUCKS IN A ROW

in a spot *modifier* In a difficult position or situation (1929 +)

in a state *adj phr* **1** Agitated; upset; tense: *She got home and found her
husband in a state (1837 +)* **2** Untidy; disheveled; chaotic: *I'm afraid
my room's in a state (1879 +)*

in a stew *adj phr* **1** Chaotic and muddled; in disarray: *The whole
place is in a stew about the new appointment* **2** Angry and irritable;
upset; IN A SWEAT: *Well don't get in such a stew about it (1809 +)*

in a sweat *adj phr* Upset; irritated; tense; scared: *Don't get in a sweat,
I'll return it at once (1753 +)*

in a tailspin *adj phr* Dangerously out of control: *I knew he'd be upset,
but he's gone into a tail spin over this [1928 +; fr the downward
spinning of an airplane, for which the term is found by 1917]*

in a tizzy *adj phr* Very much upset; distractingly disturbed; in a state: *I have been in a tizzy since reading his accusations* [1935 + ; origin unknown]

in at (or for) the kill *adv phr* Participating in the finish of something, esp when it is very satisfying and vindictive: *Tell me when the thing'll be signed, I want to be in at the kill* [1814 + ; fr a fox-hunting term]

in a walk *See* WIN IN A WALK

in a zone *adj phr* Daydreaming, esp from narcotics; SPACED-OUT [1970s + ; said to be fr *ozone*, implying very high up in the sky or toward outer space]

in bad *adj phr* In difficulty; embroiled: *When did you get in bad with the cops?* (1911 +)

in someone's bad books *adv phr* Regarded as hostile by someone; hated and menaced by someone: *nervous about getting in the bad books of the mob guys* (1861 + chiefly British)

in bed *See* one SHOULD HAVE STOOD IN BED

in bed with someone (or in bed together) *adj phr* In close association with; on good terms with: *Lef-court, who was in bed with the mob, as you know* (1970s +)

in one's book *adv phr* In my opinion; as I believe: *"Is he a competent investigator?" "In my book?"* (1964 +)

in business *adj phr* In operation; under way: *One more day or so of prep and we're in business/The space shuttle is finally in business*

(1950s+)

in cahoots *adj phr* In partnership; acting in a common purpose:
Louise Peccoralo and her husband claim they were not in cahoots with William Perone of Arizona [1829+; origin uncertain; perhaps fr French *cahute*, “cabin”]

in clover *adv phr* In a position of ease and affluence; HAPPY AS A CLAM
(1710+)

include one out *v phr* To exclude one: *Counties began asking the DNR to include them out* [1937+; said to have been uttered by the movie mogul Samuel Goldwyn upon resigning from the Hays organization that monitored Hollywood films for moral content]

in cold blood *modifier* Without feeling; also, with cruelty: *shot down the idea in cold blood*

in cold storage (or **the deep freeze**) *adv phr* Held in abeyance; reserved to be dealt with later; ON HOLD, ON THE BACK BURNER: *The plan's in cold storage for now/Well, let's just keep that one in the deep freeze for a few months* (1940s+)

in concrete or **cement** *adj phr* Firmly set; fixed and determined: *The most recent thing I heard is 45 days to two months, but nothing's in concrete/The President seems to be in cement* (1960s+)

in one's cups *adj phr* Drunk (1561+)

indeedy *adv* Indeed; certainly: *No, indeedy* (1856+)

in deep \langle doo-doo (or shit) \rangle *n phr* Very serious trouble: *He was in deep shit with Big Lou/Boy, is your ass in deep shit* (1970s+)

in deep water *adv phr* In a difficult situation, esp where one is not fitted to cope; out of one's depth (1861 +)

Indian hay (or **hemp**) *n phr* Marijuana: a couple of Indian hay cigarettes (1876 +)

Indians *See* TOO MANY CHIEFS AND NOT ENOUGH INDIANS

indie *adj* Playing indie rock: Really they're just five soft-spoken indie prepsters who happen to rule nice-kid noise pop (1990s +) **modifier:** one indie pic company *n* An independent, esp an independent movie producer (1928 + *Movie studio*)

indie rock **modifier:** its purposeful indie-rock slag at commerciality/Stars of the indie-rock scene dig into formidable pop catalogue *n phr* A kind of rock music of no particular style but of the small-company, college radio, etc, milieu (1990s +) [fr *indie*, "independent," for the relatively small companies and labels involved]

indigo *n* A kind of marijuana (1990s + *Narcotics*)

industrial *adj* **1** Very masculine; manly; MACHO, STUDLY: If you can get a date with Bambi, you'll be so industrial, dude! (1980s + *Students*) **2** INDUSTRIAL-STRENGTH: an industrial dose of Thorazine (1980s +) **modifier:** and the harsh industrial pop of Nine Inch Nails *n* A variety of rock music: industrial music is "the sounds our culture makes as it comes unglued" (1990s +)

industrial-strength *adj* Powerful, sturdy, weighty, etc, as if fit for use in industry; heavy-duty: drinking a cup of industrial-strength coffee out of a pig-shaped mug/industrial-strength smog/ripe for heavy,

industrial-strength investigation [1980s + ; the descriptive and advertising term is found by about 1920]

in Dutch *adj phr* In disfavor; in trouble: *You have to promise, Pop, not to get me in Dutch with Mrs Skoglund* [1912 + ; origin uncertain; perhaps fr bookmaking: *Dutch book*, “a bad risk with a bookmaker,” is found by 1915]

Indy or Indy 500, the *n phr* The annual Indianapolis 500 car race (1960s +)

in one's ear *See* STAND AROUND WITH **one's** FINGER UP **one's** ASS, STICK IT

in one's eye *See* a THUMB IN **one's** EYE

in one's face *adj phr* Irritating; pestering: *he's in my face about more new ideas*

in fine feather *modifier* In good form or well-dressed; also, in excellent spirits or condition: *in fine feather today*

in flames *See* GO DOWN IN FLAMES

info *n* Information; POOP: *I can slip you the info* (1906 +)

infobahn *n* The Information Superhighway, a projected system of linked computer networks; I-WAY: *Walt is already ahead of everyone on the Infobahn* [1990s + ; fr *info plus bahn*, fr German *Autobahn*, “multilane automobile highway”]

infomercial *n* A television program that tells or teaches something and is also advertising a product: *has been doing infomercials, a Taco Bell ad/Infomercials got their initial boost in 1984, when the FCC freed local stations from limits on the amount of commercial time they could*

air [1983 + ; fr *information plus commercial*]

in for it *adj phr* Committed willy-nilly; about to suffer trouble, attack, etc: *When they saw the black clouds they knew they were in for it/If they nab us with the pope's ring, we'll really be in for it* (1698 +)

infotainment *n* Televisions programs that teach while entertaining: "*infotainment,*" *an information entertainment program* [1983 + ; fr *information + entertainment*]

in front *See* UP FRONT

in God's name *See* the HELL

in-group *n phr* An exclusive group or clique, esp of influential persons (1907 +)

in-groupy *adj* Catering to or like an in-group: *When a show sets out to achieve cult status, can it avoid becoming self-consciously clubby and clever, in-groupy?* (1980s +)

in someone's hair *adj phr* Constantly annoying; nagging at: *You'll have one of these professors in your hair* (1851 +)

inhale *v* To eat or drink, esp rapidly: *I inhaled my lunch because I didn't have much time to eat* (1924 +) *See* FRENCH-INHALE

in harness *adj phr* Working; actively employed rather than resting, retired, on holiday, etc: *He didn't know how to relax after all those years in harness* (1875 +)

in heat *See* BITCH IN HEAT

in heck *See* the HECK

in hell *See* the HELL

in high (or tall) cotton *adj phr* Happy; pleased; fortunate; FAT, DUMB, AND HAPPY: *We're in high cotton tonight to have with us Mr Big/would greet them from this office, this desk, this chair, high and dry in tall cotton* [1920s+ Southern; fr the double fact that the crop is well developed and is easier to pick because the picker need not stoop over] *See* SHIT IN HIGH COTTON

in high gear *adj phr* In the most active, rapid, impressive phase; at full tempo: *The advertising campaign is in high gear (1940s+)* *See* SHIFT INTO HIGH GEAR

in hock *adj phr* **1** Accepted for pawn; in a pawnshop **2** In debt; mortgaged: *We're deeply in hock to the bank (1883+)* *See* HOCK¹

in hot water *adv phr* **1** In trouble, esp with the law, one's superiors, etc: *I'm in hot water with the cops again* **2** In difficulties, esp in serious trouble; IN THE SOUP: *I got you in some hot water with the boss (1765+)*

ink *n* **1** Coffee (1940s+ *Hoboes*) **2** Cheap, often red, wine: *a cheap local "ink" (1930s+ Black)* ◀**3**▶ A black person (1940s+) **4** Press notices; print publicity: *New York Day's got lots more ink than Paul will get for his memoir/NBC thought it might as well hang onto the one show that was getting good ink (1980s+)* **5** Tattoos In general; the amount of tattooing on someone's body: *the ink on those college basketball players* **v** To write; sign, esp a contract: *He also inked the plays/has inked to helm two more pictures (1940+)* *See* PINK INK, RED INK

ink-slinger *n* **1** A writer; author; newspaper reporter or writer **2** A

clerk; office worker (1900s+ *Lumberjacks, cowboys & hoboes*)
(1877+)

in like *adv* To like someone romantically, be fond of • A take on *in love*: *in like with the boy in study hall/The teenagers are completely in like with each other*

in like Flynn *adj phr* Accepted; acceptable; belonging to a select group; IN: “Are you *in* or out right now?” “I’m *in like Flynn*. Didn’t you notice the picture on my desk?” [1940s+, perhaps fr US Army Air Corps; origin uncertain; perhaps merely a rhyming phrase; perhaps associated with the sexual and other exploits of the actor Errol Flynn]

in line *adj phr* 1 Within appropriate bounds; acceptable; IN THE BALLPARK: *Yes, those prices are about in line* **2** Behaving properly; out of trouble: *Can’t you keep your kids in line?* (1920s+)

in line for *adv phr* In position to get; about to get: *Hey, you’re in line for a big bonus* (1940s+)

in living color *adj phr* Displayed with complete accuracy and lifelike tones: *The rules and rituals of life inside IBM are all here, and in living color: the army of lawyers, tangle of procedures and endless slide presentations* (1990s+)

in luck *adj phr* Lucky [1857+; the opposite of earlier *out of luck*]

in mothballs *adj phr* In reserve; ON ICE (late 1940s+)

innards *n* 1 The viscera; GUTS, INSIDES, KISHKES: *got a feeling in my innards it won’t work* (1825+) **2** The inner parts or workings; INSIDES: *Let’s look*

at the innards of this gizmo and see what's going on (1921 +)

innie modifier: *a tidy innie belly button/I suspect that the Cardinal arts editor has an outie belly button, and I have an innie belly button n A concave navel (1980s +) [probably a children's term]*

inning n 1 A chance for action or participation (1884 +) **2** A round of a prizefight (1920 +) [fr baseball; the British term, fr cricket, is always *innings* and is found by 1836]

in nothing (or no time) flat adv phr Very quickly: *When I heard the signal, I got over there in nothing flat (1940s +)*

-ino See -ERINO

in on (the act) adv Involved in what is going on: *I'm in on the deal/in on the act with James*

in one piece See ALL IN ONE PIECE

in on the ground floor adv phr Engaged early and profitably in a project, investment, etc: *You better act now if you want to be in on the ground floor (1872 +)*

in orbit adj phr Having a free and exhilarating experience; HIGH, WAY OUT: *One slurp of gin and he's in orbit (1960s + Teenagers)*

in over (or above) one's head adv phr In a situation one cannot cope with; helplessly committed and likely to lose: *He tried to stop, but he was in over his head (1622 +)*

in one's pants See ANTS

in pictures adv phr Acting or otherwise engaged in the movies: *You*

ought to be in pictures, as the old song says/After years in pictures he went back to the theater and bombed (1920s +)

in play *adv* Actively going on; being played or executed: *the ball's in play so stay off the sideline/stock deals in play*

in someone's pocket or hip pocket *adv phr* Under someone's absolute control: *Don't worry, I have him in my pocket/He's in the hip pocket of the networks (1940s +)*

in rare form *adv* At one's best: *She's in rare form after working 10 hours*

inside *adv* In prison (1888 + *Prison*) ***See*** ON THE INSIDE

inside dope *n phr* The privileged information; inside story: *want the inside dope on the apartment*

inside job *n phr* A robbery, stroke of espionage, etc, done by someone or with the aid of someone within the target organization: *The cops think the hotel murder is an inside job (1908 +)*

insider *n* A person who has special knowledge, authority, etc, because he is within or part of some privileged group: *The insiders are saying that the President will veto it (1850 +)*

insides *n* INNARDS

inside skinny *n phr* by 1972 The confidential and little-known truth: *This guy gave us the inside skinny on Prozac ***See*** SKINNY*

inside the Beltway *adv phr* In US government and other Washington circles: *You don't know this yet, but it's an old story inside the Beltway (1980s +)*

inside track, the **See** HAVE THE INSIDE TRACK

in one's sleep *adv phr* Very easily: *There's a lot of prose so negligent that Mr. Leithauser could have written it in his sleep* (1953 +)

insource *v* To assign a task or job internally rather than farm it to an outside vendor

in spades *adv phr* To the utmost; in the highest degree: *What Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn did for the Gulag he has now done in spades for the Soviet Union as a whole/I detest them right back, in spades* (1929 +)

instant replay *n phr* Immediate repetition and additional judgment: *If anyone mistakes the new regimen for freedom, the full trappings of martial law remain available for instant replay* [1970s + ; fr the re-viewing of a sports play on television, sometimes in order to confirm or change an official's call]

in stir *adv phr* In prison; INSIDE (1851 +)

in stitches *adv* Laughing very hard (1935 +)

in sync (or **synch**) *adv phr* In order; in harmony; synchronized; without jar or clash: *to bring the author back into sync with his existentialist colleagues/perfectly in sync with Thicke's outrageous style* [1940s + ; fr in synchronism, used in radio, television, etc, to express exact matching and timing between audio and video]

inta **See** INTO

intense *adj* Excellent; COOL (1970s + Teenagers)

intercom *n* An intercommunication system: *Marc yelled into the*

intercom (1940s +)

internal *See* BODY PACKER

in the air *See* a BEAR IN THE AIR

in the altogether *adj phr* Naked (1894 +)

in the bag *adj phr* 1 Certain; sure; ON ICE: *It's in the bag. The fix is in* (1926 +) 2 Ruined; destroyed; FINISHED, KAPUT, OUT OF THE BOX: *If an actor is hurt or killed doing a stunt the whole film is in the bag* (1970s +) [fr game shot and stuffed into the game bag; second sense fr the use of the heavy plastic body bag for the handling of military and other casualties] *See* HALF IN THE BAG

in the ballpark *adj phr* Within general appropriate limits; not exorbitant, outrageous, etc: *react to an analyst's estimate by telling him whether it is too high, too low, or "in the ballpark"* (1968 +)

in the barrel *adj phr* Without money; BROKE: *A red hot pimp like you ain't got no business being in the barrel* [1940s + Black; fr the archetypal image of a destitute man who wears a barrel for clothing]

in the belly of the beast *adv phr* In an extremely difficult plight; beleaguered: *Esa-Pekka Salonen is in the belly of the beast. The brilliant young Finnish conductor has begun his third season as music director of the Los Angeles Philharmonic* [1990s + ; perhaps an allusion to the plight of Jonah, swallowed by a great fish]

in the black *adj phr* Profitable; solvent; not in debt: *We toyed with bankruptcy for a while, but now we're in the black* [1928 + ; fr the

color of ink traditionally used by bookkeepers to record assets, profits, etc]

in the boat *See* MAN IN THE BOAT

in the bubble *adj* In winning form; playing very well; IN THE ZONE, ON A ROLL [mid-1980s + Sports; said to have been the reply of basketball player Julius Erving when he was asked what a winning streak felt like]

in the bucks *adj phr* Having money, esp a lot of it; in funds; FLUSH, LOADED: *right after Christmas and we're not in the bucks (1920s +)*

in the buff *adj phr* Naked; BARE-ASS, BUCK NAKED, IN THE ALTOGETHER: *There we stood, in the buff and abysmally embarrassed [1960s + ; in buff, "in the bare skin," is found by 1602]*

in the can *adj phr* Successfully finished; ready for release, consumption, etc [1940s + Movie studio; fr the large, flat, circular tin *can* into which finished movie film is put]

in the cards *adj phr* Very probable; likely to or about to happen: *Another tax cut is in the cards (1936 +)*

in the catbird seat *See* SIT IN THE CATBIRD SEAT

in the chips *adj phr* Having money; affluent; FLUSH, LOADED [1938 + ; *chips, "money," is found by 1859]*

in the clear *adj phr* Apparently not involved; not suspected of wrongdoing; CLEAN: *After thorough investigation they declared him in the clear (1901 +)*

in the clutch *adv phr* At the moment when heroic performance

under pressure is needed: *He's a good one to have around in the clutch* [1920s+; probably a baseball term originally]

in the coop *adj phr* Sleeping on the job; off duty for unauthorized rest: *The cruise car for that street was supposed to be in the coop* (1960s+ *Police*)

in the cross-hairs *adv phr* Fixed as a target; aimed at: *Detroit's Big Three found themselves again in the media cross hairs* [1884+; the date shows the earliest use of the term for a telescope or telescopic sight indicator]

in the cut *adj phr* Relaxed; calm; COOL, LAID BACK [1990s+ Street talk; perhaps fr the confidence of one who *makes the cut*; perhaps a version of *in the* (or *a*) *groove*]

in the dark *adj phr* 1 Uninformed; ignorant; uncognizant: *Well keep 'em in the dark about this until the time is right* **2** Mystified; puzzled: *You maybe told me, but I'm still sort of in the dark* (1838+)

in the (or a) doghouse *adj phr* In a position or status of obloquy; out of favor, esp temporarily: *The press secretary is in the doghouse for cussing out a reporter/He was in a doghouse at home on account of coming home cockeyed on his wedding anniversary* (1932+)

in the driver's (or buddy) seat *adj phr* In the position of authority; in control: *With that kind of vote, we're in the driver's seat/You don't make it very easy, do you? Always in the driver's seat*

in the dumper *adj phr* 1 Bankrupt; ruined; insolvent; IN THE TUB **2** Lost; irretrievably forfeited or taken away: *Fifteen years plus, and his pension, in the dumper* (1970s+)

in the face *See* a SLAP IN THE FACE, TILL one IS BLUE IN THE FACE

in the family way (also **in that way, in a way**) *modifier* Pregnant •
Euphemistic: *had got them in the family way* (1740s +)

in the flesh *adj phr*: *an in-the-flesh presentation* *adv phr* In person; in propria persona: *The great movie star appeared there in the flesh* [1865 +; an allusion to the corporeal resurrection of Jesus]

in the foot *See* SHOOT oneself IN THE FOOT

in the groove *adj phr* **1** Making good sense; saying what needs saying: *Right! You're in the groove now* **2** In good form; working smoothly and well: *The professor of Classics was, as she would have put it, "in canaliculo," in the groove* **3** Playing well and excitingly; HEP (*Jive musicians*) (1930s + *Jive talk*)

in the gutter *See* HAVE one's MIND IN THE GUTTER

in the hay *adv phr* In bed, either sleeping or cavorting: *Joe's in the hay, zonked out/a toss in the hay with her boss* [1940s +; probably fr *hit the hay*, found by 1912]

in the hole *adv phr* **1** Dealt face down, in stud poker: *What's he got in the hole?* (1915 + *Poker*) **2** In debt: *He is in the hole to the tune of \$9,000* (1890 +) *See* ACE IN THE HOLE

in the hopper *See* IN THE PIPELINE

in the hot seat *See* ON THE HOT SEAT

in the know *adj phr* Well informed, esp having current, advance, or confidential information: *Those in the know tell me to sell* (1902 +)

in the life *adj phr* Occupied or engaged in some specialized and usually socially despised way of living, such as the homosexual subculture or prostitution: *By the time strippers are “in the life” they have developed an exploitative attitude to men and people in general (1970s +)*

in the long run *adv phr* After a long period of time, trial, endurance, etc: *It looks grim now, but in the long run you’ll see it’ll get better [1768 +; the form at the long run is found by 1627]*

in the loop *adv phr* **1** In a select company, esp in the communicating circle of the powerful: *no force in the administration, observes simply, “He’s not in the loop”/Sometimes they are not even “in the loop” to get important information* **2** Being circulated and processed; IN THE PIPELINE: *It’s in the loop now, and who knows when I’ll get it back [1980s +; probably an alteration of the military idiom in the net, of the same meaning, fr the use of radio nets or communications nexuses that include or exclude certain headquarters]*

in the money *adj phr* Having money, esp in large amounts; IN THE BUCKS, FLUSH: *I’m in the money at last (1902 +)* *adv phr* Providing winnings to bettors: *None of his horses finished in the money today at the track (1928 + Gambling & horse racing)*

in the mud *See* STICK IN THE MUD

in the paint *adv phr* The area of a basketball court extending from the basket to the three-point line, hence the site of most action: *“In the Paint” refers to being in the center of the action of a basketball game/who can crash the boards, feed and run the break, wheel and*

deal in the paint, and shoot from the three-point range [1990s + Basketball; fr the fact that it is often painted a different color from the rest of the floor]

in the picture *adj phr* Probable; distinctly conceivable: *It just isn't in the picture that they'll get married/I'd like to travel, but it doesn't seem like it's in the picture for a year or so* (1923 +) **adv phr** In a position to understand what is happening; in an informed position: *OK, now that you're one of us, I want you in the picture* (1900 +) **See** PUT someone IN THE PICTURE

in the pink *adj phr* In good health; ruddy and in fine fettle (1914 +)

in the pipeline *adj phr* (also **in the hopper** or **in the works**) Being prepared, processed, or worked on; ON THE FIRE: *almost 10 times that amount in infrastructure projects were in the pipeline/We got a little gizmo in the works that'll give them a duck-fit* (1955 +) **adv phr** Riding inside the curled-over front of a wave (1963 + *Surfers*)

in the pocket *adj phr* **1** Enjoying the best part of a psychedelic intoxication: *It was a golden time, and I was right in the pocket* (1960s + *Narcotics*) **2** Playing precisely on the beat: *Jimmy Knepper, the trombonist, lays way back rhythmically. He rarely plays on the beat, or in the pocket, as musicians say. He places his notes in the cracks* (1990s + *Jazz musicians*)

in the raw *adj phr* **1** Naked; IN THE BUFF: *Leonora always liked sleeping "in the raw," as she called it* **2** Without amenity or polish; relatively crude and primitive: *Up there they lived life in the raw/His work is sculpture in the raw* (1930s +)

in there *adv phr* 1 IN THERE PITCHING **2** Pitched across home plate for a strike (*Baseball*) (1940s +) **See** HANG IN

in the red *adj phr* In debt; losing money; insolvent: *The huge corporation has been in the red for eight years* [1926 + ; fr the color of ink traditionally used by bookkeepers to record debts, losses, etc]

in there pitching *adv phr* (also **in there** or **right there** or **right in there**) Making a great effort; coping energetically and successfully; ON TOP OF: *I'm on the go night and day, and I'm in there pitching/When they needed a strong guide, he was in there* (1940s +)

in the ring *See* THROW ONE'S HAT IN THE RING

in the road *See* WIDE PLACE IN THE ROAD

in the sack *adv phr* Doing the sex act; making love: *Like Kirkland's book, Tharp's even includes a discussion of what Baryshnikov is like in the sack* (1960s +)

in the saddle *adv phr* 1 In a controlling position; in charge: *I see old Wilcox is in the saddle again* (1738 +) **2** On duty; working; IN HARNESS: *on duty since six that morning. Close to eighteen hours in the saddle* (1940s +) **3** Doing the sex act; in flagrante: *Maybe Caroline caught old Bailey in the saddle up there* (1940s +)

in the same boat *adv phr* Equally sharing a situation, plight, etc: *City, country, slum, farm, we're all in the same boat* (1550 +)

in the soup (or **<the shit>**) ***adv phr*** In trouble; in peril; IN DEEP DOO-DOO: *He'd better clear this one fast or he's in the soup/Maybe that's why I'm in this soup to begin with/Jeeves cocks an eyebrow, and Bertie*

knows he's in the soup (first form 1888 + , second mid-1800s +)

in the spotlight *adj phr* Singled out for close attention; prominent:

He was a public figure, but hated being in the spotlight (1904 +)

in the straight lane *adv phr* Of a normal and respectable sort, esp

not criminal nor homosexual nor drug-addicted: *referred her to*

Booth Street for another chance at life in the straight lane (1970s +)

in the tank *adv phr* Woefully ineffectual; inept; LAME: *The Rockies are*

in the tank; they have lost twelve games in a row [1990s + ; a 1930s

sports sense was “losing games or fights intentionally”] **See** GO INTO

THE TANK, TANK

in the toilet *adj phr* In very dire straits; standing a clear last: *Thirty-*

one years ago, when the Mets were really in the toilet, sportswriters

rallied New Yorkers by touting the Mets' incompetence as symbolic of

underdog struggle (1980s +)

in the tooth **See** LONG IN THE TOOTH

in the trenches *adv phr* In the workplace; in contact with the people

or problems in a situation; unprotected by distance or illusion: *I*

needed to be back in the trenches where I could really relate to a

community/More retrospective accounts are elegant and noble. Watson

told it like it was in the trenches (1970s +)

in the tub *adj phr* Bankrupt; ruined; IN THE DUMPER (1940s +)

in the water **See** DEAD IN THE WATER

in the wind **See** TWIST SLOWLY IN THE WIND

in the woods **See** DOES A BEAR SHIT IN THE WOODS

in the works *See* IN THE PIPELINE

in the wrong *adj phr* Mistaken; wrong; erring: *He's usually in the wrong when he discusses music* *adv phr* In an unfavorable light or position: *This guy is always putting me in the wrong* (1400+)

in the zone *adj phr* (also **zoned**) Playing easily and spontaneously: *Just that one time, I was in the zone/She is zoned in the second set* (1980s+ Tennis)

into or **inta** (IN tōō, INə) *prep* Currently interested or involved in; now practicing or absorbed in: *a former Ivy Leaguer named Crimpcut who is into Buddha/Cool it, woman, I'm inta my thang/if you're into Chinese cuisine* (1960s+)

into oneself *adj phr* Absorbed; introspective: *If a bear appears when you are into yourself* (1990s+)

into someone for *adj phr* In debt to; owing, esp money: *The guy's into me for five grand!* (1970s+)

into the ground *See* RUN something INTO THE GROUND

in tow *adv* Carried along; joining: *with a huge bag in tow/baby in tow* (1896+)

in transition *adj phr* Unemployed; AT LIBERTY: *in transition: A many-headed euphemism read: unemployed* (1990s+)

intro *n* An introduction or prelude of any sort: *"Listen to that intro," she says. "How awful"/the kind of intro which is important* *v:* *Who'll intro the archbishop?* (1923+)

in two (or *three*) **shakes of a lamb's tail** *modifier* Very quickly or

fast; in a minute (1816+)

invent the wheel *v phr* To labor unnecessarily through the obvious and elementary stages of something: *Hey, cut to the chase! You don't have to invent the wheel*

invitation *See* DO YOU WANT AN ENGRAVED INVITATION

invite (IN vīt) *n* An invitation: *You can't go in there without an invite* (1615+)

in your ear *See* PUT IT IN YOUR EAR

in-your-face *adj* Confrontational; hostile; impudent; SASSY: *We're just playing in-your-face football, and we feel we can stand up to anybody/verbal mud-wallowing that proudly wears its in-your-face machismo smut/takes its title from "Seasons in the Sun," which is as in-your-face as it gets* (1980s+)

I only (or just) work here *sentence* I can't answer your question; I don't know what is going on, even though I probably should (1950s+)

IOU (pronounced as separate letters) *n* A promise to pay; written acknowledgment of a debt: *had won \$800,000, in cash, not IOUs* (1618+)

◁**Irish**▷ *n* A white person; Gray, OFAY: *You call all white people Irish?* (1990s+ *Black street gangs*) *See* GET ONE'S DANDER UP

◁**Irish confetti**▷ *n phr* Bricks, stones, blocks thrown in an altercation (1935+)

Irisher *n* An Irish person or one of Irish descent: *the most exemplary*

Irisher in Hollywood (1807+)

◁**Irish pennant**▷ *n phr* The end of a rope, sheet, etc, carelessly left loose or trailing off a boat or ship: *Always loose ends. You know what they call them in the Navy? Irish pennants [1883+ Nautical; the form Irish pendant is found by 1840]*

Irish twins *n phr* Two children born in short order: *Having two children as close as 10 to 18 months is comparable to having unequal twins, and they are even called Irish twins (1980s+)*

iron *n* **1** A motorcycle; motorcycles collectively; Bike, SCOOT: *competing on old British and American iron (1920s+ Motorcyclists)* **2** A car: *On this big piece of German iron there's a bumper sticker (1935+)* **3** A firearm, esp a pistol; SHOOTING IRON (1775+) **4** The weights used in weightlifting (1972+) **See** HAVE BRASS BALLS, HOT IRON, PUMP IRON, SHOOTING IRON, WAFFLE-IRON

iron-fisted *adj* Having a fist or grip strong as iron: *The company appears to have iron-fisted control of the market (1828+)*

iron horse *n phr* **1** A railroad engine: *It seems he does have an affinity for the iron horse (mid-1800s+)* **2** A military tank (WWII Army)

iron man *n phr* **1** A dollar: *Two hundred iron men snatched out of his mitt (1908+)* **2** A very durable and tough man; tireless worker and player, esp in sports (1914+) **3** A West Indian musician who plays an instrument made out of an oil drum (1960s+ *Musicians*)

iron out *v phr* **1** To kill, esp with a gun, an "iron": *You weren't at home when he was ironed out* **2** To arrange satisfactorily; straighten out; WORK OUT: *Ironing out the kinks this way made them aware of just*

how weak their endgame was (1920s +)

iron-pumper *n* A weightlifter (1972 +)

iron up *v phr* To put on tire chains (1940s + *Truckers*)

ish kabibble (ISH kə BIB əl) *interj* An exclamation of indifference, nonchalance, etc: “*Ishkabibble,*” or “*I should worry*”/It was a pretty abrupt transition from *la belle époque* into the Space Age, but *ish kabibble* [1921 +; origin unknown; perhaps an alteration of Yiddish *nit* or *nisht gefidlt*; apparently introduced and perhaps coined by the comedienne Fanny Brice]

iso *n* Solitary confinement or isolation cells (*Prison*)

isotope *n* A nearly identical person; near double: *Like his isotope Paglia, Rush Limbaugh can be counted on to bury the occasional nugget of truth beneath his avalanche of infuriating extrapolation and phony statistics/It actually IS you. Or an isotope of you. Or a photocopy of you* [1990s +; fr the term denoting nearly identical atoms in a chemical element]

issue *n* A problem • Colloquial: *We have an issue with irregular newspaper delivery*

Is the Pope Polish (or Italian or Catholic) *sentence* That was a stupid question; isn't the answer very obvious? DOES A BEAR SHIT IN THE WOODS [1970s +; first variant used since the accession of John Paul II]

it *modifier*: *Clara Bow, the original it girl* **n** **1** Sex appeal, esp female: *a girl with lots of it (1904 +)* **2** The sex act; copulation; SCREWING • Used

in numberless unmistakable but quasi-euphemistic contexts like *do it, go at it, want it, have it off, make it*, etc (1611 +) **See** IT GIRL

it ain't over till it's over *sentence* Don't give up hope; the decision is not yet made: *It ain't over 'til it's over. So reason America's steelmakers, who began a broad campaign last week to reverse recent tariff rulings* [1970s +; fr a heartening observation by the New York Yankees catcher and manager Yogi Berra]

itch **See** SCRATCH

itchy *adj* Eager; restless; ANTSY (1940s +)

itchy feet *n phr* The desire to travel: *been six months, getting itchy feet* (1943 +)

it couldn't happen to a nicer guy *sentence* What punishment or damage was received was richly deserved • The sentiment is quite ironic: *Joe got canned? It couldn't happen to a nicer guy!* (1940s +)

item **See** HOT NUMBER

item, an *n phr* An unmarried but sexually linked couple; a NUMBER:
Book Says Ava and Adlai Were An Item/Carolyn and Larren used to be an item a long time ago [1970 +; probably a shortening of "an item in the gossip columns"]

it girl *n phr* A young woman with sex appeal (1920s +)

-itis *suffix used to form nouns* An excessive and probably unhealthy involvement with or prevalence of what is indicated:
committeetitis/symbolitis (1903 +)

it is dollars to doughnuts **See** DOLLARS TO DOUGHNUTS

it rules sentence It is wonderful, impressive, awesome (1980s + Teenagers)

it's a bitch (or bitch kitty) sentence The thing referred to is very impressive, very difficult, very complicated, very sad, or in some other way extraordinary: *She shook his knee playfully. "It's a bitch, isn't it?"* / *The last couple of laps are a real bitch kitty* (1814 +)

it's all good sentence Everything is fine; there is nothing to worry about: *the meaning of "It's all good" is straightforward. It means "no worries"*

◁**it's one's ass**▷ **sentence** One is doomed, or in great difficulty; one's ASS IS GRASS • UsU a conditional statement: *But I lend you my iron and it's my ass/You write anything about me in an article again and it'll be your ass/We have to find this outlaw an hour after daybreak or it's our asses!* (1940s + Army)

it's at See KNOW WHERE IT'S AT

it's been real or it's been sentence It has been nice to meet you; it has been a nice time or party, etc • Often used ironically (1950s +)

it shouldn't happen to a dog sentence What has happened, often to the speaker, ought not to happen even to the lowliest of creatures; it is atrocious: *The trouble I had getting this ticket, it shouldn't happen to a dog* [1940s + ; fr Yiddish speech patterns]

it's (or the opera's) never over till the fat lady sings sentence Things are never finished until they are finished; further possibilities of action exist here: *Like they say around here, "The opera's never over till the fat lady sings."* *What hotel are you staying at,*

little lady? [1970s+ Baseball; originated by Dan Cook, a San Antonio broadcaster, and based on Yogi Berra's "It ain't over till it's over"]

itsy-bitsy or **itty-bitty** *adj* Tiny; esp, small and cute; LITTLE BITTY, TEENSY-WEENSY: *I can't find even an itty-bitty scrap of paper to show who these Wunderkinds are* [late 1930s+; fr baby talk]

it's you *sentence* The thing is precisely appropriate or integral to you: *Oh my sweet, that mauve cummerbund, it's you!* (1960s+)

it's your nickel *sentence* Its is your prerogative to act, speak, etc, since you are paying for it: *"Go ahead, it's your nickel," he said quaintly* [1940s+ Students; fr the former 5-cent charge for a telephone call]

it takes two to tango *sentence* This cannot happen or have happened without more than one person; cooperation or connivance is indicated: *It takes two to tango, said the mediator/Now, it takes two to tango, but I still think it was more her fault* [1952+; the name of a 1950s song]

it up *suffix used to intensify verbs* Doing energetically, vehemently, loudly, etc, what is indicated: *camping it up/hamming it up/laughing it up*

it works for me *sentence* The idea or plan is fine and I like it

ivories *n* 1 The teeth: *as fine a display of ivories as we've seen in our time* (1782+) 2 Dice; a pair of dice (1830+)

ivories, the *n* Piano keys; the piano (1918+) **See** TICKLE THE IVORIES

ivory tower *n* A place or attitude of retreat, especially preoccupation with lofty, remote, or intellectual considerations: *Come out of that ivory tower*

I-way *n* The Information Superhighway, a projected system of linked computer networks; INFOBAHN: *our current overhyping of the InfoBahn, the I-way (1990s +)*

ixnay *negation* No; no more; none: *Ixnay on the kabitz* [1930 +; pig Latin for *nix*]

izzatso *interj* An exclamation of defiance or disbelief: *I'm a crud? Izzatso!* (1900 +)

J

J n (also **jay** or **jay smoke** or **J smoke**) A marijuana cigarette; JOINT
[1960s+ Narcotics; fr the *J* of *Mary Jane*, “marijuana,” or the *j* of
joint]

jab a vein v phr To inject narcotics, esp heroin; SHOOT UP: smoke
marijuana or opium or jab a vein (1950s+ Narcotics)

jabber n A hypodermic needle (1915+ Narcotics) **v** To talk
incessantly; chatter on (1499+) **See** JIBBER-JABBER

jabberjack n Foolish talk; nonsense; BULLSHIT: When I hear all the false
jabberjack, all the phony cries and squawks (1970s+)

jab-off n An injection of a narcotic (1920s+ Narcotics)

◁**jaboney or jiboney or jibone**▷ **n 1** A newly arrived immigrant; a
naive person; GREENHORN: Vinny, you’re a real jibone, you know that? **2**
A hoodlum; thug; GORILLA: He had a couple of his jiboneys with him **3** A
frequent television guest expert “*Nightline*” is desperate for *ajaboney*
tonight. They tried for Kissinger (1990s+ Television) [origin
uncertain; perhaps fr Italian dialect *giappone*, literally “a Japanese,”
but extended to any strange-or foreign-looking person]

jabroni n 1 (or **jobber**) A professional wrestler who loses in order to
make another wrestler look good **2** A loser

jack n 1 Money: *the fans which paid their jack/I figured it would be an easy way to make some jack (1859+)* **2** Nothing; JACK SHIT, ZIP: *What did you do today? Jack (1980s+ Students)* **v 1** To take twisting evasive action in an airplane; JANK, JINK (Vietnam War Air Force) **2** To steal; rob: *Two men who “jacked,” or stole, a 1991 Plymouth Colt (1990s+ Teenagers)* [money sense probably fr the expression *hard Jackson* or *hard Jackson money*, referring to President Andrew Jackson and found by 1838; first verb sense perhaps related to mid-1800s British criminal slang *jack*, “run away, escape,” or perhaps by folk etymology fr *jank*, an echoic companion of *jink*; compare *jink-jank* with *yin-yang* and *zig-zag*; stealing sense probably fr *hijack* and related to *carjacking*] See BALL THE JACK, HEAVY MONEY, HIJACK, PIECE OF CHANGE

Jack n Man; friend; fellow; MAC • Used in addressing any man, whatever his name: *Man, he’s murder, Jack/That supposed to be funny, jack? (1889+)*

jack around v phr 1 To idle about; FART AROUND, SCREW AROUND: *He and LD had been jacking around in practice and LD fell on his leg* **2** To meddle with; FOOL AROUND: *and jack around with somebody else’s wife/until the lawyers started jacking around with the structure [1960s+ Students; origin uncertain; perhaps fr *jack off*]*

jack someone around v phr 1 To tease; KID: *These guys are only trying to jack you around* **2** To victimize; HASSLE, JERK someone AROUND: *Don’t you think I know when people are jacking me around? (1960s+ Students)*

◁**jackass**▷ **n** A stupid person; idiot; dolt; fool; LUNKHEAD, SHIT-FOR-BRAINS

(1823 +)

jackass rig (or **harness**) *n phr* A shoulder holster: *The butt of a large revolver was hanging out of a molded-leather Jackass rig on Maksins' left side* [1980s + Police; probably fr the resemblance of the harness to that of a horse or jackass]

jacked in *adj phr* Up-to-date and aware; ON TOP OF: *I'm impressed by the level of techiness: people here are fully jacked in* [1990s + ; fr *jack*, "male plug used in telephone and electronic patching," hence "totally connected"]

jacked up *adj phr* 1 Stimulated; exhilarated; HIGH: *all the parents jacked up on coffee/I was jacked up, coming in, then I faced reality* 2 Elevated, esp by artifice; JUMPED-UP: *That he is a jacked-up cowboy and minor film star is a libel* [1970s + ; first sense probably fr *jagged up*, "drunk," found by 1737]

jacket *n* A criminal record; RAP SHEET **See** DUST someone's JACKET, MONKEY JACKET, YELLOW JACKET [1940s + Police; fr the cardboard folder or *jacket* used to hold the papers]

jack (or **jake**) *it v phr* To play half-heartedly, claiming an injury; malinger: *Piniella's charge that Henderson was "jacking it"* [1970s + Baseball; fr earlier *jake*, "a player who loafers or stalls," apparently based on the name of Jake Stahl, who played and managed various teams between 1903 and 1913, because his surname rhymes with "stall"]

jackleg *n* An incompetent and unscrupulous person; PHONY: *You don't think I hang out with jacklegs like that* (1853 +)

jack Mormon *n phr* **1** A non-Mormon who associates with or imitates Mormons **2** A nonobservant or backsliding Mormon: *Sure I have coffee in the house. I'm only a jack Mormon (1890+)*

◁**jack-off** or **jagoff**▷ *n* A stupid, incompetent person; JERK: *What's that jack-off up to now?/those two slick-haired jagoffs (1930s+)*

◁**jack off**▷ *v* To masturbate; JERK OFF • Said chiefly of males [1916+; ultimately fr *jack*, "penis"]

jack out *v phr* To pull out; seize and expose: *could jack his gun out kind of fast (1940s+)*

jack party *n phr* A neglectful or indifferent participant: *Coach Phillips was a jack party, didn't even have headphones on (1970s+ Sports)*
See JACK IT

jackpot *n* The largest win available in a slot machine [1940s+ Gambling; fr the *progressive jack pot* in poker, which stipulates that if no player has a pair of jacks or better to open, then on the next hand, after anteing again, someone must have queens or better, and so on; thus the *pot* could become quite large; the poker use, "a very large win," is found by 1881] *See* HIT THE JACKPOT

jack-rabbit *v* To advance by leaps, like a jack-rabbit: *a stock market jack-rabbiting past the Dow Jones 5,000 (1990s+)*

jackroll *v* To rob, esp a drunken man; ROLL: *Father had recently been "jackrolled" while drunk (1915+)*

◁**jack shit**▷ *n phr* Nothing at all; DIDDLY, ZILCH: *They had it, but jack shit was what they had/I didn't know jackshit about it/"Ex-model" means*

jackshit (1970s + Southern students)

jack (squat) n Nothing at all, zero; nada; JACK SHIT: *You don't know jack squat about going to college these days*

jack up v phr 1 To inject a narcotic; SHOOT UP (1960s + Narcotics) **2** To stimulate; exhilarate: *Aren't you getting jacked up? Ain't it great?* (1970s +) **3** To raise; increase: *Did they jack up the price again?* (1904 +)

jack someone up v phr 1 To rebuke, esp to revive a sense of duty: *The sergeant had to jack the whole platoon up* (1896 +) **2** To rob, esp at gunpoint (1960s +) **3** To thrash; trounce; CLOBBER (1960s +) **4** Of the police, to stop and search someone, demand identification, question harshly, etc; ROUST, TAKE ON (1960s + Black)

jack with v phr To play or toy with; mess with: *mechanic jacked with the poor woman customer* **See** MESS AROUND WITH

jag n 1 A drinking spree; BENDER **2** A spell or spree of a specified sort: *One had a "crying jag"/the annual Christmas gift-buying jag* [1887 +; fr *jag*, "a load," found by 1597, whence "as much liquor as a man can drink," found by 1678] **See** CRYING JAG

Jag n A Jaguar automobile (1950s +)

jagged (JAGD) **adj** Drunk (1737 +)

jagoff **See** JACK-OFF

jail v To live tolerably in jail; survive imprisonment: *Roy taught me how to jail* (1980s +)

jail bait n phr <1> A girl or boy below the legal age of sexual

consent, copulation with whom would constitute statutory rape; SAN QUENTIN QUAIL **2** Any person or thing likely to tempt one to crime and imprisonment (1934 +)

jailbird *n* A convict or ex-convict (1618 +)

jailhouse lawyer *n phr* A prisoner who, authoritative or not, is disposed to lengthy discussion of his legal rights and those of other inmates; GUARDHOUSE LAWYER: *an avid reader of good literature and a "jailhouse lawyer" (1940s +)*

jake *adj* Excellent; very satisfactory; HUNKY-DORY: *She said the whole college seemed jake to her* *adv*: *You never can tell on a day like this, things could be goin' jake one minute, then presto, before you know it you're history [1914 + Underworld; origin unknown]*

jalopy or **jaloppy** or **jalop** *n* **1** An old and battered car or airplane; HEAP: *A jalopy is a model one step above a "junkie"* **2** Any car; any vehicle; BUGGY: *Let them search every jalop on the road [1924 +; origin unknown; perhaps fr Jalapa, a Mexican city to which many US used cars were sent]*

jam¹ *modifier*: *Jam bands do have styles* *n* **1** A predicament; BIND, TIGHT SPOT (1914 +) **2** (also **traffic jam**) A tight crush of cars, people, etc; JAM-UP (1917 +) **3** Small objects like rings and watches that are easy to steal (1925 + *Underworld*) **4** A party or gathering where jazz musicians play for or with one another; JAM SESSION: *Bix and the boys would blow it free and the jam was on (1930s + Jazz musicians)* **5** A party: *Are you going to the jam tonight? (1930s +)* <6> The vulva; a woman's genitals (1896 +) **7** Cocaine; NOSE CANDY (1960s + *Narcotics*)

v **1** To play jazz with great spontaneity, esp to improvise freely with other musicians and usu without an audience (1930s+ *Jazz musicians*) **2** To have a good time; party joyously; GET IT ON: *As for us, we danced, we jammed, and we wondered* **3** To make up a rap song, esp in a competitive situation (1970s+ *New York teenagers*) **4** To make trouble for; coerce or harass, esp with physical force: *than when they're jammin' me for a penny every time I walk down the street/He knows what to say that will jam you and not jam you* (1960s+) **5** **To do the sex act; copulate;** SCREW: *Did what? Jammed* (1970s+ *Students*) **6** To auction; act as an auctioneer (1950s+ *Hawkers*) **7** To send an interfering signal on a broadcast channel one wishes to make unintelligible: *An attempt was made to jam* (1914+) **8** To run away; SKEDADDLE: *Let's jam!/I shifted ionto high gear and jammed it up to Santa Teresa* (1990s+) **9** To pitch the ball close to the batter, so that he is forced to hit it close to the gripped end of the bat (1960s+ *Baseball*) **10** SLAM DUNK (1990s+ *Basketball*) [all senses have some relation to the basic notion of squeezing or crushing so as to make *jam*] **See** IN A JAM, JIM-JAM, LOGJAM, TOE JAM

jam² **n** A heterosexual man [1970s+ Homosexuals; said to be fr *just a man*]

jamble **See** JIMBLE-JAMBLE

jambox **See** GHETTO BOX

jammed **adj** Drunk: *He got jammed* (1922+)

jammed up **adj phr** IN A JAM: *You are jammed up* (1940s+)

jammer **n** A musician who takes part in jam sessions: *the likely*

jammers being the four ex-Beatles, Leon Russell, Mick Jagger, and a few other “friends” (1930s + Jazz talk) See GEAR-JAMMER

jammies *n* Pajamas: *who conclude the revue clad in jammies/into the bedroom, into his jammies, into the bed (1980s +) See JAMMY²*

jammin’ *modifier* **1** Very busy, esp with people: *coffee shop is jammin’*
2 Excellent; first-rate: *That was a jammin’ set, man*

jammy¹ *n* (also **jammies**) A gun: *Also a jammy, a smoker, a heater, a piece/Jammies was street terminology for gun [1980s + ; origin unknown]*

jammy² *adj* Excellent • Chiefly British [1853 + ; fr *jam*, the sweet conserve]

jamoke¹ or **Jamoke** (jə MOHK) *n* Coffee [1914 + ; perhaps a blend of *java* and *mocha*]

jamoke² or **jamoche** *n* A despised man; **JERK**: *I don’t rate your chances none too good if that jamoke’s going to defend you/You really think this jamoche is gonna give you somethin’?* [origin unknown]

jam-packed *adj* Very tightly packed; very crowded: *those jam-packed suburban classes (1925 +)*

jams, the **See** the **JIMJAMS**, **KICK OUT THE JAMS**

jam session *n phr* A gathering of musicians, esp jazz musicians, playing freely and for one another, but sometimes in a public performance; **JAM**: *Here’s Dodo on the piano and Tiny on the bass. Looks like well have a fine jam session (1930s + Jazz musicians)*

jam-up *n* A tight crush of people, cars, etc, preventing normal

movement; **JAM**: *to forestall the possibility of another jam-up (1940s +)*

jam up v phr To encumber; disable by overburdening: *to file complaints was a sure way to jam up a cop (1940s +)*

jane n 1 A young woman; **CHICK, DOLL**: *some jane that was kind of simple/Ladies from Long Island, janes from New Jersey* **2** A man's sweetheart, fiancée, etc: *make earrings for our janes out of them studs (1906 +)* **See** **MARY JANE**

Jane Crow n phr Discrimination against women: *segregation by sex, describing it as "Jane Crow" [1960s +; fr Jim Crow]*

Jane Q Citizen (or Public) n phr Any woman, esp the average or typical woman: *The president seems very popular with Jane Q Citizen (1940s +)*

janfu n Confusion; chaos; **SNAFU** [WWII armed forces; fr *joint Army Navy fuck-up*]

◁**jang**▷ **n** The penis **See** **YING-YANG**

jangle See **JINGLE-JANGLE**

jank v To maneuver an airplane about evasively; **JACK, JINK**: *I was janking when I got hit [Vietnam War Air Force; perhaps fr jink and jank on the model of zig and zag]* **See** **JINK**

jarhead n 1 A mule (1918 +) **2** A US Marine; **GYRENE** (WWII armed forces)

jasper n 1 A fellow; man; **GUY**: *two jaspers with a grudge* **2** A rustic; **HICK** (1914 +)

java or **Java** *n* Coffee [1907 +; fr *Java*, an Indonesian island whence some coffee was exported]

jaw *n*: *ain't had a good jaw together* (1842 +) **v** **1** To talk; chat; converse: *Can't stand here jawing with you all day* (1760 +) **2** To exhort; lecture; strive to persuade orally; **JAWBONE**: *had kept sober for several months by jawing drunks, unsuccessfully* (1810 +) **See** **BAT** **one's** **GUMS**, **CRACK** **one's** **JAW**, **FLAPJAW**, **GLASS JAW**, **RATCHET-MOUTH**

jawbone *n* **1** Credit or trust, esp financial: *Try as he might he got no jawbone from the bankers* (1862 +) **2**: *The President launched a sustained and hot jawbone on the budget cuts* **v** **1** To borrow; obtain on credit: *He jawboned enough to set up an office* (1862 +) **2** To discuss; talk over, esp extensively and profoundly: *a distinguished group of presidential biographers to jawbone about the situation* (1966 +) **3** To exhort and earnestly urge in order to persuade • Used predominantly to describe high-level pressure applied on economic issues, and popularized under President Lyndon Johnson: *the Presidential promise not to "jawbone" business into not raising prices/chiefly direct controls on all pay and prices or "jawboning" against individual wage and price rises* (1969 +) **4** To fire a weapon in practice, esp for formal qualification to use it (*WWII Army*)

jawboning *n* Strong exhortation; potent oral pressure: *The technique was called "jawboning." Lyndon Johnson and Mr Nixon used it* (1960s +)

jawbreaker or **jawcracker** *n* **1** A long word or a word difficult to pronounce: *Diphenyl-pentoactomaggetoneplangianoliosis is something of a jawbreaker* (1835 +) **2** A piece of hard candy, esp a spherical

piece with bubblegum in the center (1875 +)

jaw dropper *n phr* Something astonishing; an awesome event: *Wasn't that a jaw dropper! Imagine Ted being elected Dalai Lama!/That first show was a jaw-dropper* [1990s +; fr the instinctive gaping response to such an event]

jawed *See* GLASS-JAWED

jaw-hanging *adj* Causing the jaw to gape in awe; riveting: *You have to have cutting-edge, jaw-hanging graphics* (1990s +)

jay¹ *n* **1** A rustic; simpleton; HICK, RUBE (1523 +) **2** An easy victim; MARK, PATSY, SUCKER (1884 + *Underworld*) [fr the raucous bird]

jay² *n* Marijuana or a marijuana cigarette; J: *Let's do up a jay and truck on down to the libo* (1960s + *Narcotics*)

jay smoke *See* J

jaywalk *v* To walk into or across a street at a forbidden place or without the right of way [1916 +; fr the naive behavior of a jay, "rustic"]

jazz modifier: *a jazz trumpet/jazz riffs* *n* **1:** *This place needs more jazz and pizzazz* **2** A kind of popular, often improvised, and emotive instrumental music originating among Southern black people in the late 19th century and still evolving as an American and a world style (1900s + *Jazz musicians*) **3** Empty talk; nonsense; lies; BALONEY, BULLSHIT, JIVE: *You mean her most eloquent pledges were jazz?* (1918 +) **4** Ornamentation; embellishment, esp when merely superficial: *a clean design, without a lot of jazz* (1960s +) *v* ◀1▶ To do the sex act

with or to; FUCK: *I jazzed her, too/what he's going to do to a guy he finds out's been jazzing his wife (late 1800s + Black)* **2** To increase the tempo, animation, or excitement of something; JAZZ something UP: *Come on, jazz yourself, we're late (1875 + Black)* **3** To arrange or play in a jazz style: *They jazzed the National Anthem* **4**: *Stop your jazzing and merely adduce the data* [origin unknown; *jass* was an earlier spelling]

jazz-bo *n* **1** A flashily groomed man or woman; CAT, DUDE: *her stage image as a witchy little jazz-bo with a boxer's shuffle and a baseball player's kick (1923 +)* **2** A black man, esp a black soldier (1919 +)

jazzed *adj* Eager and energetic; PSYCHED UP: *I'm really jazzed. I want to train for '96 (1960s + Teenagers)*

jazzed up *adj phr* Made faster, more exciting, interesting, active, etc; HOPPED UP, HYPED-UP: *They were riding motorcycles, the big jazzed-up ones (1930s +)*

jazz something up *v phr* **1** To make faster, more exciting or stimulating, etc: *He tried to jazz the meeting up* **2** To play in the musical style indicated (1930s +)

jazzy *adj* **1** Resembling or partaking of the musical style indicated: *He could turn a Beethoven sonata into a jazzy little number* **2** Exciting; stimulating; SEXY: *He wore bow ties and jazzy suits (1915 +)*

◁**Jebby**▷ *n* A Jesuit (1950s +)

jeebies *See* the HIEBIE-JEEBIES

jeep carrier *n phr* A US Navy escort aircraft carrier (*WWII Navy*)

Jeepers Creepers or **Jeepers** *interj* An exclamation of surprise, dismay, emphasis, etc: *Jeepers Creepers, another busted leg!* [1929+; a euphemism for *Jesus Christ*]

Jeez *interj* (also **jeez** or **Jeeze** or **jeeze** or **Jees** or **jees** or **jeezy-peezy** or **Jeezy-peezy**) An exclamation of surprise, dismay, emphasis, etc; JEEPERS CREEPERS [entry form 1923+, *jeeze* 1920+, *jees* 1931+, *jeezy-peezy* 1942+; fr *Jesus*]

jelly *n* **1** An easy, pleasant task; sinecure; CINCH **2** Anything gotten free or without effort; GRAVY **3** JELLY-ROLL (1940s+)

jellybean *n* **1** A gaudily dressed man; faddish dresser (1919+) **2** A stupid person; fool; SAP: *The jelly beans I went to school with* (1915+) **3** A novice; ROOKIE (1950s+ *Baseball*)

jelly-belly *n* A fat person (1896+)

jelly-roll *n* <1> The vulva; vagina (1870s+ *Black*) <2> The sex act; copulation; FUCKING (1870s+ *Black*) **3** A man obsessed with women; woman-chaser; COCKSMAN, LOVER-BOY (1870s+ *Black*) **4** A lover or mistress; SWEET PAPA, SWEET MAMA (1870s+ *Black*) **5** Large round hay bales; big round bales (1980s+) [sexual senses perhaps related to *jelly*, “semen,” found by 1622]

jerk *modifier*: a couple of **jerk wops** *n* **1** A short branch railroad line: a small “jerk” with only two locals a day (1892+) **2** A short ride (1920s+ *Cabdrivers*) **3** A tedious and ineffectual person, esp a man; fool; ninny; ass; BOOB, TURKEY: *Jeez, what a jerk!* (*Carnival* 1935+) **4** A contemptible and obnoxious person, esp a man; ASSHOLE, BASTARD: *Dr*

Johnson admired Goldsmith's literary talent, although he considered him a jerk/A jerk not only bores you, but pats you on the shoulder as he does so (1935 +) **5** SODA JERK (1923 +) **<1>** JERK OFF (1940s +) [the derogatory term comes fr *jerk off*, "masturbate"; the form *soda jerker* is found by 1883] **See** CIRCLE JERK, KNEE-JERK, PULL someone's CHAIN

jerk around v phr To idle about; play casually; FOOL AROUND: *if kids are jerking around and enter a system as a lark with no intent to deprive (1980s +)*

jerk someone around (or off) v phr To victimize or harass:

Salespeople feel that men who want hand holding are often jerking them around/bumming cigarettes and generally jerking him around throughout the broadcast/I think Coyle was jerking you off (1980s +)

jerk (or yank) someone's chain v phr To victimize or dupe; harass;

JERK someone AROUND: *You came out to jerk my chain tonight/the perception white voters got that Jackson was jerking their chains/Are you guys yanking my chain? [1980s +; fr the notion of a chained man, monkey, etc, being harassed]*

Jerkimer See HERKIMER JERKIMER

Jerk McGee n phr A stupid person; JERK: *Some Jerk McGee like you just got off the boat (1950s +)*

<jerkoff> adj Stupid; JERKY: *It's too much of a jerkoff idea/preparing an answer to the jerkoff question modifier* Useful for masturbation: *an electric suction jerkoff device n* A person who jerks off, either literally or figuratively: *I'd be tickled to death to lose the jerkoffs (1960s +)*

◁ **jerk off** ▷ **v phr** 1 To masturbate; JACK OFF: *I went ahead as usual and jerked off into my sock/KB was always trying to jerk off (1916 +)* 2 To idle about; FUCK OFF, GOOF OFF (1950s +)

jerk over v phr 1 To victimize; treat disrespectfully; DIS: *My professor jerked me over when he refused to accept my paper two days late (1980s + Students)* 2 To treat ineffectually; FUCK UP, MESS UP: *Well, you know, just generally jerking it over (1980s +)*

jerk soda v phr To work at a soda fountain: *They had spent their tender years jerking sodas (1883 +)*

◁ **jerk the gherkin** ▷ **v phr** To masturbate; pound one's pud: *Your gherkin is for firkin', not for jerkin' (1940s +)*

jerk (or jerkwater) town n phr A small town; an insignificant village: *to fool around a jerk town (1899 +)*

jerkwater adj Insignificant; trivial: *These seem like jerkwater sentiments (1897 +)*

jerky adj Having the traits of a jerk: *any jerky Joe (1940s +)* **See** HERKY-JERKY

jerry n 1 A track laborer; GANDY DANCER (1915 + *Railroad*) 2 Any laborer (1915 + *Hoboes*) 3 A small pistol that can be easily concealed (1940s + *Underworld*)

Jerry n A German soldier; KRAUT, KRAUTHEAD [WWI Army fr British; fr the German helmet, which was likened to a *jerry*, "chamber pot," found by 1827]

jerry-rigged adj Patched or cobbled; HOKED-UP: *these would be much*

better than something jerry-rigged on my Olivetti [1980s + ; a blend of *jerry-built*, “badly or flimsily built,” found by 1869, with *jury-rigged*, “rigged temporarily or in an emergency,” found by 1788; the origin of both of these is unknown]

Jesus, the *n* the BEJESUS (1940s +)

Jesus boots *n phr* Men’s sandals (1960s + *Counterculture*)

Jesus Christ *interj* An exclamation of surprise, dismay, emphasis, etc; JEEPERS CREEPERS (1592 +)

Jesus freaks (or *people*) *n phr* Members of an evangelical Christian religious movement among young people, esp ex-hippies and drug addicts: *in this light the herds of Jesus freaks/Jesus freaks, gypsies, lunatic right-wingers, leering conventioners* (1960s + *Counterculture*)

Jesus H Christ or **Jesus** *interj* An exclamation of surprise, dismay, emphasis, etc; JEEPERS CREEPERS [1840s + ; the intrusive *H* may reflect *IHC*, fr Greek IHSOUS, “Jesus Christ,” found by 950 and still embroidered on vestments of the Church of England, or it may be an infix for oral emphasis]

jet v To leave; AIR OUT, SPLIT (1990s + *Teenagers*)

jet set, the *n phr* The group of wealthy, chic people who move about from one costly venue to another: *a charter member of the international jet set* (1951 +)

jetties, the *n phr* Jet fatigue; jet lag: *She was disoriented a couple days by a bad case of the jetties* (1970s +)

◀**Jew (or jew) down**▶ *v phr* To bargain and haggle in an attempt to

get a lower price: *but then the guy started jewin' me down* [1848 + ;
jew in the same sense is found by 1824]

jewel in one's crown, the *n phr* One's most precious and distinguished possession: *Once the jewel in Luce's crown, Time was seen by its new managers as just another rhinestone* (1873 +)

jewels *See* FAMILY JEWELS

◀**Jewish American Prince**▶ *n phr* A pampered and usu wealthy young man who feels he deserves special treatment (1970s +)

◀**Jewish American Princess or JAP or Jap**▶ *n phr* A pampered and usu wealthy young woman who feels she deserves special treatment: *plenty of Jewish American Princesses in their wigs and false eyelashes/the unofficial, secret JAP within me* (1970s +)

Jewish penicillin *n phr* Chicken soup, regarded as a panacea (1950s +)

Jheri curl (or **Kurl**) *n* Staightened kinky hair: *He was a tall motherfucker with a Jheri curl, looked like a baboon* (1990s + *Black*)

◀**jibagoo**▶ *See* JIGABOO

jibber-jabber *v* To talk nonsense; **JABBER**: *Time for Congress to quit jibber-jabbering/We just jibber-jabbered these things all day*

jiboney *See* JABONEY

jiffy, a *modifier*: *Let's make a jiffy dessert* *n phr* (Variations: **jif** or **jiff** or **jiffin** or **jiffing**) A short space of time; an instant: *drop off to sleep for a jiffy/I'll have coffee ready in a jiff* (1793 +) [said to be fr thieves' slang *jeffey* or *jiffey*, "lightning"]

jiffy bag *n phr* **1** A small canvas or leather bag for carrying toilet articles, etc, while traveling (*WWII armed forces*) **2** (also **Jiffy**, a trademark) A heavy-walled paper bag used for mailing items, esp books (1970+)

jig *n* **1** A dancing party or public dance ◀**2**▶ JIGABOO (1923+)

◀**jigaboo**▶ (also **jibagoo** or **jigabo** or **jig** or **zig** or **zigaboo** or **zigabo**) *modifier: a jig band* *n* A black person (1909+)

jigger *n* **1** An artificially made sore, usu on the arm or leg, useful in begging: *whether it will pay to use his “jigger”* (1890s+ *Hoboes*) **2** A liquor glass of one-and-a-half ounce capacity; SHOT GLASS (1857+) **3** THINGAMAJIG (1874+) **v** **1** To interfere with; QUEER: *jigger our riding on the railroad* (1890s+ *Hoboes*) **2** To tamper with or falsify; DOCTOR: *There is pressure from Casey to jigger estimates/how the gold trading was jiggered* (1970s+) [*giger*, “lock,” is found by 1612, apparently coined by Thomas Dekker, and is probably the source of the third noun sense] **See** DOODAD, I’LL BE DAMNED

jiggered *See* I’LL BE DAMNED

jigger-man or **jiggers guy** *n* or *n phr* A lookout: *acted only as “the two-block jiggers guy”* (1940s+ *Underworld*)

jiggers or **jigs** *interj* An exclamation of alarm and warning: *Jiggers, the heat’s here* [probably connected with British dialect *jigger*, “constable, police officer,” found by 1857]

jiggery-pokery *n* Deception; trickery; SKULLDUGGERY: *or what some term jiggery-pokery/could have prevented most of the jiggery-pokery* [1893+; probably fr Scottish *joukery-paukery* fr *jouk*, “trick”]

jiggins *See* JUGGINS

jiggle or **jiggly** *modifier*: *the ads for comedies in the jiggle genre/a brand of show so dependent on buxom stars and wet T-shirts that it was called jiggle television* **n** 1 The bouncing and shaking of a woman's parts, esp of the breasts • Hence the whole tone and style of blatant female sexual exploitation: *help put the jiggle back in the series "Charlie's Angels"* 2 A TV program featuring the bouncing and shaking of a woman's parts: *when advertisers see wall-to-wall jiggles in prime time* **v**: *She swims, jumps rope, and practices jiggling in front of the mirror (1970s +)*

jiggy *adj* 1 Excellent; cool: *jiggy with that idea* 2 Excited or involved, esp sexually: *gotten jiggy with a few men* *interj* Excellent; sweet **n** 1 Sexual relations 2 Money; wealth (1990 +)

jig is up, the *sentence* The criminal enterprise is discovered (1800 +)

◁**jig-jig** or **zig-zig**▷ **n** The sex act; copulation; FUCKING [first form 1932 +, second 1918 +; the earlier form is US military slang from WWI and represents a French-like pronunciation of British *jig-a-jig*, "do the sex act," found by 1893]

jig-swiggered *See* I'LL BE DAMNED

jihad **n** A violent attack; destructive assault: *We'll call these guys Tinker, Evers, and Chance, to protect them from jihad by the Elvis cult* [1980s +; fr Arabic, "holy war"]

jillion **n** (also **gadzillion** or **gillion** or **kajillion** or **skillion** or **zillion** or **quadzillion**) A great many; an indefinitely large number; SCADS: *a jillion jackpots/The beautiful people who would be at her cocktail party*

(“A zillion horny studs! “)/All those years we paid no official notice to those gadzillions of Chinese/This instant, in fact, quadzillions of these particles may be streaking harmlessly through our bodies (1940s +)

jimble-jamble *adj* Mixed; motley: *a jimble-jamble sort of crowd*
[1970 +; modeled on *skimble-skamble*, found by 1826]

Jim Crow *modifier: Jim Crow laws n phr* ◀1▶ A black man; African-American (1828 +) 2 Segregation and discrimination against black people, and the laws and practices that accompany them: *My first experience with Jim Crow/Jim Crow killed Bessie Smith (1940s +) v: I would like to say that the people who Jim Crow me have a white heart*
[fr a character in a minstrel-show song by T D Rice]

jim-dandy *adj: Anacin is a jim-dandy remedy n* A person or thing that is remarkable, wonderful, superior, etc; BEAUT, HUMDINGER (1844 +)
[perhaps fr an early 1840s song “Dandy Jim of Caroline”]

jim-jam *v* JAZZ, JAZZ something UP (1940s +)

jimjams *n phr* the HEEBIE-JEEBIES: *Two-seaters are high therapy from life’s imbalances, emotional dross and other colitis-causing jimjams (1880 +)*

jimjick *n* Something one does not know the name of or does not wish to name; GIZMO, THINGAMAJIG: *this jimjick here, the trigger* [1940s +; perhaps a blend of *jim hickey* with *jigger*, both meaning “thingamajig”]

jimmies *n* Bits of candy put onto ice cream as a topping (1960s +)

jimmies, the *n phr* Nervous frets; the HEEBIE-JEEBIES, the JIMJAMS: *Frankly it gives me the jimmies (1900 +)*

jimmy or **jimmy hat** *n* A condom: *That's right, condom fashions, with small pockets for what kids call jimmies (1990s + Teenagers)*

jimmy up or **jim v phr** To spoil something; damage; BUGGER: *This scale's all jimmied up (1940s +)*

jingle *n* A telephone call; a ring; TINKLE: *We never hear from you, not even a jingle*

jingle-jangle *adj* In poor condition; ramshackle: *driving down to Big Sur in their funky bus or some jingle-jangle car (1970s +)* *n* (also **jing**) Money; coins: *I've got some jingle-jangle in my jeans/A lot of bars have fundraisers and donate a big chunk of their jing to AIDS groups (1950s +)*

jink *v* To take evasive action; dodge; zig-zag: *went jinking down the field, shot and missed/She jinked sideways to avoid an oncoming truck* [1785 +; fr northern English dialect *jink*, "make a quick evasive turn," adopted into the idiom of rugby football; popularized by Vietnam War Air Force use]

jinks *See* HI-JINKS

jinx *n* **1** A cause of bad luck: *Somebody around here is a jinx (1911 +)*
2 A curse; assured ill fortune: *Looks like the place has a jinx on it (1911 +)* *v*: *Somebody jinxed him (1917 +)* [apparently fr *jynx* or *iyx*, "wryneck woodpecker," fr the use of the bird in divination]

jip *See* GYP

jippo *See* GYPPO

jism *n* ◀**1**▶ CUM (1899 +) **2** (also **gism**) Liveliness; excitement; SPUNK;

ZING (1842 +) [origin unknown]

◀**jit**▶ *n* A black person (1931 +)

jitney or **jit** *adj* Cheap: *a jitney dance hall (1916 +)* **modifier**: *cracked down today on illegal jitney service* *n* **1** A nickel (1903 +) **2** (also **jitney bus**) A small bus used as public transportation • Formerly, jitneys were cars operating for low fare in more or less unregulated competition with taxis, buses, and streetcars (1914 +) **3** Any car, esp a small or cheap one (1917 +) [origin unknown; perhaps fr Yiddish]

jitter *v* **1** To tremble; quiver: *A line of half-washed clothes jittered on a rusty wire (1931 +)* **2** To be nervous; be agitated; fret: *I jittered around the house, unable to concentrate on anything (1932 +)* [echoic-symbolic]

jitterbug *n* A devotee of swing music, esp one who dances to swing: *Jitterbugs are the extreme swing addicts* *v* To dance to swing music: *Do you feel like jitterbugging a little bit? (1930s + Jive talk)*

jitterbug, the *n phr* A fast, freely improvisational, and vigorous dance done to swing music, with passages where the couple separates to do more or less spectacular solo figures (1930s + *Jive talk*)

jitters, the *n phr* A state of nervous agitation; acute restless apprehension: *I had the jitters (1925 +)*

jittery *adj* Nervous: *He felt all jittery and uptight (1931 +)*

jive¹ **modifier**: *jive records/jive dancers* *n* **1** Empty and pretentious

talk; foolishness; BALONEY, BULLSHIT: *Sugar Mouth Sammy with the same ol' tired jive/male chauvinist, damsel in distress, and all that jive* (1929 +) **2** Trifles; trash: *I bought a lot of cheap jive at the five and ten cent store* (1920 +) **3** Swing music of the 1930s and '40s, esp as played by the big bands and played fast and excitingly: *Man, what solid jive!* (1938 +) **4** (also **gyve**) Marijuana or a marijuana cigarette: *So Diane smoked jive, pot, and tea* (1938 +) **v** **1** To banter; jest; tease; KID: *She told him to quit jiving* (1938 + *Black*) **2** To deceive, but not seriously; mislead, esp playfully (1928 +) **3** To play or dance to fast, exciting swing music (1938 +) [origin unknown; perhaps fr Wolof *jev*, "talk disparagingly"] *See* JUKING AND JIVING, SHUCK

jive² **v** To jibe; chime • The form **gibe** is found by 1813: *The two answers do not jive* [1940 +; origin uncertain; perhaps related to *chime*; the form *gibe* is found by 1813]

jive and juke **v phr** To have a very good time (1970s + *College students*) *See* JUKING AND JIVING

◁**jiveass**▷ **adj** **1** Deceitful; undependable: *Damn his lazy, jiveass soul/You better find out some place else, you jiveass punk* **2** Ridiculous, stupid • Usu objectionable: *jiveass bitch* **n** Pretentious and deceitful talk; BULLSHIT, JIVE: *That's like jiveass* [1940 + *Black*; in the phrase *jiveass motherfucker* said to have originated with the musician Charlie "Bird" Parker]

jive stick **n phr** A marijuana cigarette (1960s + *Narcotics*)

jive talk **n phr** A rapid, pattering way of talking, accompanied with finger-snapping and bodily jerks and using the swing and jive

vocabulary, affected by teenagers during the swing and jive era of the 1930s and '40s (1930s + *Jive talk*)

jive turkey *n phr* A stupid person: *Get those jive turkeys off my car*

◀**jizz or jizzum**▶ *n* Semen; CUM, JISM: *puts a little body in his jizz, pumps a baby a year into the wife* (1960s +)

J/O modifier Masturbation: *Since the confusing days of AIDS, one of the main attractions of group J/O scenes was precisely the ecstatic sexual energy that only a group can generate* [1980s + ; abbreviation of *jack off*]

job *n* 1 (also **jobbie**) A specimen or example, either of a thing or a person: *I lost two \$110 imported jobs before a locksmith told me what I was doing wrong/She's a tough little job/one of those big 18-wheel jobbies* (1927 +) 2 (also **jobbie**) A car: *She was driving a little red job* (1940s +) 3 A crime; a criminal project; CAPER: *a big payroll job* (1667 + *Underworld*) *v* To deceive; cheat; DOUBLE CROSS, FRAME: *Crying that he had been jobbed/got absolutely jobbed out of the Heisman* (1731 +) **See** BAG JOB, BLOW JOB, BOOB JOB, CON GAME, GIVE **someone** A GREASE JOB, GREASE JOB, HAND JOB, HATCHET JOB, INSIDE JOB, LAY DOWN ON THE JOB, LUBE, MENTAL JOB, NOSE JOB, PUT-UP JOB, SEX JOB, SHACK JOB, SNOW JOB, TORCH JOB, TURNKEY JOB

jobber **See** JABRONI

jobbie *v* To befoul: *any ladies out there who will jobbie their pants for the camera*

job pop *v phr* To inject narcotics intravenously, usu into the arm (1960s + *Narcotics*)

jock *n* 1 A jockey (1670 +) 2 Disc jockey (1970s +) 3 The penis; the

crotch: *I'll be beating the bushes with snow to my jock* (1790 +) 4 An athletic supporter; JOCKSTRAP: *I asked him if he wanted some sweat clothes, or a jock* (1952 +) 5 (also **jocko**) An athlete • Now used of both men and women, despite the phallic derivation: *The players themselves are a curious blend of woman and jock/the lucrative job proper to an all-Ivy jock* (1963 +) [the basic etymon is *jock*, “penis,” fr *jack*, probably the diminutive of *John*, which fr the 14th century has been applied to males, malelike things, and male organs; the sense “athlete” is fr *jockstrap*]

jocker *n* 1 A homosexual hobo who lives off the begging of his boy companion 2 An aggressive male homosexual; WOLF: *When he was a kid in some juvenile place some black guy musta been his jocker* (1893 + *Hoboes*)

jockey *n* The driver or pilot of any vehicle: *airplane jockey/tank jockey* (1912 +) **See** BLIP JOCKEY, DESK JOCKEY, HOGGER

jockstrap *n* 1 An athletic supporter (1897 +) 2 An athlete; JOCK (1960s +) **v** To make one's living in the less glamorous and lucrative reaches of professional sports: *He spent a couple of years jockstrapping in the minor leagues* (1960s +)

jody *n* 1 A civilian who is thought to be prospering back home with a soldier's sweetheart, wife, job, etc: *Jody was the guy going in the back door while you were walking down the front walk* 2 JODY CALL [WWII Army fr black; fr the full name *Jody Grinder*, that is, fornicator, probably fr an earlier black and prison character of similar import, *Oolong the Chinese Grind-boy* or *Chinese Joe the Grinder*]

jody call *n phr* An antiphonal song or chant done while marching or running [WWII Army; fr the character *Jody* used in the chant]

Joe or joe *adj* Informed; aware; HEP (1940s + *Underworld*) **n** **1** Coffee (1940s +) **2** Man; fellow; GUY: *never seemed to share much of the problems of the ordinary joe* (1846 +) **3** GI JOE (WWII Army) **v**: *Let me Joe you to that racket* (1940s + *Underworld*) **See** GOOD JOE, HOLY JOE, LITTLE JOE, OLD JOE, SLOPPY JOE

Joe Average *n phr* The ordinary or typical citizen: *For Joe Average, the game simply doesn't exist* (1990s +)

Joe Beige *n phr* A bland, colorless person: *I don't find you very interesting. "Joe Beige"* (1980s +)

Joe Blow *n phr* (Variations: **Doakes** or **Storch** or **Zilch** may replace **Blow**) Any man; the average man; JOHN DOE: *the average black "Mr Joe Blow"* [entry form 1920s + Jazz musicians, *Doakes* 1943 + , *Storch* 1960s + , *Zilch* 1925 + ; fr the *blowing* of the musician, later probably thought of as referring to big talk]

Joe College *n phr* A young man whose dress and manner betoken the nonacademic aspects of college life: *a real Joe College type* (1932 +)

joe-darter *n* HUMDINGER (1851 +)

Joe Lunch Bucket *modifier*: *Royko's Joe Lunch-bucket persona may lie at the heart of his appeal **n phr** The ordinary or typical working man: *Three years ago the Packers got Jim Thorpe in the draft, and now they get Joe Lunch Bucket* (1990s +)*

Joe Public *n* The general public: *Joe Public first was theatrical slang*

(1942 +)

Joe Sad *n phr* An unpopular person (1934 + *Black*)

Joe Schmo (or **Schmoe**) *n phr* An undistinguished and unfortunate person [1960s + ; fr *schmo*, a Yiddish or quasi-Yiddish word meaning “unfortunate person, *schlemiel*“]

◁**Joe Shit the Ragman**▷ *n phr* (Variations: **Snuffy** or **Tentpeg** may replace **Shit the Ragman**) An ordinary soldier; BUCK PRIVATE, GI
(1970s + *Army*)

Joe Six-pack *n phr* An ordinary American male; JOE, JOE AVERAGE, JOE BLOW:
Do you think that Joe Six-pack in Illinois cares?/a sleazy bar where go-go girls perform for goggle-eyed Joe Six-packs [fr the six-bottle or -can packets of beer these men typically consume]

joey or **Joey** *n* A clown [1896 + ; fr the nickname of *Joseph Grimaldi*, famous early 1800s British clown and pantomimist]

Joe Yale *modifier* Betokening by dress and manner the nonacademic aspects of life in the Ivy League: *this very Joe Yale-looking guy*
(1940s +)

jog *v* To annoy; bother (1970s + *Teenagers*)

john¹ *n* A toilet; CAN: *I made a brief visit to the john* [1930s + ; probably an amusing euphemism for *jack* or *jakes*, 16th-century terms for toilet; some say fr Sir *John Harington* (1561--1612), who originated a form of water closet, but evidence for the attribution is lacking; *cuzjohn*, “cousin john,” in the same sense is found in 1735]

john² *n* An Army lieutenant (*WWII Army*) **See** FIRST JOHN

john³ or **John** *n* **1** Any man; an average man; JOE: *We don't want no poor johns on here (1920s + Black)* **2** A man regarded as an easy victim, a potential easy sale, etc: *He's pretty smart at figurin' out what a John'll pay (1946 +)* **3** An Army recruit (1940s + Army) **4** A man who keeps a girl; DADDY, SUGAR DADDY (1950s +) **5** (also **johnson**) A prostitute's customer: *even for girls turning their first tricks, pulling their first real John/shot an 18-year-old hooker then plugged a john who was present (1911 + Prostitutes)* **6** An older homosexual male who keeps a younger one (1950s + Homosexuals) **7** JOHN LAW **See** BIG JOHN, DEAR JOHN, SQUARE JOHN

John Doe or **Richard Roe** *n phr* Any man; the average man; JOE [1768 +; originally the fictitious plaintiff and defendant in a lawsuit]

John Hancock (or **Henry**) *n phr* One's signature [1903 +; fr the fact that *John Hancock* of Massachusetts was the first to sign the Declaration of Independence in 1776; *John Henry*, possibly by confusion with *Patrick Henry*, because of the prominence of *John Henry* as a folklore hero, and by near-rhyming resemblance]

John Law *n phr* A police officer; the police: *had been gathered in by John Law (1907 +)*

John L's *n phr* LONG JOHNS (1940s +)

Johnny or **johnny** *n* Any man; JOE, JOHN • Chiefly British: *The big johnny came over to talk (1673 +)* **See** STAGEDOOR JOHNNY

Johnny-come-lately *modifier*: a *Johnny-come-lately* quasi-solution **n** **1**
A person or thing only recently arrived, esp as compared with the

more seasoned: *Postwar planning was no Johnny-come-lately* 2 An upstart (1839+)

Johnny-one-note modifier Like someone who has only one idea, one method, one explanation, etc: *One of the great bogus management concepts is consensus; Johnny-one-note thinking is just what corporations don't need* [1930s+; fr the title of a pre-WWII popular song about a musician with only one note]

Johnny-on-the-spot n A person who is ready and effective when needed: *Ed was Johnny-on-the-spot and we got it cleaned up quick* (1896+)

John Q Citizen (or Public) n phr Any man, esp the average or typical man; JOE AVERAGE: *John Q Citizen seems to yearn for the big cars* (1940s+)

John Roscoe See ROSCOE

johns See LONG JOHNS

◁**johnson or Johnson or jones**▷ **n** The penis: *beat out time with their titties and their johnsons/I've only got one Johnson, and he winks/Enough is enough, turn my jones loose* [1863+; origin unknown; such a use is recorded fr Canada in the mid-1800s, perhaps as a euphemism for the British euphemism *John Thomas*, "penis"] **See** JOHN³

John Thomas n The penis: *John Thomas up and raring to go* (1879+)

John Wayne adj phr Very tough and durable; militarily exemplary (1970s+ Army) **n phr** An aggressive police officer (1990s+) **v phr**

To handle a weapon, esp a machine gun, in an ostentatiously unconventional way (1970s + Army)

joined at the hip *adj phr* Very closely associated; inseparable; symbiotic: *Weldon writes as if she were Virginia Woolf and Roseanne Arnold joined at the hip/Frequently in the past, Main Street and Wall Street have had their differences, but today as never before they are joined at the hip* [1990s + ; fr the condition of some Siamese twins]

join out *v phr* To join; join up (1914 + Circus)

joint *n* **1** Any disgusting or disreputable place; DIVE, DUMP: *That evening the joint buzzed with sedition/a vile Kansas "joint"* (1821 +) **2** Any place or venue, including a home: *It's a swell joint, all right* (1905 +) **3** A marijuana cigarette; REEFER: *inhale a joint or two of cannabis/I've had to hold joints in my hand but I never smoked even one* (1950s + Narcotics) **4** The apparatus for injecting narcotics; HEAD KIT, WORKS (1940s + Narcotics) **5** The penis (1960s +) **6** A concession (1940s + Carnival) [place senses fr early 1800s Anglo-Irish joint, "low resort," perhaps from its being a nearby, joined room rather than a main room] **See** BEER JOINT, the BIG JOINT, CALL HOUSE, CLIP JOINT, CREEP-JOINT, EAT HIGH ON THE HOG, GREASE JOINT, GYP JOINT, HAM JOINT, HOPJOINT, JUKE JOINT, PULL one's PUD, PUT someone's NOSE OUT OF JOINT, RIB JOINT, SCHLOCK SHOP, SQUARE

joint, the *n phr* Jail; prison: *in the joint* (1927 +)

joint factory *n phr* SMOKE SHOP (1960s + Narcotics)

joke **See** SICK JOKE

joke, a *n phr* Someone or something not to be taken seriously; a laughingstock: *So nobody's about to pay big money for the site fee of a*

Tyson versus Ribalta. I mean, Ribalta's a joke (1791 +)

joker *n* **1** (also **joker in the deck**) A hidden cost, qualification, defect, nasty result, etc; CATCH: *It all looks very sweet, but there's a joker (1904 +)* **2** A man; fellow; GUY, CHARACTER, CLOWN • Often derogatory: *Ask that joker who the hell he thinks he is (1811 +)* [first sense fr the *joker* card included in a new deck, which may be used as a trump or a wild card]

jokey or **joky** *adj* Fun-loving; jocular; given to joking: *George is too jokey for a responsible slot (mid-1800s +)*

jollies *n* Pleasure and gratification; thrills, esp when somewhat disreputable; BANG, KICKS: *People that drive Buicks are getting some kind of jollies (1957 +)* **See** GET one's COOKIES

jolly *v* To cajole with humor and bonhomie: *I was pretty upset, but she jollied me along/We jollied her into coming along with us (1876 +)*

jolt *n* **1** The initial impact of a narcotic injection; the potency of a type of drug; RUSH (1916 + *Narcotics*) **2** A narcotic injection; a dose of a drug (1916 + *Narcotics*) **3** A marijuana cigarette; JOINT (1950s + *Narcotics*) **4** A drink of strong liquor or the potency of a type of alcohol; SNORT: *a wee jolt of Bourbon/got a jolt from one seven-and-seven (1904 +)* **5** A prison sentence: *to get a jolt in the stir (1912 + Underworld)* *v*: *We didn't want to jolt*

jone or **joan** *v* To play a game of verbal abuse, esp against the opponent's mother and family; JIVE, play the dozens: *All kinds of kids jone, says 11-year-old Hamani/readers howling in outrage that we had dared to suggest that the verb "joan" (meaning to insult) was possibly*

derived from Joan Rivers [1930s+ Black; origin unknown]

Jones or **jones** *n* **1** Heroin; HORSE, SHIT **2** A drug habit: *works at two jobs to keep up with the “Jones”* **3** Any intense interest or absorption: *The twenty-something elite definitely has a jones for Jones* *v*: *She’s jonesing for those diamond earrings* [1960s+ Narcotics; origin unknown; perhaps an innocent code word used by addicts and dealers] **See** JOHNSON, SCAG JONES

Joneses **See** KEEP UP WITH THE JONESES

jook **See** JUKE

Jose **See** NO WAY

josh *n*: *It was just a tasteless little josh (1978+)* *v* To joke; banter; KID: *continued Brian, unwilling to be joshed out of it (1845+)* [origin unknown; the earliest example is capitalized, suggesting a proper name; Eric Partridge gives “a country man; a rustic” as one sense, so perhaps the primary meaning is “to behave like a bumpkin” or “to fool one by seeming to be a rural simpleton”]

joskin *n* A rustic; HICK • Still chiefly British [1811+; fr British dialect *joss*, “bump,” with wordplay on *bumpkin*]

jostle *v* To pick pockets: *a junkie vocation known as “jostling”/always looking for cats who were down there jostling (1929+)*

journo *n* A journalist; ink-stained wretch: *Another part of his pedigree had been unknown even to Mr Blair himself until the journos started trampling over his life (1990s+)*

jowls **See** BAT one’S GUMS

joy-juice *n* Liquor (1950s +)

joy pop *v phr* To take narcotic injections occasionally, esp intramuscularly (1930s + *Narcotics*)

joy-popper *n* **1** A newcomer among narcotics users, esp among marijuana smokers **2** A person who takes, or claims to take, only an occasional dose of narcotics: *For the “joy-poppers” had no intention of becoming addicts in the true sense* (1930s + *Narcotics*)

joy-powder *n* Morphine (1950s + *Narcotics*)

joy ride *n phr* A ride or trip taken solely for pleasure, esp a fast and merry junket that is in some way forbidden: *They stole the police car and had themselves a joy ride* (1908 +)

joy-rider *n* An occasional and nonaddicted user of narcotics (1940s + *Narcotics*)

joy smoke *n phr* Marijuana (1940s + *Narcotics*)

joy-stick *n* **1** The control lever of an airplane (1910 +) **2** The steering wheel of a car, esp a hot rod (1950s + *Hot rodders*) **3** The control lever for a computer or video game (1967 +) **4** An opium pipe (1940s + *Narcotics*) **5** (also **joy-knob**) The penis (1920 +) [the origin of the control-lever senses is uncertain; perhaps fr the tremulous shaking of the stick, perhaps fr the joyful sensation experienced while flying]

j-school *n* A school or college of journalism: *I did not say that j-school was a worthless educational experience, only that the degree was not highly regarded by potential employers/Truman is trying to entertain J-*

school questions about the future of American magazines (1990s+)

J smoke *See J*

juane *n* Marijuana or a marijuana cigarette: *a half-smoked juane on the side (1930s+ Narcotics)*

juco (JOO koh) *n* **1** A junior college; community college **2** A junior-college student or graduate: *those fugitives from a real education, those, those “jucos” (1939+)*

Judas Priest *interj* An exclamation of surprise, dismay, emphasis, etc [1914+; a euphemism for *Jesus Christ*]

judy *n* **1** A sexually promiscuous girl or woman (1823+) **2** A girl or woman (1885+)

Judy sentence I have you in sight or on the radar screen [WWII Air Forces; origin unknown]

jug *n* **1** A bottle of liquor: *Fetch me my jug, son (1886+)* **2** A relatively cheap wine, usu bought in large bottles; JUG WINE: *Far more people drink jugs these days (1980s+)* **3** A vault or safe (1925+ *Underworld*) **4** A bank (1845+ *Underworld*) **5** A carburetor (1960s+ *Hot rodders*) **6** A good holding place: “jug”—*a nice big hold (relative to the rest of the route) (1990s+ Rock climbers)* **v** To put in jail; imprison: *I get jugged for parking in the wrong places? (1834+)* [rock-climbing sense fr jughandle in the same sense, found by 1955]

jug, the *n phr* Jail; prison: *Refusal will result in a quick trip to the jug (1834+)*

jugful *See* NOT BY A LONG SHOT

juggins or **jiggins** *n* **1** A stupid person; dolt; JUGHEAD (1882 + *British schoolboys*) **2** A dupe; EASY MARK, PATSY, SUCKER (1940s + *Underworld*)

juggle *v* To alter, esp with a view to deception and advantage:
Owners Might Juggle Lineup Before Facing Players/They discovered that the CEO had been juggling the books (1813 +)

juggler *n* PUSHER (1960s + *Narcotics*)

jughandle *n* A tightly curved portion of road shaped like the handle of a jug, used for making turns from and into a busy highway (1961 +)

jughead *n* A stupid person; fool; KLUTZ (1926 +)

Jughead *n* An Internet search tool for files in the public domain (1990s + *Computers*)

◁**jugs**▷ *n* A woman's breasts; HOOTERS [1920 + *Australian*;
abbreviation of *jugs of milk*]

jugular *adj* **1** Bent on destruction; ruthless; savage; CUTTHROAT: *inert and inept troop of Democrats unable to beat back an aroused and jugular band of Republicans* **2** Vital; crucial; life-and-death: *a jugular issue for the industry/Barbara has a very strong respect for power and position. She will not ask the ultimate jugular question* [1960s + ;
based on the phrase *go for the jugular*]

jug wine *n phr* A relatively cheap domestic wine, usu bought in large bottles (1980s +)

juice modifier: a juice dealer/juice man *n* **1** Liquor; BOOZE, the SAUCE:

liquor much stronger than the present-day juice/Those people just don't hold the juice (1828 +) **2** Money, esp illegally obtained and used by gamblers, loan sharks, etc: *The juice, the C, the commission* (1940s + *Underworld*) **3** The interest paid on a usurious loan; VIGORISH: *interest, known in the trade as vigorish, vig, or juice* (1940s + *Underworld*) **4** Electricity; current and voltage: *Turn on the juice so we can see something* (1896 +) **5** Gasoline; motor fuel: *If you have a light supply of juice you climb at about 200 mph* (1909 +) **6** A fuel additive for cars, esp hot rods; POP (1960s + *Hot rodders & car racing*) **7** Nitroglycerin; SOUP (1925 +) **8** Influence; CLOUT, PULL: *"What's juice?" "I guess you'd call it pull. Or clout"* (1935 +) **9** Methadone, often administered in fruit juice (1960s + *Narcotics*) **10** Anabolic steroids: *About 60 per cent of the wrestlers he knew during the 1980s used steroids, commonly known as "juice"* (1980s +) **11** Authority; power: *It was the stuff of cool and ultimate victory. The Redskins have the juice, the Broncos don't/As one of the oldest gangsters in the neighborhood, Bogard had the credibility, or "juice," to call the shots* (Black 1980s + *hip-hop & street talk*) **v** To hit the ball hard and far; SLUG²: *The club starts struggling a bit, so he starts trying to juice the ball* (1960s + *Baseball*) **See** BUG JUICE, HAPPY-JUICE, JOY-JUICE, JUNGLE-JUICE, LIMEY, MOO-JUICE, TORPEDO JUICE

juiced or **juiced up** *adj* or *adj phr* **1** Intoxicated, either by liquor or narcotics; HIGH, STONED: *Crabs was already pretty juiced up/You been smoking too much grain. You head is juiced up* (1937 +) **2** Excited, perhaps overly so; enlivened; inspired; PUMPED UP: *When they get into (regular season) games, they get all juiced up. You try to protect them* (1960s +) *adj phr* **3** Manufactured or tampered with so as to travel

longer and farther: *One thing about the ball that never changes is the occasional claim that it's "juiced up"/When a little singles hitter like the Mets' Howard Johnson connects for a tape-measure homer, all you hear is "The ball is juiced, it's hot" (1980s + Baseball)*

juice dealer *n phr* A racketeer who loans money at very high interest; usurer; LOAN SHARK, SHYLOCK (1960s + *Underworld*)

juiced up *adj phr* **1** Using anabolic steroids (1990s +) **2** SOUPED UP (1940s + *Hot rodders*) *See* JUICED

juicehead *n* A heavy drinker; LUSH: *He had a raving juicehead for a wife/All wayfarers, outlaws, broken-down poets and juiceheads looking for a free drink were welcomed (1955 +)*

juice man *n phr* A hoodlum who collects money owed to a racketeer: a "juice man" (loan collector) for syndicate hoodlum bosses (1950s + *Underworld*)

juicer *n* An alcoholic (1967 +)

juice up *v phr* **1** To energize; invigorate; PUMP oneself UP: *A thing like that can really juice you up/He seems, if anything, to be juicing up the pace these days* **2** To fuel: *They juiced the car up and set out* **3** SOUP UP (1940s + *Hot rodders*) **4** To use anabolic steroids (1980s +)

juicy *adj* Interesting in a sexy or scandalous way; sensational; RACY: *He spared us none of the juicy details (1883 +)*

juju *n* Magical or supernatural power: *has some juju going for him*

juke¹ or **jook** *n* **1** JUKE HOUSE **2** JUKE JOINT **3** JUKEBOX **4** Liquor; BOOZE: *That is some juke, man. That is some bad beverage (1990s + Black street*

talk) **v 1** To tour roadside bars, drinking and dancing: *I want you to go juking with me* **2** To have a good time; disport oneself, esp at a party (1970s + *College students*) **3** To dance (1970s + *College students*) **4** To do the sex act; **BOFF, SCREW**: “*Did you juke?*” “*No, we just met*” (1980s + *College students*) **5** To kill; **OFF, SCRAG**: *A man said the lady who got juked was Alice Carmody* (1980s +) **6** To absent oneself from school; **PLAY HOOKY** (1970s + *Canadian teenagers*) [1900s + ; fr Gullah fr Wolof and/or Bambara, “unsavory”] **See** JIVE AND JUKE, JUKING AND JIVING

juke² v To swerve and reverse evasively; trick a defender or tackler; **JINK**: *Rather than to juke a defensive back, then duck inside/Zaffuto juked past Peters on the right side* [Sports; fr Scots *jouk*, of uncertain origin]

jukebox n A coin-operated record player in a restaurant, bar, etc (1930s +)

juke house n phr A brothel [1940s + ; the date should probably be earlier]

juke joint n phr A usu cheap bar, roadside tavern, etc, with a jukebox (1935 +)

juking and jiving modifier: *Hart despises “the jukin’ and jivin’ phoniness of politics”* **n phr** Frivolity and evasiveness; triviality and inanity (1970s + *College students*) **See** JIVE AND JUKE

jumbo adj Very large; gigantic; **HUMONGOUS**: *I had a jumbo portion* [1897 + ; fr the London Zoo’s great elephant, sold in 1882 to P T Barnum; *Jumbo* is a version of the word for “elephant” in various

West African languages, for example, Kongo *nzamba*]

jump modifier: *a jump tune/jump music* **n 1** SWING (1930s + *Jive talk*) **2**
A dance where the music is swing or jive; HOP (1930s + *Jive talk*) **3**
A street fight between teenage gangs; RUMBLE (1950s + *Street gangs*) **4**
The continuation of a news story on a later page: *Wednesday's Times had to concede, in the jump, that Kennedy didn't make any Cabinet appointments until December 1st* (1920s + *Newspapers*) **5** A base runner's lead off base in a possible steal (1960s + *Baseball*) **v 1**
To attack; assault: *We jumped him as he left the place* (1789 +) **2** To rob, esp at gunpoint; HOLD UP (1859 +) **3** To be furiously active; be vibrant with noise and energy: *Before long the joint was jumpin'* (1930s + *Jive talk*) <4> To do the sex act with or to; SCREW: *She admitted she always wanted him to jump her*> (1638 +) **See** GET THE JUMP ON someone or something, HAVE THE JUMP

jump all over (or **up and down on**) someone **v phr** To rebuke and berate someone very severely; savage someone: *He jumped all over her for not telling him/The critics loved to jump up and down on Brubeck: He only once won a Down Beat critics' poll* (1950s +)

jump at **v phr** To agree eagerly: *They all jumped at the idea of a picnic* (1769 +)

jump bail **v phr** To default on one's bail (1872 + *Underworld*)

jump band **n phr** A band playing fast and heavily accented swing music: *A "jump band" is a big and powerful jazz band* (1930s + *Jive talk*)

<**jump** (or **jump on**) someone's **bones**> **v phr 1** To make strong

sexual advances; sexually assault: *All these spades is gonna jump on your bones and pull your pants off/Have I tried to jump your bones? 2*
To do the sex act with someone: *how you wish to deal with the question of me jumping your bones (1960s +)*

jump down someone's throat v phr To make a violent and wrathful response: *When I hinted he might be mistaken he jumped down my throat (1916 +)*

jumped-up adj Elevated above one's proper status; JACKED UP • Chiefly British: *The elite regard me as a jumped-up interloper (1835 +)*

jumper See PUDDLE-JUMPER, TREE JUMPER

jump someone in v phr To initiate a gang member by beating: *Gang members asked if she wanted to be "jumped in" to their gang (1990s + Street gangs)*

jump it v phr To play in a swing music style: *Then the band would "jump it" and O'Connell would join in a swinging rendition (1930s + Jive talk)*

jump (or go) off the deep end v phr To act precipitately; take drastic action: *He jumped off the deep end and got married again (1940s +) See* GO OFF THE DEEP END

jump on someone v phr JUMP ALL OVER someone: *When severe reproof is administered, the culprit is said to be jumped on (1868 +)*

jump on someone's meat v phr To rebuke severely; savage; CHEW someone OUT: *Chickenshit lieutenant used to jump on our meat every night at roll-call (1970s +)*

jump on the bandwagon *See* GET ON THE BANDWAGON

jump someone out v phr To eject someone from a gang, usu with beating: *So I didn't have to go through the beat-down or be jumped out (practices in which the gang members are physically beaten if they decide to leave) (1990s+ Street gangs)*

jump out of one's skin v phr To react vehemently from joy or fear: *If that promotion comes through, he'll jump out of his skin/When it thundered she jumped out of her skin (1798+)*

jump page n phr A page on which stories are continued: *the mixup of several paragraphs appearing on the inside "jump page" (1920s+ Newspapers)*

jumps, the n phr the JITTERS (1899+)

jump salty v phr To become angry (1938+)

jump ship v phr To desert or abandon one's job; change jobs: *Why did CBS' Deborah Norville jump ship to replace Bill O'Reilly (1940s+)*

jump smooth v phr To give up crime and violence; adhere to the law: *tells why he decided to "jump smooth" (1950s+ Street gang)*

jump-start n The act or process of starting or setting in motion something that is stalled or sluggish: *Linden teacher gives kids jump-start on information highway v* To start a car by attaching cables to the battery from a car that runs; start anything that resists going: *They finally jump-start that poor dumb animal/Mubarak Tries to Jump Start Stalled Mideast Peace Talks (1980s+)*

jump street n phr The very beginning; the GIT-GO, SQUARE ONE: *One usually*

starts at the beginning of the endeavor, or from Jump Street [1980s+; at the first jump in the same sense is found by 1577]

jump the couch *v phr* To exhibit frenzied or aberrant behavior that makes others think one is insane [2005+; fr Tom Cruise's antics on Oprah TV show]

jump the gun *v phr* To act prematurely: *We planned it well, but jumped the gun and ruined it* [1940s+; *beat the pistol* is found by 1905]

jump the shark *v phr* To resort to stunt programming when a television show is past its peak [1998+; fr episode on *Happy Days* TV show in which this was the actual stunt]

◁**jump through one's ass**▷ *v phr* To make a very quick response to a sudden difficult demand: *Old Man says we'll have to jump through our ass to get that done by tomorrow* (1970s+ Army)

jump through hoops *v phr* **1** To serve, obey, or accommodate someone without question, esp in a harried, frantic way: *You had to jump through hoops to please that guy* **2** To exert oneself mightily; strain: *I had to jump through hoops to get you that job* [1917+; fr the image of a trained animal *jumping through hoops* in a show, circus, etc]

jump-up *n* A job that must be done at once, with little time to think and prepare (1970s+ Army)

jumpy *adj* Nervous; apprehensive; JITTERY: *One of our pals is jumpy and he needs a bodyguard tonight* (1879+)

jungle *n* **1** A camp or regular stopping place near the railroad on the outskirts of a town: *always leaves the jungle like he found it (1914 + Hoboes)* **2** Any place of notable violence, lawlessness, etc: *The neighborhood's becoming a jungle (1906 +)*

◀**jungle-bunny**▶ *n* A black person: *It's no longer open season on jungle bunnies. That day is gone (1950s +)*

jungle-juice *n* Liquor made by prisoners, soldiers, etc, from any available alcohol and flavorings [WWII Army fr earlier nautical; originally *African rum*]

junk modifier **1:** *junk jewelry/junk mail* **2:** *one of the most dangerous junk neighborhoods in the city* *n* **1** Worthless and shoddy things; useless and inept productions; trash; DRECK, SHIT: *Why do you always buy such junk? (1842 +)* **2** Tricky serves and lobs; soft, hard-to-reach shots: *He is a master of control and of dealing "junk"/looping junk, the players' term for soft, short shots (1970s + Tennis)* **3** JUNK-BALL (1950s + *Baseball*) **4** Narcotics; DOPE: *Canales has a noseful of junk a lot of the time/Sherlock Holmes. All he does is play a fiddle and take junk (1920s + Narcotics)* **5** Unspecified heaps and objects; stuff; crap: *Men carry more junk in their pockets than women do in their pocketbooks* [fr a British nautical term for old or weak rope or cable, found by 1485]

junk-ball modifier: *Eddy Lopat, another "junk ball" pitcher* *n* A deceptive and unorthodox pitch; JUNK (1950s + *Baseball*)

junk bond *n phr* A bond having high yield but relatively little security, used as a payment for one company by another in a

corporate merger: *Fed adopts "Junk Bond" curbs (mid-1970s +)*

junked up *adj phr* HOPPED UP (1940s + *Narcotics*)

junker *n* JUNKIE (1920s + *Narcotics*) **2** A narcotics dealer; CONNECTION, JUGGLER (1920s + *Narcotics*) **3** A car or other machine that is worn out and ready to be discarded, or that has been discarded; something that ought to be discarded; PIECE OF SHIT: *You can't litter the countryside with the kind of crap that the junkers are/driving a junker around and around one of the chicken coops (1950s +)*

junket *n* A tour undertaken by a government official at public expense and often for no public benefit: *An agricultural junket through nine European countries (1886 +)* *v*: *junketed like contemporary tourists* [fr *junket*, "feast; merrymaking," found by 1530 and of obscure origin; the verb is found by 1821, meaning "take a pleasure trip," without the US political sense]

junk fax *n* An unsolicited and unwanted fax message

junk food *n phr* Foods like potato chips, popcorn, sugar-coated cereals, and the like, esp popular with children and having little nutritional value (1970s +)

junk heap *n phr* **1** A worn and ramshackle old car; HEAP, JALOPY (1940s +) **2** Any unsightly or chaotic place: *His room was always a mephitic junk heap (1906 +)*

junkie or **junky** *modifier*: *Junkie logic is the ability to justify whatever needs to be done to support an addiction* **n** **1** A narcotics addict: *I didn't want to be a junkie/The man I was to find was both a junkie and pusher (1923 + *Narcotics*)* **2** A devotee or addict of any sort:

Zuckerman describes himself as a “newspaper and magazine junkie”/Growth junkies, snipes one former insider, go-go boys

junk mail *n phr* Mail, usu third class, consisting of advertising circulars, appeals for money, etc, and sometimes addressed to “resident” (1950s +)

junk shop *n phr* A shop where old discarded things and miscellaneous bits of potential trash are sold; secondhand store (1940s +)

junk sports *n phr* Professional wrestling, “gladiator” contests, big-wheel trucking, and other quasi-sports events seen on television: *He hosts occasional “junk sports” specials on network TV (1980s +)*

junkyard dog *n phr* A particularly vicious dog or person: *If the unions took over our plants, we would turn as mean as a junkyard dog/He’s a junkyard dog. He’s tough. He’s nasty (1980s +)*

junque *n* Old and discarded odds and ends; rummage; JUNK: *a wonderful collection of white elephants, trash, treasures and, as the antique dealers spell it, “junque”/ever since the self-described “junque” jeweler arrived in New York [the pseudo-French spelling lends a certain chic and dignity to the material]*

jury is still out, the *sentence* No decision has yet been made; the question is open: *The jury is still out on whether he’s fitting in/The jury is still out on whether the traditional union is necessary for the new workplace/The jury may remain out on Mr. Clinton’s contradictory character for a long time (1980s +)*

just another pretty face, not **See** NOT JUST AN OTHER PRETTY FACE

just around the corner *adv phr* Nearby; imminent: *Prosperity is just around the corner, the President said (1914+)*

just fallen off the turnip truck *adj phr* Unfledged; inexperienced; ignorant: *Detective Benjamin Calazo was not a cop who had just fallen off the turnip truck [1980s+; the agricultural source suggests an earlier date]*

just folks *n phr* Ordinary people; common people; hoi polloi: *The Mayor moved about in a warm-up jacket, playing just folks (1908+)*

just for the hell of it *See* FOR THE HELL OF IT

just off the boat *modifier* Just in from a foreign country; also, naive and gullible: *They don't understand; they are just off the boat*

just one of those things *n phr* Something that can hardly be predicted, justified, explained, or avoided, but is an intrinsic and sometimes a distressful part of living • The gestural equivalent is a shrug: *Their divorce was just one of those things (1930s+)*

just the ticket *adv* Just the thing needed or wanted: *cup of coffee will be just the ticket*

just what the doctor ordered *n phr* Exactly what is needed: *Account Supervisors: We're just what the doctor ordered for your career (1914+)*

just whistling Dixie *See* NOT JUST WHISTLING DIXIE

juve or **juvie** or **juvey** *adj* Juvenile; youthful: *the next monster juve act would be (1940s+)* **modifier 1:** *Andrews became the archetypal juve lead on British television 2: juvey hall/juvey books* **n 1** A young

person; child; juvenile, esp a juvenile offender: *I'm a juve* (1940s +)
2 An actor who plays youthful roles; a juvenile lead: *No juve in this show?* (1935 +) **3** A juvenile court or a reformatory: *I was desperate. You ever been in juvie?* (1940s +)

K

K *n* **1** A thousand dollars: *Four bastards no smarter'n you and me got ninety-seven K out of some little bank (1970s +)* **2** A kilogram, esp such a quantity of narcotics; KEY: *even occasional Ks (kilograms) of cocaine (1960s + Narcotics)* **3** A strikeout (1861 + *Baseball*) [fr the Greek prefix *kilo-*, “one thousand”; baseball sense said to have been originated in a score-card notation system either by Henry Chadwick or M J Kelly]

kabibble *See* ISH KABIBBLE

kablooey *See* GO BLOOEY

kafooster *n* Useless talk; babble; BULLSHIT: *There has been a great deal of kafooster about emasculating the price-control act (1940s +)*

kaka *See* CA-CA

kale or **kale-seed** *n* Money; the GREEN STUFF: *trite slangisms, among 'em kale, dough, mazuma, etc (1902 +)*

kamikaze *modifier* Violent and reckless; self-destructive: *his kamikaze style would lead to fine, suspension, or tragic injury (1960s +)*

kangaroo *v* To convict someone with false evidence; FRAME (*Prison*)

kangaroo court or **club n phr** 1 A mock court: *The toughest prisoner announced that he was president of the Kangaroo Club and would hold court (1853 +)* 2 A small-town police court where traffic fines to transients are high and usu divided among the police (1940s +)
[origin unknown]

kaput or **kapoot** (kah PŌŌT) **adj** Inoperative; ineffective; FINISHED: *I would be “kaput” without a folding machete/Only sixteen of us. After that, kapoot* [1914 +; fr echoic-symbolic German slang]

Katie bar the door sentence Get ready for trouble; a desperate situation is at hand: *If you fall too far behind, it’ll be Katie-bar-the-door real quick/If they were on to him, well, that’s all she wrote. Katie bar the door (1930s +)*

katrinka n An old car: *makes it clear that some of the old katrinkas are worth their weight in gold (1990s +)*

kayo or **kay n** A knockout; KO (1923 + *Prizefight*)

kazoo or **gazoo** or **gazool n** 1 The buttocks; anus; ASS: *an impossible, unreliable, self-destructive pain in the kazoo/We have subcommittee staff running out the kazoo/You know he’s off balance and you’d like to stick it in his gazoo* 2 Toilet; CAN: *I tore it up and flushed it down the kazoo* [1970s +; origin unknown; perhaps fr Louisiana French *zoozoo*, “buttocks, ass”; perhaps *kazoo*, known in its standard sense fr the 1880s, suggested the anus in being tubular and emitting sounds]

kee See KEY²

keed n KID (1920 +)

keel over v phr To fall down; collapse: *He was so tired he was about to keel over* [1876 + ; fr nautical careening of a ship so that the keel is raised]

keen adj Excellent; wonderful; NEAT: *I think she's a keen kid/“Keen?” Blanche said. “I haven't heard that word in 20 years”* (1900 + Teenagers & students) **See** PEACHY

keep someone v phr To support and maintain someone for sexual purposes: *She has “an old man” who “keeps” her/Maybe some day some guy'll even keep me* (1560 +)

keep (or maintain) a low profile v phr To stay inconspicuous; try not to attract much attention: *Better keep a low profile until this blows over* [1975 + ; originally a military term, based on the idea of offering a small target; low profile is found by the 1960s]

keep an eye on someone or something v phr To watch; guard over: *So I paid her a visit so as I could keep an eye on the house* (1818 +)

keep one's chin up v phr To maintain a positive attitude (1938 +)

keep one's cool v phr To retain one's composure; stay calm; COOL IT: *We'd all better keep our cool and not provoke him* (1950s + *Beat & cool talk*)

keeper n Someone or something worth keeping or trying to keep: *This husband's a keeper*

keep one's eye on the ball v phr To pay strict attention to what one is doing; be alert and undistracted (1907 +)

keep one's eye peeled (or skinned) v phr To be vigilant; look

carefully: *I keep my eye peeled for bargains (entry form 1853 +, second 1833 +)*

keep one's hair on v phr To stay unruffled; be calm; COOL IT: *I'm coming. Just keep your hair on, won't you? (1885 +)*

keep someone honest v phr 1 To pose a requirement or test so that someone does not go unchallenged: *We'll ask her a few questions just to keep her honest 2* To pitch close to a batter; throw at a batter: *Keep him honest, which means, make the batter afraid of you (Baseball) (1960s +)*

keep it down to a dull (or loud) roar v phr To be quiet, or quieter: *How about keeping the noise level down to a dull roar?/Earl thrives on controversy, and we're trying so hard to go the other way or, at least, keep it to a loud roar (1940s +)*

keep it on the DL v phr To keep something secret [1990s + Teenagers; fr *keep it down low*]

keep it real interj Be yourself; don't be a fake: *They all pretend to be sophisticated, but I'm keeping it real*

keep one's nose clean v phr To avoid doing wrong or seeming to do wrong; stay above reproach: *If you only keep your nose clean, you'll have it* [1887 +; fr a traditional injunction of a mother to a child to wipe its nose, wash behind its ears, etc]

keep someone on a short leash v phr To keep someone under close control: *We must keep that crazy kid on a short leash (1970s +)*

keep someone on ice v phr To keep someone under one's authority:

i > complete control to keep Dubie on ice indefinitely (1894+)

keep on keeping on v phr To persist; hold one's course; KEEP ON TRUCKING: *He would keep on keeping on and worry later about his destination (1970s+)*

keep something on the down low v phr To keep quiet about a matter; to not divulge information: *Please keep this idea on the down low*

keep someone on the reservation v phr To ensure and require orthodoxy, esp in politics: *White House chief of staff McLarty kept Penny, McCurdy and Stenholm completely on the reservation [1990s+; fr the notion of confinement to an Indian reservation]*

keep on trucking v phr To carry on; continue what one is doing, esp working, plugging away, etc; KEEP ON KEEPING ON (1972+)

keep one's pecker (or rocket) in one's pocket v phr To refrain from the sex act; practice continence: *Another professor remarked crudely, "You had better teach your husband to keep his pecker in his pocket, so you can get your research done" (1990s+)*

keep one posted interj Please keep me informed of what is going on; supply up-to-date information (1800s+)

keeps See FOR KEEPS, PLAY FOR KEEPS

keep several balls in the air (or irons in the fire) v phr To be involved on multiple jobs, projects, etc [1980s+; fr the image of a juggler]

keep one's shirt (or pants) on v phr 1 To stay unruffled; be calm;

COOL IT: *He was beginning to holler, so I told him to keep his shirt on 2*
To be patient; wait a bit; **HOLD ONE'S HORSES:** *Keep your pants on and the*
guy will be back (1854 +)

keep tabs on v phr To keep informed about; keep watch on or over:
Who's gonna keep tabs on the receipts? [1888 + ; fr *tab*, "bill,
account"]

keep the faith (baby) interj Stay encouraged and positive: *a 60s*
chant to keep the faith

keep one's trap shut v phr To stay or become silent; **SHUT UP:** *Otherwise*
you do yourself a favor and keep your trap shut, you understand?
(1899 +)

keep something under one's hat v phr To keep something quiet, or a
secret; keep to oneself: *Payne, keep this under your hat, will you?*
(1885 +)

keep up with the Joneses v phr To strive, esp beyond one's means,
to keep up socially and financially with others in the same
neighborhood or in the same social circle: *Never keep up with the*
Joneses; drag them down to your level, it's cheaper [1913 + ; fr the
title of a 1913 comic strip by Arthur R Momand]

kee-rect (KEE rekt) **adj** Correct (1950s +)

kef (KEEF, KAYF) **n** (also **keef** or **kief** or **kif**) Marijuana, hashish, or
opium [1878 + Narcotics; fr Arabic, "pleasure"]

kegger or **keg party n** A beer party; **BEER BUST** (1960s + *Teenagers &*
students)

keister (KEE stər) (also **keester** or **keyster** or **kiester** or **kister**) *n* **1**

The buttocks; rump; ASS: *I've had it up to my keister with these*

leaks/What a sensation; we'll knock them on their keister (1931 +) **2** A

rear trousers pocket (1930s + *Pickpockets*) **3** A suitcase that opens

into a display of goods: *the typical "keister" of the street hawker*

(1930s + *Hawkers*) **4** A safe; strongbox; CRIB (1914 + *Underworld*) [fr

British dialect *kist* or German *Kiste*, "chest, box," transferred to the

buttocks perhaps by the pickpocket sense or by the notion that

something may be concealed in the rectum]

Ken or **Ken-doll** *n* A conformist, conventional man; a man lacking

any but bland typical characteristics: *Mr Quayle has been called a*

sort of Ken/Bergin, the male villain, is reprising his role as the Ken-doll

monster of Sleeping With the Enemy [fr the male counterpart of the

Barbie doll]

ker- (KURR or KUH) *prefix* A particle that intensifies echoic terms

for blows, splashings, hard efforts, etc:

kerbang/kerblam/kerplunk/kerslosh/kerwallop (1840s +)

kerflooie or **kerflooey** *See* GO BLOOEY

kerflummoxed *adj* FLUMMOXED

kerfuffle *n* Disorder; confusion: *Don Imus has thrown the capital into a*

kerfuffle [1813 +; fr Scots dialect; often spelled *curfuffle*]

kerplunk *See* GO KERPLUNK

kettle of fish *See* FINE KETTLE OF FISH

kevork or **kervork** *v* To terminate; kill; nullify: *This is going nowhere.*

I'm going to kervork it/This kind of kevorks the idea of blood sucking. But mosquitoes come prepared [1990s + ; fr Dr Jack Kevorkian, a Michigan physician who assists suicides; the ker- variant is based on simple misspelling or perhaps a subliminal influence of the ker-prefix]

key¹ **adj** **1** Essential; crucial: *U.S. commitment and pressure are key to what happens next/The attendance of cute guys at this party is key (1980s +)* **2** Excellent; splendid; FRESH, KILLER, AWESOME (1980s + Students) **n** **1** A typical Ivy League student; WHITE SHOE (1950s + College students) **2** The area on the court legal for free throws: *Best way to choose a nominee? "Personally," said Bradley, "I favor a jump shot from the top of the key"/knocked home a 19-footer from the top of the key (1990s + Basketball)* **v** To vandalize a car by scratching it with a key: *Well, did you key her car? (1980s +)* **See** CHURCH KEY

key² or **kee** or **ki** **n** A kilogram (about 2.2 pounds) of a narcotic: *enough opium to produce a key (kilo) of heroin/Anybody who can handle a key of pure coke is dealing big [Narcotics; fr kilo]*

key club **n phr** **1** A loose association of married couples in which keys to dwellings are exchanged more or less at random for sexual purposes **2** A private social organization to which one can purchase a membership

key on something **v phr** To regard something as important; discover that something is "key": *One of the things I kept keying on was this notion of a distinctly hand-oriented society (1990s +)*

keyster **See** KEISTER

keystone or **keystone sack** or **keystone cushion**, the *n phr* Second base (1917+ *Baseball*)

ki *See* KEY

kibbles and bits *n phr* Crumbs of cocaine [1990s+ Teenagers; fr *kibbles*, “products of a kind of grinding,” found by 1891; the verb is found by 1790; today chiefly a form of dog-food pellets]

kibitz or **kabitz** *n*: *Ixnay on the kabitz. Get me? v 1* To give intrusive and unrequested advice while watching a game, performance, etc: *He was kibitzing us all the way 2* To banter, comment: *We were kibitzing around* [1920s+; fr Yiddish fr German *Kiebitz*, “peewit, lapwing,” a noisy little bird]

kibitzer *n* A person who gives intrusive advice: *I don't mind admitting that a good kibitzer has 20--20 hind-sight* (1920s+)

kibosh *v* To eliminate; terminate; KEVORK, KILL: *That was kiboshed promptly by the White House spokesman* (1884+)

kibosh, the *n phr* The termination; sad end; sudden doom: *This latest goof is probably the kibosh* [1834+; origin unknown and very extensively speculated upon; perhaps, e.g., fr Irish *cie bais*, “cap of death,” referring to the black cap a judge would don when pronouncing a death sentence; perhaps fr Yiddish] *See* PUT THE KIBOSH ON someone or something

kick *n 1*: *If you got any kicks, you can always quit* (1839+) *2* A pocket, esp a pants pocket: *I have a hundred thousand boo-boos in the kick* (1849+) *3* A surge or fit of pleasure; a feeling of joy and delight; BELT, CHARGE: *He was having a real kick/I get a kick out of you*

(1941 +) 4 Anything that gives one a feeling of pleasure, joy, etc:
i> That's a kick. Ridin' a guy down Wilshire in daylight (1941 +) 5
A strong personal predilection; THING: *Arthur is on the Paris
kick/several opportunities to let her wail on a comic kick (1940s +) 6*
Power; impact; potency: *One of those stories with a kick (1844 +) 7*
A shoe: *Hey, nice kicks (1904 +) 8* A spurt of speed at the end of a
footrace: *Full into his kick as he passed them (1980s + Sports) v 1* To
complain; protest; BITCH: *She can just kick all she wants to (1388 +) 2*
To end one's drug habit; become "clean" (1936 + *Narcotics*)
[pocket sense fr late 17th-century *kicks*, "breeches"] **See** GET A KICK OUT
OF someone or something, ON A ROLL, SIDEKICK

kick around v phr 1 To idle about; drift around rootlessly; BAT AROUND:
He put in a couple years just kicking around California 2 To acquire
experience; become seasoned: *sound like a band that's kicked around
for a long time* [1940s + ; the sense "walk around" is found by
1839]

kick someone around v phr To abuse; repeatedly maltreat: *Mr Nixon
said the press wouldn't have him to kick around anymore (1912 +
Students)*

kick something around v phr To discuss or think about something;
consider from all angles: *It's something we've been kicking around for
about 10 years (1940s +)*

kick-ass adj (also **kick-butt** or **kickyer-ass**) Rough; powerful; ROUGH-
ASS, TOUGH: *that kick-ass attitude/gave up its last drop of kick-ass
Gewurztraminer/the only team without a kick-butt run blocker on their
line n* Power; energy; virility: *He's the guy who coaxed the kick-ass*

back into the torque/with the gall to label such Muzak kick-ass
(1970s + Army)

kick ass v phr 1 To assert power; be rough; punish: *He once again kicked ass with the Wagner 6 to 1 triumph/Geometry and algebra were kicking my ass/We kicked a little ass last night* **2** To have power; have unpolished vigor: *just country that kicks ass and entertains* (1970s + Army)

kick ass and take names v phr To behave very roughly and angrily;
KICK ASS: *screaming, berating, threatening, kicking ass and taking names/Paschal ain't gonna do nothing but kick ass and take names*
[1970s + Army; fr the image of a rough and punitive police officer, drill sergeant, prison guard, etc]

kick at the cat n phr A turn; a chance: *When the pages are pasted up, the Engraving Department gets its second kick at the cat/Give everyone an opportunity to take a kick at whatever cat is up for study* (1970s +)

kickback n Money given to someone illegally or unethically: *Buying another poor devil's job for \$50 or a kickback from his pay/All the cops were on the pad, getting kickbacks from the hookers* (1934 +)

kick back v phr 1 To return or restore, esp to give back stolen property: *Stolen goods returned to the rightful owner are "kicked back"* (1926 + *Underworld*) **2** To give part of wages, fees, etc, illicitly to another in return for one's job or other advantage: *The cabbies had to kick back a lot to the dispatchers* (1934 +) **3** To relax; CHILL OUT: *Use the pool, kick back. Who knows?/That's when I started kicking back with my brothers and homeboys* (1980s + *Students fr black*)

kick booty v phr KICK ASS (1980s +)

kick down v phr To shift into a lower gear in a truck or car (1960s +
Truckers)

kicker n 1 A complainer; KVETCH (1876 +) 2 A small motor, esp an outboard, used for a boat; EGGBEATER (1928 +) 3 Anything that gives great pleasure; KICK: *The kicker was the station wagon* (1940s +) 4 A hidden cost, qualification, defect, etc; CATCH: *The kicker is that if you are subject to this requirement, your homeowner's policy will not cover the injuries/The kicker to this one is simple* (1970s +) [fourth sense probably fr poker, "a high card kept, along with a pair, in draw poker," found by 1892]

kickers n Shoes, esp tennis shoes (1950s + *College students*)

kickin' adj Excellent; BAD, COOL, way rad: *a creamy Italian dressing with kickin' taste and bumpin' pack-aging/The game was kickin'* (1980s +
Black teenagers)

kick in v phr 1 To pay up money; make one's proper contribution; FORK OVER: *to ask you guys to kick in your share of the expenses* (1908 +) 2 To begin action; take effect; begin to function: *The endorphins were beginning to kick in/Now the morphine was kicking in/The motel kitchen was kicking into action* (1980s +) [second sense perhaps fr earlier phrase *kick it in gear*, "shift the gears of a car"]

kicking ass n phr A good time; a BALL: *We went downtown and had a kicking ass* (1980s + *College students*)

kicking can n phr An object of attack, esp a habitual object; whipping boy: *The young alderman's chief kicking can has been four*

oil companies [1980s+; fr the children's game kick the can]

kick in the ass (or **the [seat of the] pants**), a *n phr* **1** A surprising and dampening rebuff, misfortune, etc; a slap in the face **2** A strong stimulus or impetus; a SHOT IN THE ARM: *If this campaign doesn't get a kick in the ass we're dead/The sizzle of the 24-valve V8 Mercedes M3 assures the driver of the right kind of kick in the pants (1940s+)*

kick it v phr **1** To rid oneself of narcotic addiction: *I don't think anybody knew anyone who had kicked it (1936+ Narcotics)* **2** To play swing or jazz very vigorously (*Jazz talk & jive talk*) **3** To idle about with nothing much to do: *Dude canceled his party, so we'll probably end up kickin' it/I didn't really have any friends at school, I just used to kick it by myself (1980s+ Black teenagers)*

kick it up a notch v phr To make something more exciting, intense, or interesting, as a food dish or a social gathering: *He's adding garlic to kick it up a notch/She broke out the martini ingredients to kick it up a notch [1990s+; fr chef Emeril Lagasse, whose other catch phrases are "BAM!" "Feel the love," and "Oh yeah, babe"]*

kick line n phr A theatrical chorus line: *Who does not know Madonna's latest stage show, complete with tubular-breasted males and a kickline of Dick Tracies? (1990s+)*

kickoff modifier: *kickoff dinner/kickoff speech n* The beginning; inauguration: *He planned the kickoff of his campaign for Texas (1875+)*

kick off v phr **1** To die: *after his wife kicked off (1921+)* **2** To leave; depart (1950+) **3** To begin something; inaugurate: *the chain of*

thought kicked off by it/a relative newcomer who kicked off her film career with Menace II Society

kick-out *n* A dishonorable discharge (*WWII armed forces*)

kick someone out *v phr* To eject, expel, or dismiss someone; BOUNCE:
She kicked Peter out of the apartment (1711 +)

kick (or break) out the jams (or jambs) *v phr* To behave in an unrestrained way; be uninhibited; LET oneself GO: *Kick out the jams, motherfuckers/On Side Two they kick out the jams, or at least shake the Jello [1960s + Musicians; said to be fr jams, “chocks under the wheels of a dragster, used to hold it in place”]*

kick over *See* KNOCK OVER

kick pad *n phr* A place where one is detoxified from narcotics: *I was clean three more days, left the kick pad (1960s + Narcotics)*

kick party *n phr* A party where LSD is used (*1960s + Narcotics*)

kicks *n* **1** Pleasure and gratification; BANG, JOLLIES: *Sock cymbal’s enough to give me my kicks (1950s +)* **2** Shoes (*1891 +*) *See* GET one’s COOKIES

kick-start *n* To inaugurate; launch, esp vigorously: *Clinton’s speech was a kick-start for his health plan [1990s + ; fr the starting of a motorcycle by a kick downward on the start pedal]*

kick stick *n phr* A marijuana cigarette (*1960s + Narcotics*)

kick the bucket *v phr* To die: *Old man Mose done kicked the bucket [1785 + ; origin uncertain; perhaps fr the bucket a suicide might kick from beneath him in hanging himself]*

kick-the-cat modifier Angry and frustrated: *puts the IRS in a surly, kick-the-cat mood* [1990s + ; *fr the image of one who kicks the cat when the real target of anger is unknown or unreachable*]

kick the tires v phr To make a quick and superficial inspection; do cursory checking: *simplistic agrarian vision bought by the war-weary nation without kicking the tires/has asked PC Magazine to kick the tires and slam the doors* [1970s + ; *fr such an examination made while appraising a car*]

kick someone to the curb v phr To be no longer employed or wanted; made surplus: *It shall be rendered, as the British say, redundant. Or as my contemporaries would observe, kicked to the curb* (1990s +)

kick-up n 1 A dance or dancing party (1778 +) 2 A commotion; disturbance; RUCKUS (1793 +)

kick up a fuss (or a row) v phr To make a disturbance; complain loudly and bitterly; RAISE CAIN: *I don't want his lawyer to kick up a fuss about this/I'm afraid the opposition will kick up a row over this* (entry form 1848 +, variant 1759 +)

kick someone upstairs v phr To remove someone from office by promotion to a nominally superior position: *It is conceivable but not likely that Mr Gromyko has been kicked upstairs where he'll no longer influence Soviet foreign policy* (1821 +)

kicky adj 1 Very chic and modish: *a lot of kicky clothes, many of them imports/so easy and smooth in their short, kicky skirts, pantyhose* 2 Exciting; ravishing; FAR OUT: *It's very kicky to be able to drive right over*

sand dunes/a kicky way to spend a couple of years (1950s +)

kid modifier: his kid sister/my kid cousin **n 1** A child: *She's a cute little kid (1599 +)* **2** A young or relatively young man or woman: *the kids in college (1884 +)* **v 1** To joke; jest; banter; *JOSH: a funny guy, always kidding (1891 +)* **2** To attempt to deceive; try to fool: *Are you kidding me? (1811 +)* [fr *kid*, "an infant goat"; bantering and fooling senses perhaps fr an alteration of dialect *cod*, "hoax, fool"] **See** I KID YOU NOT, NEW KID ON THE BLOCK, WHIZ KID

Kid, the *n phr* A copilot; meter-reader (*WWII Army Air Forces*)

kid around *v phr* To jest and banter; avoid seriousness; *FOOL AROUND (1940s +)*

kiddie or **kiddy** *n* A child [1889 +; the form *kiddey* is found by 1823]

kidding *See* NO KIDDING

kiddo or **Kiddo** *n* A person, esp one younger than oneself • Used nearly always in direct address: *Look, kiddo, I don't think you quite understand/There's a lot of loot there, kiddo (1905 +)*

kidney *See* GRIPE ONE'S ASS

kidney-buster *n 1* A rough road **2** A hard-riding truck (*1940s + Truckers*)

kidpic *n* A movie made primarily for children: *all the purer-than-thou preteens and tots from kidpics like Angels in the Outfield (1990s +)*

kid show *n phr* A sideshow (*1930 + Circus*)

kid stuff *n phr* 1 Something too easy to challenge an adult; CINCH, PIECE OF CAKE: *That swim to Catalina's kid stuff* 2 Activity not appropriate for an adult; childish concerns: *Give up the kid stuff and find a real job* (1923 +)

kidvid modifier: *The trade journals call the children's program segment on television the "kidvid ghetto"* *n* Children's television: *a year when kidvid is being publicly scolded/The three networks are offering the public more kidvid* (1955 +)

kief or **kif** *See* KEF

kiester *See* KEISTER

kife *v* To swindle; cheat (1940s + *Circus*)

◀**kike**▶ *adj:* *kike neighborhood n* 1A Jew • Sometimes used by Jews of other Jews they regard with contempt; several early occurrences are found in a theatrical context (1904 +) 2 A low or shady merchant or shop • The 1916 advertisement quoted here was placed by a Jewish merchant: *Go into any little kike, little hole-in-the-wall* (1916 +) [origin unknown and much speculated upon; the most plausible explanation, published by J H A Lacher, a former traveling salesman, is that the established German-American Jewish salesmen ridiculed their Eastern European colleagues in the 1890s with the name *kiki* because so many of their surnames ended in "ki" or "ky," whence *kike*]

kill *n* 1 A murder: *for the Shannon kill* (1930s +) 2 An enemy airplane, ship, tank, etc, destroyed (*WWII armed forces*) *v* 1 To drink or eat up: *The lady killed a dozen oysters* (1833 +) 2 To spoil

or ruin: *One bad grade killed his chances for med school (1573 +)* **3**
To demoralize totally; make hopeless: *The third defeat killed him (1940s +)* **4** To be extremely successful with: *The Evergreen Review kills him (1899 +)* **5** To make an audience helpless with laughter; FRACTURE: *My McEnroe act kills 'em (1856 +)* **6** To do very easily; ACE: *I killed the geology final (1900 + Students)* **7** To eliminate a newspaper story or part of it (1865 +) **8** To extinguish a light (1934 +) **9** To stop or turn off a motor (1886 +) **See** IN AT THE KILL, KILLER

kill, to **See** DRESSED TO KILL, DRESSED TO THE TEETH

killer adj (also **killer-diller**): *not only was it a killer version/The killer idea of the century is about to be laid on you (1970s +)* **n 1** A very attractive person: *Ain't she a killer? (1937 +)* **2** (also **killer-diller**) A person or thing that is remarkable, wonderful, superior, etc; BEAUT, DOOZIE: *The song's a killer!/The famed quartet steams out "killer-dillers" (1930s +)* **3** A marijuana cigarette; JOINT (1940s + *Narcotics*) **See** LADY-KILLER

kill for something **v phr** To be willing to go to great extremes to get something: *I'd kill for a beer now*

killing adj Excellent; FRESH, GREAT, KILLER, way rad: *And good things are known as "rad, tough, booming, legit, fly, kill, killing, chilling, fresh or nasty" [1980s + Teenagers; the sense "fascinating, bewitching, irresistible" is found by 1619, but the current use is an independent phenomenon rather than a survival]* **See** MAKE A KILLING

killjoy n A morose pessimist; CRAPE-HANGER, GLOOMY GUS

killout n A remarkable person or thing; KICK (1950s + *Black*)

kill the clock v phr To use delaying tactics and plays at the very end of a period or game: *and ran double tight-end formations sets to kill the clock (1960s + Sports)*

kill (or shoot) the messenger modifier: *In a shoot-the-messenger diversionary tactic, the spotlight swung away from Clarence Thomas and smack onto Totenberg v phr* To punish the bearer of bad news: *Dreyfus is right. Let's not make the mistake of killing the messenger (1980s +)*

kilo connection n phr A wholesale narcotics dealer who dilutes the pure drug by about 50 percent *(1960s + Narcotics)*

kilter See OUT OF KILTER

kimono See PINE OVERCOAT

kin See KISSING COUSIN

kind (or sort) of See SOME KIND OF

king n 1 (also **kingpin**) The leader; chief: *king of the motorcycle jumpers (entry form 1382 +, variant 1867 +)* **2** A prison warden *(1940s + Underworld)* **3** A yardmaster or freight conductor *(1940s + Railroad)*

king-hell modifier Very severe; outstanding; WORLD-CLASS: *The poor fool is pushing a stroller around the zoo in 90-degree heat with a king-hell hangover (1990s +)*

King Kong n phr 1 Something huge and threatening; SIX-HUNDRED-POUND GORILLA: *"It wouldn't matter if you put King Kong in the Treasury," complained Sir Teddy Taylor. "The Germans control our economy"*

(1955 +) **2** Cheap and strong liquor: *No six-year-old child got no business drinking that King Kong* (1960s + *Black*) [fr the 1933 movie *King Kong*, about a gargantuan gorilla]

king-size or **king-sized** *adj* Very large; extra large: *Your nagging gives me a king-size headache/The new king-sized rockets stopped three Red tanks* (1940s +)

kink modifier: *a kinko diner who tries to attract Chong's attention* **n 1** (also **kinko**) A person with deviant or bizarre tastes, esp sexual: *I'm not some kind of kink* (1960s +) **2** A deviant practice or predilection, esp sexual: *a Nazi with a kink for prepubescent girls/the female staffer whose kink is making love down in the morgue* **3** A style featuring deviation and oddness: *blend of leaden TV-style melodrama and deadpan modernist kink* (1990s +) **4** A defect or flaw, esp a minor one; BUG: *We'll work the kinks out of the plan before we announce it* (1868 +)

kinky *adj* **1** Dishonest; illegal; CROOKED: *"kinky" gambling paraphernalia* (1927 +) **2** Stolen: *a kinky car* (1927 + *Underworld*) **3** Eccentric; crotchety (1860 +) **4** Bizarre; weird: *no offense so kinky that the Maximum Enchilada and his consiglores wouldn't commit it* (1950s +) **5** Deviant and abnormal, esp sexually: *a very kinky guy, likes being beat up* (1950s +) **6** Showing or pertaining to sexual deviation: *kinky photos/kinky porn* [the stronger fifth sense is said to have originated among British homosexuals in the 1920s]

kip *n 1* A bed: *in the kip* **2** Sleep; a sleep or nap **3** A night guard **v**: *find a place to "kip"* [1859 +; origin uncertain; perhaps fr Danish *kippe*, "hut, mean alehouse," whence the early 1800s sense

“brothel”]

kipe *v* To steal: *kiped some cherries from the bar (1960s +)*

kishkes or **kishkas** *n* The entrails; innards; GUTS: *His kishkas were gripped by the iron hand of outrage and frustration [1959 + ; fr Yiddish]*

kiss *n* KISS-OFF (1950s +) **See** BUTTERFLY KISS, FRENCH KISS, SOUL KISS

KISS (KIS) *sentence* Keep it simple, stupid, or keep it simple and stupid (1980s +)

kiss and make up *v phr* To become reconciled; forget past animosity: *Mandela and his rival Chief Buthelezi, whose followers have been slaughtering one another by the thousands, have kissed and made up (1940s +)*

kiss and tell *modifier* Gossiping about one’s friends, esp about sexual exploits: *Reagan condemned these “kiss and tell” books by former government servants/those juicy kiss-and-tell escapades that seem so much a part of the professional athlete’s life (1695 +)* *n phr*: *Don’t look for a kiss-and-tell from Ulichny (1980s +)* [the dated instance for the first sense is in the original verb form]

◁**kiss-ass** or **kiss-butt**▷ *modifier* (also **kissy-ass**): *another kiss-ass review of an extremely bad album/his tone much different, being efficient and a little kissy-ass* *n* 1 A toady; sycophant; BROWNOSE, ASS-KISSER: *and not have people think, “Oh, what a kiss-butt”* 2 Sycophantic flattery: *using the old kiss-ass with the colonel (1960s +)*

◁**kiss ass**▷ *v phr* To flatter one’s superiors; BROWNOSE: *He likes to be*

perfect and kiss ass (1930s +)

◁**kiss someone's ass**▷ **v phr** To flatter someone; curry favor with superiors: *I didn't kiss anybody's ass and I didn't expect anybody to kiss mine (1749 +)*

kisser n The mouth; the face: *It would be a pleasure to drop one on your kisser, I admit/show the good side of my kisser/Reagan had that quizzical "do I talk now?" look on his kisser (1860 +)* **See** ASS-KISSER, MOTHERFUCKER

kiss something goodbye v phr To take leave of something, often unwillingly; bid farewell: *I figure, this is it, say your prayers and kiss your butt goodbye (1930s +)*

kissing See MOTHERFUCKING

kissing cousin (or kin) n 1 A relative close enough to be kissed in salutation, hence anyone with whom a person is fairly intimate: *The two species will often prove to be kissing cousins, for they'll crossbreed/You guys talk like kissing cousins 2* A close copy: *He had a kissing cousin of Montgomery's mustache (1940s +)*

◁**kiss my ass**▷ **sentence** An invitation to perform an obsequious and humiliating act; **GO FUCK oneself, FUCK YOU** • Always an insulting challenge and rejection: *"What should I say?" asked Belle. "Tell him to kiss my ass"/I want him to kiss my ass in Macy's window and tell me it smells like roses (1705 +)*

kiss of death n phr The reason something will end or die; something causing ruin: *Interviewing with them could be the kiss of death*

kiss-off n (also **California kiss-off** or **New York kiss-off**) A

dismissal, esp a rude one; the BOUNCE, BRUSH-OFF, KISS: *He got up out of his chair, the standard kiss-off* **v** To die (1940s + *Black*)

kiss off v phr **1** To dodge; evade: *had kissed off all raps (1930s +)* **2**
To kill: *who kissed off Martin (1940s +)*

kiss someone or something off v phr **1** To dismiss rudely; BRUSH
someone OFF: *The receptionist kissed me off quite cheekily* **2** To let go
of, to attempt to forget; KISS something GOODBYE: *You can kiss that
money off (1930s +)*

kiss someone out v phr To deny someone their share: *When a member
of a mob is deprived of his share he is “kissed out” (1920s +
Underworld)*

kiss the canvas (or the resin) v phr To be knocked unconscious, esp
in a boxing match (1919 +)

kiss the dust v phr BITE THE DUST (1940s +)

kiss up to v phr To flatter obsequiously: *kisses up to the popular crowd*

kissy-face (also **kissy-huggy** or **kissy-kissy** or **kissy-poo**) **modifier**:

*But she was such a kissy-face up person/Pauley and Norville’s kissy-
poo exchange on Today/For two weeks after that kissy-face weekend,
our love connection continued/is not gonna be a kissy-huggy*

*book/Many of the rich and famous, the kissy-kissy socials had all but
disappeared* **n** **1** Displays of affection; cuddling; blandishments:

From now on it’s all PR work and kissy-kissy here and kissy-kissy there

2 A kiss: *The symbol of welcome is a handshake, not a kissy-poo* **v**: *I’ve
trained poodles so that they won’t kissy-face everybody (1980s +)* **See**

PLAY KISSIE

kister *See* KEISTER

kit *See* HEAD KIT

kit and caboodle (or **boodle**) *n phr* The totality; everything: *the whole kit and caboodle, go hang/the whole kit and boodle of 'em* [1861 +; fr 1700s British *kit*, “outfit of equipment,” plus early 1800s *boodle*, “lot, collection,” perhaps fr Dutch *boedel*, “property, effects”]

kitchen *n* **1** The cab of a locomotive (1940s+ *Railroad*) **2** The stomach **3** The space over home plate where a **batter finds it easiest to hit a fair ball; a batter's preferred point of delivery;** WHEELHOUSE: *He'd throw it in my kitchen, so I moved up a step toward the plate* (1970+ *Baseball*) [baseball sense perhaps ultimately fr *kitchen*, “stomach,” found by 1594] *See* IF YOU CANT STAND THE HEAT STAY OUT OF THE KITCHEN

kitchen cabinet *n phr* An unofficial set of advisers to a president or chief, made up of close friends and cronies, originally of President Andrew Jackson (1832+)

kite *n* **1** A letter or note, esp one smuggled into prison (1851+ *Underworld*) **2** An airplane • Chiefly British (1917+) **v** To write a check when one does not have the funds to cover it, hoping to find them before the check is cashed: *The bill was due before payday, so I had to kite the check* (1934+) [fly a kite in the verb sense is found by 1808] *See* FLY A KITE, GO FLY A KITE, HIGH AS A KITE

kitsch or **Kitsch** (KITCH) *n* Literature or art having little esthetic merit but appealing powerfully to popular taste: *It stands unchallenged as*

a masterpiece of kitsch/The closest I can come to America is through its Kitsch [1925 + ; fr German, “trash, rubbish”]

kitschy *adj* Being or resembling kitsch: *Visconti’s kitschy film/Its kitschy Lupe Velez ambiance* (1960s +)

kitten *See* HAVE KITTENS, SEX KITTEN

kitty *n* The pot or pool of money in a gambling game, made up of contributions from the players; a contributed fund: *Each put \$25,000 in the kitty* (1891 + Gambling) *See* BITCH KITTY, DUST KITTY, FEED THE KITTY, IT’S A BITCH

kiwi *n* An Air Force member, esp an officer, who shuns airplanes (*Air Force fr WWI British*) *n* A New Zealander (1918 +) [fr the name of a flightless bird of New Zealand, fr Maori]

Kleenex *n* Something to be used once and discarded: *Presidents and champions who used women like Kleenex were merely exercising an aspect of their power/The freeways might open up in an earthquake, causing roadways to fall. He called them disposable Kleenexes good for one blow/Delors himself says that the French go through politicians like Kleenex* [1990s + ; the name of a brand of disposable tissues, a trademark since 1925]

klepto *n* A kleptomaniac: *“Bloody klepto,” says Siddhartha* [1940s + ; fr a Greek combining word *klepto-*, “thief”]

click or **klik** *See* CLICK

kluck *See* CLUCK, DUMB CLUCK

kludge or **klodde** or **kluge** (KLOŪJ, KLUJ) *n* 1 A term of endearment for

a favorite computer, esp a somewhat defective one **2** A computer program that has been revised and tinkered with so much that it will never work **3** A ludicrous assortment of incompatible and unworkable components: *You see this mechanical kluge (contraption), stop, think, and decide to do something* [1962+ Computer; apparently fr German **klug**, “clever,” with an ironic reverse twist]

klutz or **clutz** (KLUTS) **n** **1** A stupid person; idiot; BLOCKHEAD: *Now, klutz that I am, I thought of Neal/A small crowd of first-class clutzes* **2** A clumsy person; a lubberly lout: *I am the world’s biggest klutz. I trip over my own feet, drop things* [1968+; fr Yiddish, “blockhead,” literally “block”]

klutz around v phr To behave stupidly; tamper with clumsily (1960s+)

klutzy adj **1** Stupid; idiotic: *any clever kid playing a klutzy kid* **2** Clumsy; unhandy (1968+)

kneecap v **1** To shoot someone in the kneecap or legs: *There was another drive-by and one of the deacons got kneecapped* **2** To disable as if by kneecapping: *The law-and-order issue, which Republicans have used for a generation to kneecap Democrats at will, has been coopted* (1975+)

knee-deep adj phr Overwhelmed; oversupplied; very much involved; UP TO ONE’S ASS in something: *I never even tried to make money, and now I’m knee deep in the stuff* (1940s+)

knee-high to a grasshopper adj phr (Variations: **bumblebee** or

duck or **frog** or **mosquito** or **spit** or **splinter** or **toad** may replace **grasshopper**) Very short or small, esp because young: *He's been smoking since he was knee-high to a grasshopper* [1851 + ; *knee high to a toad* is found by 1814]

kneejerk modifier: *one more gesture to the kneejerk hawks in the Congress/Yet McDonald is no mere kneejerk critic of the evangelicals* **n**
1 A reflexlike action or response: *Being nasty to women is a kneejerk with him* (1958 +) 2 A person who reacts with a reflexlike response: *a seventy-year old kneejerk best remembered for castigating the Reverend Bill Moyers for dancing the frug in the White House* (1958 +)
v: *We need less kneejerking on both sides in these arguments about the environment* (1980s +) [fr the patellar reflex, described as *knee jerk* by 1876]

knees **See** BEES KNEES, CUT **oneself** OFF AT THE KNEES, CUT **someone** OFF AT THE KNEES, GET TAKEN OFF AT THE KNEES

kneesies **n** Clandestine amorous friction of the knees: *We got back to the table and played kneesies while we talked* [1951 + ; modeled on *footsie*]

knee-slapper **n** Something very funny, esp a joke; BOFFOLA: *That's a knee-slapper/If she ever told a knee-slapper, I wasn't there* (1966 +)

knickers **See** HAVE **someone** BY THE SHORT HAIRS

knife and gun club **n** A hospital emergency room [1990s + Medical; modeled on *fish and gun club*]

knitting, one's **See** STICK TO **one's** KNITTING

knob **n** 1 The head: *Can you get that through your ugly knob?* (1725 +)

2 A despised person; DORK, JERK, PRICK: *Don't they know what a knob he is?* (1990s +) [*knob*, “penis,” was British use in the 1800s, according to Tony Thorne]

knobber *n* A male homosexual transvestite prostitute: *It is where the knobbers, or transvestites, hang out* [1970s +; perhaps for their wearing of false *knobs*, “female nipples or breasts”; perhaps because they give *knob jobs*]

knobby *See* NOBBY

◁**knob job**▷ *n phr* An act of fellatio; BLOW JOB (1960s +)

◁**knobs**▷ *n* A woman's breasts or nipples; KNOCKERS (1970s +) *See* WITH BELLS ON

knock *n*: *It wasn't a disinterested comment—it was a knock/The knock on Fernandez is he can't field* **v 1** To deprecate; criticize severely; dispraise; PUT someone or something DOWN: *by knocking Hymie Salzman* (1896 +) **2** To borrow or lend; ask or beg (1950s + Black) **3** To give: *C'mon, baby, knock me a kiss* (1944 + Black) *See* DON'T KNOCK IT, HAVE something CINCHED

knock, the *n phr* The bill for food, drinks, etc; check; the DAMAGE, TAB: *By the way, I'm picking up the knock* (1970s +)

knockabout *adj 1* Casual; informal: *These are my knockabout clothes* (1880 +) **2** Noisy; raucous; crude: *Beverly Hillbillies has knockabout humor/in the contest of a knockabout comedy it's deeply offensive* (1892 +)

knock around *v phr* To idle about; loaf; KICK AROUND (1834 +)

knock back v phr To drink in one gulp: *The Colonel got his drink, and after he had knocked it back with one swift motion, he began to feel better/there to mull their downside risks and knock back free champagne (1915 +)*

knock someone's block off v phr To hit very hard; give a severe trouncing; CLOBBER: *One more word and I'll knock your block off [1908 +; block, "head," is found by 1635]*

knock someone cold (or cuckoo) v phr To knock unconscious or semiconscious (1896 +)

knock someone (or knock 'em) dead v phr To delight or impress someone extremely; KILL, KNOCK someone's SOCKS OFF, WOW: *I want a fantastic scenery number for my life's movie. Something that'll knock 'em dead (1917 +)*

knockdown modifier Designed to be sold unassembled and to be easy to assemble and disassemble: *a knockdown kitchen set (1795 +)*
n 1 An introduction: *You want a knockdown to something (1865 +)* **2** An invitation (1940s +) **3** Money stolen from one's employer: *considered the "knockdown" a perfectly legitimate source of profit (1860s +)*

knock down v phr 1 To pocket money taken from one's employer: *clerk who was knocking down on the till (1850s +)* **2** To earn: *Hommuch he knock down a week? (1929 +)*

knock something down v phr To sell something at auction: *I'll knock it down to you for three bucks [1760 +; probably fr the gavel blow given by an auctioneer to signal and conclude a sale]*

knockdown-drag-out *adj phr* Very violent; unrestrained; ALL-OUT:

They were having a knockdown-drag-out argument when I got there n:

Seems the neighbors were having a knockdown-drag-out (1827 +)

knocked *adj* Arrested (1920s + *Police*) **See** HAVE something CINCHED

knocked out *adj phr* **1** Drunk (1940s +) **2** Intoxicated with a narcotic; HIGH, STONED (1940s + *Narcotics*) **3** Overcome with delight; extremely pleased: *and were really knocked out with it/Everybody was knocked out to be asked (1940s +)* **4** Very tired; exhausted; POOPED (1950s +)

◁**knocked up**▷ *adj phr* Pregnant (1813 +)

knocker¹ *n* A consistently negative critic; detractor: *that pack of knockers that have been howling (1898 +)* **See** APPLE-KNOCKER

knocker² or **k'nocker** (KNAH kər) *n* A very important person; BIG SHOT, macher: *Knocker means a big shot, either real or imagined, and you pronounce that first "k" [1960s +; fr Yiddish, literally "one who cracks or snaps a whip"]*

◁**knockers**▷ *n* A woman's breasts; HOOTERS: *Dumb broads with big knockers, that's what guys go for (1941 +)*

knock someone's **eyes out** *v phr* To astonish and delight someone: *But wa-ait a minute! I'm going to knock your eyes out! (1930s +)*

knock someone or something **for a loop** (Variations: *throw* may replace **knock**; **goal** or **row** or **row of ash cans** or **row of milk cans** or **row of Chinese pagodas** or **row of tall red totem poles** may replace **loop**) *v phr* **1** To hit someone or something very hard;

CLOBBER: *We knocked the villain for a row of ash cans/You certainly knocked him for a row of tall red totem poles* **2** To unsettle severely; disrupt calm and confidence; discombobulate: *It must have thrown him for a loop, but he asked* **3** To delight extremely; thrill and amaze; **KILL, KNOCK someone's SOCKS OFF:** if this climactic sequence doesn't knock you for a loop/Wouldn't that knock the boys for a row or two/guaranteed to knock the keenest mind for a loop **4** To cope with very well; **ACE, CREAM:** *Would he hit Math 1 in the eye? He'd knock it for a loop (1920 +)*

knock someone or something galley-west (or skywest) v phr To hit someone or something very hard, esp to knock unconscious; trounce; **CLOBBER:** *Jimmy likewise knocked him galley-west/something that will knock somebody around here skywest (1875 +)* **See** GALLEY-WEST

knock heads together v phr To exercise persuasive or punitive force; **KICK ASS:** *Oakley has spent much of his time in Somalia opening dialogue between different elements trying to knock heads together to get them to talk (1940s +)*

knock something into a cocked hat v phr To demolish, esp to disprove, invalidate, or show the falsity of a statement, plea, etc: *This knocks our whole case into a cocked hat [1833 +; literally "flatten," since a naval officer's cocked hat could be flattened]*

knock someone or something into the middle of next week v phr
To hit extremely hard; **CLOBBER (1836 +)**

knock it off or knock it v phr To stop doing or saying something; desist; cut it out • Often a stern command: *I told you creeps to knock*

it off, now I'm gonna waste you (1902 +)

knock someone's lights out v phr **1** To beat severely; BEAT THE SHIT OUT OF someone, CLOBBER **2** To impress enormously; KNOCK someone's SOCKS OFF: *I have a story that would knock your lights out [1940s + ; probably based on the expression *liver and lights*, "liver and lungs," used of animals by at least 1704; influenced by *lights*, "eyes"]*

knockoff modifier: *extra pieceworkers to turn out knockoff blouses/knockoff Coach bags bought in Chinatown n* A copy or close imitation: *Clint Eastwood's Pale Rider is a contemporary knockoff (1966 +)*

knock off v phr **1** To stop, esp to stop working; desist (1649 +) **2** To produce, esp with seeming ease and rapidity: *He knocked off a couple of portraits at \$40,000 each (1820 +)* **3** To delete; shorten by: *Let's knock off this last paragraph/If you do that I'll knock off half the purchase price (1811 +)* **4** To consume, esp to drink; KNOCK BACK, KNOCK DOWN: *after knocking off a glass of wine/while I knock off two or three or four drinks (1950s +)* **5** To kill; murder; assassinate; RUB OUT: *Before long the spiders knock off Michael/sent to a lonely spot and knocked off (1919 +)* **6** To die; pass away (1704 +) **7** To arrest, esp after a raid: *Local cops had free authority to knock them off (1926 +)* **8** To rob; HOLD UP, KNOCK OVER: *The pair knocked off several shops, a bank, and jewelry stores (1919 +)* ◁19▷ To do the sex act with, esp as a prostitute; satisfy a sex client: *if you're a street hooker and knock off twenty or thirty guys a day/She couldn't see anybody just knocking her off one time (1940s +)* **10** To defeat; overcome: *The Tigers knocked off the Yankees today (1950s +)* **11** To attain; operate at: *The old tub*

was knocking off 12 knots and groaning like a cow in labor (1940s +)

◁**knock off a piece**▷ **v phr** To do the sex act; copulate; SCREW
(1940s +)

knock someone or something **off** one's **pins v phr** To stun; bowl over; invalidate: *Nature knocked our theories off their pins (1880 +)*

knockout modifier: *That was a knockout plot/a knockout wife and two daughters n* An especially attractive person or thing; DISH: *Saaay, you know, you're a knockout (1906 +)*

knock oneself **out v phr 1** To work very hard; do one's utmost: *They like "knocking themselves out" for Variety 2* To have a splendid and exhausting time: *They knocked themselves out drinking and dancing [1936s + ; perhaps fr Yiddish aroysshlogn zikh]*

knock someone **out v phr 1** (also **knock** someone **stiff**) To make someone unconscious, esp with a blow (1896 +) **2** To delight or impress someone extremely; KILL, KNOCK someone's SOCKS OFF: *I read a lot of war books and mysteries and all, but they don't knock me out too much/He knocked me out. He just killed me! (1942 +)*

knock something **out v phr** To make or produce, esp rather quickly and crudely: *I haven't got time to knock the script out myself (1856 +)*

knockout drops n phr Chloral hydrate or another stupeficient drug, esp when put into a drink of liquor; **MICKY FINN (1876 +)**

knockover n A robbery; HEIST (1940s + Underworld)

knock over v phr 1 (also **kick over**) To rob; HOLD UP, KNOCK OFF: *made regular sweeps by jet, knocking over airport motels/We kick over the*

spot/to prevent people from coming in to case the joint so they can knock it over later (entry form 1928 + , variant 1930 +) **2** To raid: *knocked over a reputed bookmaking parlor (1931 +)*

knocks *n* Extreme pleasure; gratification; COOKIES, JOLLIES, KICKS: *They get their knocks that way*

knock (or **blow**) someone's **socks off** *v phr* To delight extremely; thrill and amaze; KILL, SEND: *It's undressing that really knocks your socks off/We got a sound that's gonna knock your socks off/a "surprise special" that we think will blow your socks off [1845 + ; these senses fr mid-1800s sense "defeat utterly," fr the notion of hitting someone so hard that he is lifted right out of his shoes and socks]*

knock the habit *v phr* To stop taking drugs, esp end a drug addiction

knock them in the aisles *See* LAY THEM IN THE AISLES

knock the props from under (or **out from under**) *v phr* To make a position, argument, opinion, etc, invalid; call into serious question: *What he found out knocks the props from under her story (1910 +)*

knock the spots off someone *v phr* To defeat someone decisively; CLOBBER (1950 +)

knock the tar out of *v phr* To beat up; KNOCK THE SHIT OUT OF someone or something

knock (or **throw**) **together** *v phr* To make or produce something quickly: *what you said about knocking something together that we could eat/In the few minutes available they threw together a cover story*

(1874+)

knock someone up v phr <1> To make pregnant (1813+) 2 To awaken someone; arouse by knocking • Fr a British term meaning to awaken someone with a knock at the door (1663+)

know *See* IN THE KNOW

know all the angles v phr To understand all the aspects of something; to be extremely knowledgeable: *know all the angles of this business*

know (or have) all the answers v phr 1 To claim or affect special intimate knowledge: *That little creep over there always thinks he knows all the answers* 2 To have a jaded, cynical, spiritless sort of wisdom: *She don't bother anymore, knows all the answers* 3 To know a case or subject thoroughly • Most often in the negative: *Even your doctor doesn't have all the answers* (1940s+)

<**know one's ass from one's elbow** (or **from a hole in the ground**), not> *See* NOT KNOW one's ASS FROM one's ELBOW

know a thing or two v phr To have practical sagacity; be worldly-wise; *KNOW WHAT'S WHAT* (1792+)

know beans, not *See* NOT KNOW BEANS

know Dorothy *See* BE A FRIEND OF DOROTHYS

know from v phr To know about; be acquainted with: *I don't know from trees much* [1940s+; fr Yiddish *vos vayz ikh fun*]

know someone from Adam, not *See* NOT KNOW someone FROM ADAM

know someone or something **from a hole in the ground**, not **See** NOT KNOW someone or something FROM A HOLE IN THE GROUND

know (or **not know**) **from nothing** *v phr* To be ignorant; be deeply uninformed or ill-informed: *Gallo knows from nothing* [1936 + ; fr Yiddish *nit zu wissen fin gornisht*]

know-how *n* Skill, esp technical skill; practical competence: *Takes know-how to run that thing* (1838 +)

know something **inside out** (or **backwards** or **backwards and forwards**) *v phr* To be very familiar with something: *know baseball inside out/know parallel parking backwards*

know-it-all *n* A person who pretends to virtual omniscience; BIGMOUTH, SMART-ASS: *Just what we need aroundhere, another know-it-all* (1895 +)

know something **like the back of one's hand** *v phr* To understand something intimately: *know this school like the back of my hand*

know one's **onions** *v phr* (Variations: *beans* or *business* or *stuff* may replace **onions**) To be very competent and authoritative in one's work: *I'm glad the tax accountant knows his onions* (1922 +)

◁**know shit from Shinola, not**▷ **See** NOT KNOW SHIT FROM SHINOLA

know the ropes *v phr* To be seasoned and informed; know the intricacies of a job, situation, etc; KNOW one's WAY AROUND [1874 + fr nautical; fr the myriad *ropes* of a sailing vessel]

know the score *v phr* To have essential and current information; understand what is important: *You look like a smart lad who knows the score* (1940s +)

know the time of day v phr To be knowledgeable (1897+)

know one's way around v phr To be informed and experienced; be seasoned and reliable: *He's been at the job for two years but still doesn't know his way around* (1940s+)

know what one can do with something v phr (Variations: *where one can put [or shove or stick or stuff] may replace what one can do with*) To know that one's offer, request, possession, etc, is held in extreme contempt • A euphemized way of saying that one can take something and stick it up his or her ass: *I saw the contract, and he knows what he can do with it/I told him where he can shove that great idea of his* (1950s+)

know what one is talking about v phr To be very knowledgeable • Often used in the negative, denoting speaking in ignorance: *popped off without knowing what he was talking about* (1920+)

know what's what v phr To have practical sagacity; KNOW WHICH WAY IS UP (1553+)

know when to hold them and when to fold them v phr To be aware of probabilities and consequences; KNOW THE SCORE: *Jackson knows instinctively how to bluff and bargain, when to hold 'em and when to fold 'em* [1980s+; fr a Kenny Rogers song, and fr poker]

know where it's at v phr To be up-to-date and cognizant: *the NOW generation, who, like, know what's happening and where it's at* (1960s+ *Counterculture*)

know where the bodies are buried v phr To have intimate and secret knowledge, esp of something criminal, scandalous, etc: *The*

president reckoned he had to keep that lawyer quiet, because he knew where the bodies were buried (1960s +)

know which way (or end) is up *v phr* To have practical sagacity;

KNOW WHAT'S WHAT: *Beneath the tunes and the glories, Mozart knew which way was up, and had a first-class comic imagination/They was all badly scared and muddled, and didn't know which end was uppermost (1891 +)*

knuckle *See* WHITE KNUCKLE

knuckleball or **knuckler** *modifier*: *a knuckleball artist n* A pitch thrown from the knuckles that moves slowly and erratically;

BUTTERFLY BALL: *Leonard's tantalizing knucklers (1906 + Baseball)*

knuckled *See* WHITE-KNUCKLED

knuckle down *v phr* To work hard and seriously; stop loafing; BUCKLE DOWN [1866 +; fr the act of putting one's *knuckles down* to the taw or marble preparing for a careful shot in the game of marbles, a use dating fr the mid-18th century]

knuckledragger *n* A rough, somewhat stupid and crude man; GORILLA, STRONG-ARM MAN: *the tendency of some covert agents, "the knuckledraggers" of the Special Operations Group, to revel in deception* [1970s + College students; from the image of a gorilla whose knuckles drag on the ground when it walks]

knuckle-dusters *n* Brass knuckles (1858 +)

knucklehead *n* A stupid person; BONEHEAD: *Movies are made by unappreciative knuckleheads* [1940s +; fr earlier **knuckle**, "bone"]

knuckler *See* KNUCKLEBALL, WHITE KNUCKLER

knuckles *See* RAP someone's KNUCKLES

knuckle sandwich *n phr* A hard blow to the mouth or face: *I feed him a knuckle sandwich/You keep that up and you're going to get a knuckle sandwich (1973+)*

knuckle under *v phr* To yield; THROW IN THE SPONGE: *It's a shame she had to knuckle under to those bigots (1860+)*

knuckle up *v phr* To fight with the fists; MIX IT UP (1990s+ Teenagers)

knucks *n* Brass knuckles; KNUCKLE-DUSTERS: *The "knucks" were hidden in the heel (1897+)*

KO (pronounced as separate letters) *modifier: a KO punch n* A knockout; KAYO (1922+ *Prizefight*) *v: He KOed six in a row See* TKO

kocker *See* ALTER KOCKER

KOed *adj* Knocked out, esp from drinking or tiredness: *KOED FROM THE LONG WEEK*

Kong or **kong** *n* KING KONG (1960s+ **Black**)

kook (KOOK) *modifier: did a kook piece with dancers n 1* An eccentric person; NUT, SCREWBALL: *The bomb cannot be exploded by a single "kook"/The early Streisand played kook (1950s+ Teenagers) 2* A novice surfer (1961+ *Surfers*) [fr cuckoo]

kookie or **kooky** *adj* Crazy; eccentric; DIPPY, GOOFY: *make you seem a little kookie/the kooky stunt so pleased him (1950s+ Teenagers)*

kootchy *See* the HOOTCHIE-COOTCHIE

kopasetic *See* COPACETIC

kosh *n* COSH

kosher *adj* Proper; as it should be; legitimate: *Everything looks kosher* [1896 + ; fr Yiddish fr Hebrew kasher, “fit, proper”]

◀ **kraut** or **Kraut** or **krauthead** ▶ *adj*: *kraut wine* *n* A German, esp a German soldier: *Oh, that krauthead (WWI armed forces)* [fr *sauerkraut*, regarded as a favorite and characteristic German food]

kvell (KVEL) *v* To display pride and satisfaction; beam: *The elderly couple kvell also upon making contact with a Jewish airstrip/Hollywood agents, kissing and kvelling* [1967 + ; fr Yiddish, literally “gush, flow forth”]

kvetch (kə VECH) *n*: *I am another kvetch when it comes to wind chimes/right in tune with the city medical spirit, which is basically one of kvetch* *v* To whine; complain; be consistently pessimistic: *I know you know. I’m just kvetching/Dealing with a controversial idea of public importance, Mobil kvetched* [1960s + ; fr Yiddish, literally “squeeze, press”]

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lab modifier: a lab report **n 1** A laboratory (1895 +) **2** (also **Lab**) A Labrador retriever (1960s +)

labonza n The belly; GUT, KISHKES: *She let him have it right in the labonza* [1950s + ; probably fr Italian *pancia*, “paunch,” with attached article and dialectal pronunciation]

labor See GRUNT WORK

labster n A designer and maker of illicit narcotics: *Among “labsters,” as clandestine drug producers are known* (1990s + *Narcotics*)

lace into v To attack and beat; thrash; CLOBBER: *I rushed at the fellow and fairly laced into him/Reviewers laced into the play* [1920s + ; *lace* in the same sense is found by 1599]

la-di-da (also **lah-de-dah** or **la-de-da** or **lah-di-dah**) **adj 1** Very refined and respectable: *Nobody weren’t going to make her live in a lah-di-dah place like that* (1940s +) **2** Carefree and nonchalant: *Her emotions at the dissolution of her 25-year marriage are anything but la-de-da* (1970s +) **interj** A phrase used to mean the equivalent of “It doesn’t matter”: *You’re canceling our date? Oh well, lah-di-dah* (1970s +) **n** A dandyish or sissified man; superrefined and delicate person: *Some lah-de-dah with a cane* (1883 +) **v** To treat in a

nonchalant, offhand manner: *The outfielder la-di-da'd the catch* (1970s +) [an imitation of casual and aristocratic speech]

ladies' (or lady's) man *n phr* **1** A man who pursues and otherwise devotes himself to women to an unusual degree; LOVER-BOY **2** A man who is attractive to many women: *He's so conceited. Thinks he's a real ladies' man* (1842 +)

ladies who lunch *n* Women who are well-off, style-conscious, and somewhat conservative in dress: *The title character, played by Mia Farrow, is apampered Upper East Side lady who lunches/Chic fleet—for tony ladies who lunch* [1970 + ; fr a song by Stephen Sondheim]

lady *n* Any woman; any grown-up female • Used increasingly since the 1970s, perhaps as a sort of response to feminism: *That's a very smart lady* (1400 + , US use 1890s +) **See** BAG LADY, FAIRY LADY, OLD LADY, the OPERA'S NEVER OVER TILL THE FAT LADY SINGS

lady, the *n phr* Cocaine (1960s + *Narcotics*)

Lady H *n phr* Heroin: *urging teens to stay away from Lady H* (1960s + *Narcotics*)

lady-killer *n* A man who is irresistible to women or has the reputation for being so; LADIES' MAN (1811 +)

lady of the night (or evening) *n*: A prostitute (1925 +)

lag *n* A convict: *lags who escape from the county pokey* (1930s + *Underworld*) **v** To arrest or imprison a criminal (1940s + *Underworld*)

lagniappe (LAN yap) *n* A dividend; something extra: *I hit her with a*

few real hard ones for lagniappe (or good measure)/From the company's point of view, of course, safety is a lagniappe [1849 + ; fr New Orleans Creole, origin unknown and much speculated upon; originally a little present or gratuity given to a customer by a New Orleans merchant]

laid *adj* Having had sex; copulated with: *definitely got laid*

laid-back *adj* Relaxed; easy-going: *a sort of laid-back, not insane Janis Joplin/relatively upbeat moods, laid-back-in-the-South-Seas [1960s + ; perhaps fr the reclining posture of highway motorcyclists]*

laid out *adj* Drunk (1929 +)

la-la (or la la or lala) land (also Lotusland) *n phr* **1** Los Angeles and Southern California in their reputed glamour and trendiness: *Suddenly the real Los Angeles intrudes itself. La-la land with its beaches and movie stars, Rolls Royces and Evian, Italian suits and car phones, coke-sniffing boy-girl bimbos, was gone/I just wanted to show you we ain't asleep down here in Lotusland* **2** An unreal and hallucinatory place; dreamland; Never-Never Land; Lotus Land: *After the operation I was in la-la land/This is directed at President Clinton, Mike McCurry, and anyone else in that la la land they call Washington/Stanford is a multicultural lala land; it's not the real world (1980s +)*

lallygag *See* LOLLYGAG

lam *v* **1** To depart; go, esp hastily in escaping: *lammed for Cleveland* **2** To escape from prison [1886 + Underworld; ultimately fr British sense "beat," found by 1596, hence the same semantically as *beat*

it] **See** ON THE LAM, TAKE IT ON THE LAM

lamb *n* A dear, sweet person: *Mary is such a lamb* (1923 +)

lambaste or **lambast** (lam BAYST, lam BAST) *v* **1** To hit very hard; thrash; CLOBBER: *They lambasted the suspect mercilessly* **2** To disparage strongly; castigate: *A woman psychologist today lambasted the idea that “mom is to blame”* [1637 +; ultimately fr British *lam* and *baste*, both “beat”]

lambie or **lambie-pie** *n* One’s sweetheart; beloved: *It was a dithering meditation on a lackluster Don Juan. Are Reynolds and Edwards such unmanly lambie-pies?* (1940s +)

lame *adj* **1** Socially awkward; clumsy; KLUTZY: *Cindy normally tells such great jokes, but that last one was really lame* (1942 +) **2** (also lamed or lame-o) Stupid; inept: *I automatically inherit this lame “slacker” attitude/Don’t try and sell us this lame-o “throwback to a bygone era” argument* (1950s + *Students*) **3**: *a lame assault on boomers/Their performances were sloppy, sometimes even lame* (1950s + *Teenagers fr jazz musicians*) *n* An old-fashioned, conventional person; SQUARE: *and not worry about anybody naming me a lame/not have been as quick to judge him as a lame* (1950s + *Teenagers fr jazz musicians*)

lamebrain *n* A stupid person; DOPE, KNUCKLEHEAD: *Not all the lamebrains on Capitol Hill frequent the House or Senate* (1929 +)

lamebrained *adj* Stupid; KLUTZY (1929 +)

lame duck *modifier: lame-duck president n phr* **1** A public official who has lost an election or one who is not permitted by law to seek reelection for an additional term but is serving out a term (1863 +)

2 A speculator who has taken options on stocks he or she cannot pay for (1751 + *Stock market*) [political sense attributed to Vice President Andrew Johnson, referring to a Colonel Forney]

lame-o *adj* Stupid; inept: *That's a lame-o excuse if I ever heard one* *See*
LAME

lamp *n* **1** An eye: *a beefsteak for this lamp of mine* (1590 +) **2** A look; glance; GANDER (1920s +) *v* To see; look at: *Lamp the lad in blue* (1916 +)

lamster *n* An escaped convict [1904 + Underworld; fr *lam*]

landsman (LAHNTS mən) *n* A fellow countryman, townsman, etc; compatriot; HOMEBOY, PAESAN: *You from Kalamazoo? Landsman!* [1940s +; fr Yiddish]

lane *See* FAST LANE, HAMMER LANE, IN THE STRAIGHT LANE

lap *n* **1** A round of a prizefight (1920 +) **2** A swallow of liquor; SLURP (1940s +)

lapdance *v* To perform an erotic dance straddling a customer's lap: *To lapdance, you undress, sit your client down, order him to stay still and fully clothed, then hover over him, making a motion that you have perfected by watching Mister Softee ice-cream dispensers* (1990s +)

lap dancer *n phr* A woman who does lap dances: *Of course, not every coming film exalts women: audiences will also see them as lap dancers, strippers, and phonesex workers* (1990s +)

lapdog *n* A subservient person; eager sycophant: *The leading Singapore newspaper, the Straits Times, enthusiastically fills the role of*

government lapdog/employee committees that labor leaders charge will be lapdogs of management (1980s +)

lapel-grabber *n* A person who seizes and holds one's attention by grasping one's lapels, either actually or in effect: *The style is the man; Hoving of the Met has always been a lapel-grabber/Margaret Mead is the most famous of these lapel-grabbers (1980s +)*

lapper *See* CUNT-LAPPER

lapping *See* CUNT-LAPPING

lap something up *v phr* To accept or believe eagerly; to take in something delightful: *Tell 'em you'll lower their taxes and they'll lap it up/lapped up the praise (1922 +)*

lard *See* TUB OF GUTS

◁**lard-ass** or **lard-bucket**▷ *n* A fat person; CHUBBO, TUB OF GUTS (1946 +)

large *n* A thousand dollars; BIG ONE, GRAND: *with new Beverly Hills basic wheels going for fifty large (1980s +)*

large charge *n phr* 1 Great pleasure; CHARGE, KICK: *I can hardly do justice to the large charge I get out of you* 2 BIG SHOT (1940s + *Students fr jive talk*)

large evening *n phr* A festive, pleasant, exciting, etc, evening: *The good doctor had himself a large evening (1896 +)*

large one *n phr* A year in prison: *The Tiger got fifteen large ones (1970s + Underworld)*

lark *n* A merry time • Chiefly British (1811 +) *v*: *This is no time to go*

larking (1813 +) [origin uncertain; perhaps fr an allusion to the bird, since *skylark* in the same sense is found somewhat earlier]

larky *adj* Playful; frolicsome; bantering • Chiefly British: *began making larky plunges into show business* (1841 +)

larrup (LEH ruh-p) *v* To beat; thrash; CLOBBER, LAMBASTE, LATHER (1839 +)

lash-up *n* Living quarters; barracks; DIGS [WWII Army; fr British, “something improvised,” found by 1898]

last *See* NICE GUYS FINISH LAST

last dance, the *See* GET THE LAST DANCE

last-ditch *modifier* Ultimate; final and heroic: *They pumped themselves up for a last-ditch effort* [1940s + ; fr earlier *last-ditcher*, ultimately fr *die in the last ditch*, “die at the last defense line,” found by 1715 and attributed to William of Orange]

last hurrah *n phr* The end for someone or something: *Last hurrah for some write-offs/I want this book to be my last hurrah* [1956 + ; fr the title of Edwin O’Connor’s 1956 novel about a politician’s final campaign and bow]

last of the big-time spenders, the *n phr* The last lavish spender and host • Always ironical, meaning its opposite [1970s + ; *big spender* is found in the New York night-life milieu in the 1920s]

last straw *n* The final insult; an act that calls for a response: *her yelling at him was the last straw*

lat *modifier* For exercising the latissimus dorsi muscles: *did a handstand on the seat of the lat pull down machine* (1980s +)

latchkey (or **doorkey**) **child** or *kid n phr* A child whose parents are working and who must spend part of the day unsupervised at home: *A latchkey child, Nikki would always go home, stay inside, and do her homework/Personally, I always wanted to be a latchkey kid, or at least have a key (1944 +)*

latch on to or **latch on v phr** **1** To get; obtain; GLOM ON TO: *Latch on to the first seat that's empty* **2** To comprehend; grasp; DIG: *He finally latched onto the truth* **3** To attach oneself to; be dependent on: *He latched on to me as soon as I arrived (1930s + Black)*

lately *See* JOHNNY-COME-LATELY

later *interj* A parting salutation: *I dug right away what the kick was, so I said, "Later," and he split/Later, baby. Catch you later (1980s + Teenagers fr black)* *See* SEE YOU LATER, ALLIGATOR

lather *v* To hit; strike: *He lathered the ball out of the park [1797 + ; fr the notion that frothy washing lather is produced by vigorous agitation or beating]* *See* IN A LATHER

latrine (or **barracks**) **lawyer** *n phr* A soldier who is argumentative, esp on fine points, and tends to be a meddler, complainer, and self-server (1940s + Army)

latrine rumor *n phr* An idle rumor that probably has no basis in fact (WWI Army)

lats *n* The latissimus dorsi muscles: *checking the cut of their lats in shiny windows (1980s +)*

laugh *See* BELLY LAUGH, the HORSELAUGH

laugh, a, or a **laugh and a half** *n phr* Something funny; a cause of amusement, esp of contemptuous derision: *You're gonna cook? That's a laugh*

laugh all the way to the bank *v phr* To be amused and gratified by a victory where a defeat was predicted: *The film, with horrible reviews, grossed more than \$30 million. Disney laughed all the way to the bank (1970s +)*

laugher *n* A laughing matter, esp a game in which one team scores an annihilating victory: *The two games he mentioned were laughers, Oklahoma 41-7 over North Carolina/I like to see it about 16-0. I like laughers (1960s + Sports)*

laughing academy *n phr* A mental hospital; FUNNY FARM, NUTHOUSE (1960s +)

laughing soup *n phr* LIQUOR; BOOZE (1934 +)

laugh something off *v phr* To dismiss something with a laugh: *It's hard to laugh that insult off, isn't it? (1715 +)*

laugh on (or out of) the other side of one's face *v phr* To lament and moan; suffer a change of mood from joy to distress; undergo a defeat: *When they get through with him he'll be laughing out of the other side of his face (1779 +)*

laugh up (or in) one's sleeve *v phr* To laugh covertly: *After you had that accident she was laughing up her sleeve (1560 +)*

launching pad *n phr* SHOOTING GALLERY (1960s + Narcotics)

launder *v* To transfer or convert funds so that illegal or dubious

receipts are made to appear legitimate: *The account money that had been “laundered” by being siphoned from this country into Mexico and returned under an alias (1961 +)*

laundry *n* **1** A bank or other place used for legitimizing illegal or dubious money (1960s +) **2** A board of faculty members that passes on flying cadets (*WWII Air Forces*) [second sense from the fact that some cadets were *washed out*, “failed,” by such a board]

See HANG OUT THE LAUNDRY

laundry (or shopping) list *n phr* A long bill of items to be obtained, discussed, done, or not done: *This “do-good” laundry list draws sneers/The cadets didn’t need a laundry list of prohibitions/A shopping list is not a strategy (1958 +)*

lav *n* Lavatory; bathroom: *ladies in the lav*

lava **See** IN A LATHER

lavender *adj* Homosexual: *Alberta Maged had marched with a coalition of groups including the Lavender Left and the Commie Queers/Clinton dropped the gays like a flaming potato, suggesting they might serve in special lavender units [1970s +; both blue and lavender are colors associated with homosexuality]*

law **See** SUNSET LAW, SUNSHINE LAW

Law **See** JOHN LAW

law, the *n phr* Any police officer, prison guard, etc; the HEAT (1920s + *Underworld*)

lawnmower *n* A hard-hit grounder (1891 + *Baseball*)

lawyer *See* CLUBHOUSE LAWYER, JAILHOUSE LAWYER, LATRINE LAWYER, SEA LAWYER

lay *n* <1> A person regarded merely as a sex partner or object: *The two girls looked like swell lays/She's a great lay* (1932+) <2> A sex act; PIECE OF ASS: *Anyone who is looking for an easy lay* (1936+) *v* <1>: *five cadets who swore they'd all laid the girl one night* (1934+) **2** To bet: *I laid her six to one he wouldn't show up* (1300+) *See* EASY MAKE

lay a batch *v phr* To leave black rubber marks on the road by accelerating a car rapidly (1940s+ *Teenagers*)

layabout or **lie-about** *n* A lazy person; shirker (1930s+)

<**lay a fart**> *v phr* (Variations: **cut** or **let** or **rip** may replace **lay**) To flatulate; FART: *This guy laid this terrific fart* (1940s+)

lay a glove (or **finger** or **hand**) **on** someone, not *See* NOT LAY A GLOVE ON someone

lay an egg *v phr* To fail; BOMB, FLOP: *The plan's going to lay an egg unless we give it a shot in the arm* [1929+; fr earlier British *lay a duck's egg*, "make a score of zero"]

lay a trip (or **scene**) **on** someone *v phr* To attribute something to someone; burden someone with something; accuse someone of something: *But if you try and lay a trip on somebody through psychoanalysis, it's nonsense/Don't lay this scene on me. I did the best I could/Vote for Walker. But don't lay any undue trips on him* (1960s+ *Counterculture fr black*)

lay back *v phr* To relax; take one's ease: *It is not a Southern-rock band. They don't lay back* (1970s+ *fr black*)

lay down on the job *v phr* To loaf; dawdle and shirk (1918 +)

lay down the law *v phr* To cite the rules, or one's rules, sternly: *He overheard a father laying down the law to three sheepish kids* (1762 +)

lay eyes on *v phr* To see: *never laid eyes on him before* (1200s +)

lay for someone *v phr* To watch for one's chance to take revenge; vigilantly stalk: *I'd lay for him in town some night* (1494 +)

lay into someone *v phr* To attack someone, physically or verbally: *That's why I laid into Eckert and made him drive me down that night* (1838 +)

lay it on *v phr* To exaggerate; overstate; • Often used of flattery and cajolement: *I overheard you laying it on to the boss. Shame!* (1560 +)

lay it on someone *v phr* To tell; inform; CLUE: *If you know it, please lay it on me* (1960 +)

lay (or put) it on the line (or on the table) *v phr* To speak candidly and straightforwardly; TELL IT LIKE IT IS: *They are more likely to give it to you if you lay it on the table* (1940s +)

lay it on thick *v phr* To exaggerate; overstate; hyperbolize; LAY IT ON: *"I tell them it's something their father and I always talked about" "That's laying it on a bit thick, isn't it?"* (1740 +)

lay it on with a trowel *v phr* LAY IT ON THICK: *The film has too many slow spots, and its message is laid on with a trowel* (1600 +)

lay low *v phr* To stay out of sight; remain inconspicuous; KEEP A LOW PROFILE, LIE DOGGO: *We're layin' low a couple days* (1839 +)

layoff *n* **1** A dismissal or furlough from a job (1919+) **2** The part of a bookmaker's bets placed with another agent to forestall catastrophic loss (1950s+ *Gambling*) **3** An unemployed actor: *A couple of layoffs were walking out of the hotel (1950s+ Theater)*

lay off *v phr* **1** To stop troubling or harrying someone; leave someone in peace • Often an irritated command or entreaty: *So lay off or I'll split your head, baby (1908+)* **2** To dismiss or furlough an employee: *Half the staff at IBM has been laid off (1868+)* **3** To place a portion of bets or debts with other agents so as to reduce one's possible losses: *That's a lot of cash to come up with. We could lay some of it off, you know it'd be easier for us (1950s+ Gambling)*

lay someone off *v phr* To terminate someone's job (1868+)

lay something on someone *v phr* **1** To present; give: *And the sisters laid the revolutionary ideology right on them/will suck his dick to oblivion if he lays some coke on them* **2** To tell or inform: *I have something heavy to lay on you, I'm afraid* **3** LAY A TRIP ON someone: *The media says I'm not a journalist. I never said I was. They're laying something on me I never laid on myself [1960s+ counterculture; fr 1930s+ black]*

lay one on someone *v phr* To hit hard; punch; HANG ONE ON: *She laid one on him, when he least expected it (1940s+)*

lay (or put) something on the line *v phr* To put deliberately at risk; put in peril as a wager or hostage: *If you try this, remember you are laying your ass on the line (1950s+)*

layout *n* **1** A place; house; living arrangements: *Nice little layout you*

got here (1869 +) **2** Place, equipment, apparatus, etc, for a particular purpose: *who may never have seen such a layout (1886 +)*

lay pipe (or tube) v phr ◀1▷ To do the sex act; copulate; SCREW: *If you're up all night, laying pipe, you won't be worth a shit to me on the court/About eighty a them's gonna lay more tube than the mother-fuckin' Alaska Pipeline (1967 + Black)* **2** To specify; spell out: *You can't just infer that; you gotta lay pipe (1970s +)*

lay rubber v phr To accelerate rapidly and speed in a car, so as to leave black tire marks on the road (*1940s + Teenagers*)

lay them in the aisles v phr (Variations: **have** or **knock** or **put** may replace **lay**) To entertain, amuse, or impress an audience extravagantly; wow (*1934 +*)

lay the skin on someone v phr To shake or otherwise deploy hands in greeting; GIVE SOMEONE FIVE: *Lay the skin on me, pal (1940s + Black)*

lazybones n An indolent person; slugabed (*1593 +*)

lead n Bullets; gunfire (*1809 +*) **See** GET THE LEAD OUT, HAVE LEAD IN **one's PANTS, HAVE LEAD IN one's PENCIL**

lead balloon n phr A dismal failure; FLOP: *His run for office was a lead balloon (1940s +)* **See** GO OVER LIKE A LEAD BALLOON

lead someone down the garden path v phr To deceive someone; hoodwink someone: *Will anyone know who led whom down the garden path? (1870 +)*

leaded coffee n phr Coffee with caffeine, as distinct from

decaffeinated coffee: *Coffee? You want leaded or unleaded?*
(1980s +)

lead-foot (LED fōōt) *v* To drive fast: *Starting Friday, speeders will pay an extra \$20 when caught lead-footing* (1940s + *Truckers*)

lead-footed (LED fōōt əd) *adj* **1** Sluggish and awkward; clumsy: *The bungling, lead-footed fellow* (1596 +) **2** Tending to drive very fast (1940s + *Truckers*) [the first dated form is *leaden-footed*]

lead in one's pencil *n phr* A penile erection (1930 +) **See** HAVE LEAD IN ONE'S PENCIL

lead-pipe (or **lead-tight**) **cinch** *n phr* **1** A certainty; inescapable fact: *not early enough to move no tables, that's a lead-pipe cinch/calls Coleco Vision a "lead-pipe cinch" for making a strong showing at Christmas* **2** Something very easy; CINCH, PIECE OF CAKE: *a lousy lead-tight cinch that any freshman in law school could have won* [1898 +; fr the fact that a *lead pipe* can be easily bent, in case one has bet on such a feat]

lead with one's chin *v phr* To make oneself vulnerable: *If you tell him that right away you'll be leading with your chin* (1940s +)

leaf, the *n phr* Cocaine (1960s + *Narcotics*)

league **See** BIG-LEAGUE, BUSH LEAGUE, GRAPEFRUIT LEAGUE, HOT STOVE LEAGUE, MAJOR-LEAGUE, MINOR-LEAGUE, OUT OF **one's** LEAGUE

leaguer **See** TEXAS LEAGUER

leagues **See** the BIG LEAGUES, the BUSH LEAGUES

leak *n* **1** The divulgence or divulger of secret information: *A famous*

leak was called *Deep Throat* (1873 +) <2> An act of urination; a PISS (1930s +) **v 1** To give information to the press or other recipient secretly: *Then the FCC report was “leaked” to the press* (1859 +) <2> To urinate; PISS: *He said he had to leak; his back teeth were floating* (1930s +) **See** TAKE A LEAK

lean and mean *adj phr* Desperately and somewhat menacingly ambitious; HUNGRY: “*Lean and mean*” is the byword in publishing these days/*A fat and lazy firm must become lean and mean, or see its capital redeployed* (1970s +)

lean on someone *v phr* To put pressure on someone, esp with violence or the threat of it: *And he thinks he can lean on me!/Several restaurants and clubs were being leaned on* (1950s +)

lean over backwards *See* BEND OVER BACKWARDS

leaping heebies, the *See* the HEEBIE-JEEBIES

leap on the bandwagon *See* GET ON THE BANDWAGON

leap tall buildings at (or in) a single bound *v phr* To do something impossible: *She is under the impression that you can leap tall buildings at a single bound* [1940s +; one of the feats of the comic-strip character Superman]

learn the ropes *v phr* To learn the elements of a task or profession; serve one’s apprenticeship: *Stokovich and a mope from Justice who was at the time learning the ropes* (1977 +)

leary *See* LEERY

least, the *n phr* The worst; the dullest, most conventional, etc

(1950s + *Beat & cool talk*)

leather modifier: *jokes about the heroine's harmless male roommate, leather men, etc/becomes part of the leather-bar homosexual underworld/the sex clubs and leather bars of the gay ghetto* **n** 1 The clothing and trappings of overt sadomasochism (1980s +) 2 A kind of male homosexual behavior, costume, etc, based on exaggerated masculinity as symbolized esp by black-leather-clad motorcycle gangs (1970s + *Homosexuals*) **See** HEAVY LEATHER, HELL-FOR-LEATHER

leatherneck *n* A US Marine; GYRENE [1914 + Navy; fr the *leather* collars of their early uniforms; the term is found by 1890 as British sailors' name for a soldier]

leave **See** FRENCH LEAVE

leave a calling card *v phr* To defecate in a public or inappropriate place: *after a passing horse had left its calling card on the street* (1940s +)

leave a strip *v phr* To brake or decelerate a car very rapidly, so as to leave black rubber marks on the pavement (1950s + *Hot rodders*)

leave something or someone be *v phr* To leave alone (1825 +)

leave someone flat (or cold) *v phr* To leave a person suddenly and definitively: *When he lied once too often she left him flat* (1902 +)

leave someone holding the bag *v phr* 1 To cause someone to take all the losses; dupe someone to his disadvantage: *Don't you let them leave you holding the bag* (1906 +) 2 To maneuver so that one takes individual blame for a failure or a crime [fr 1600s *give the bag to*

hold, “victimize in a game of snipe-hunt”; the form *hold the sack* in the first sense is found by 1904]

leave someone in the lurch *v phr* To abandon someone in a difficult plight: *They all cleared out and left me in the lurch* (1596 +)

lech or **letch** *n* 1 Strong desire, esp sexual; lust; the HOTS: *his lech for cam shafts and turbines/He had a lech for his fifteen-year-old daughter* (1796 +) 2 A lecher: *under the illusion that the lech is as enamored as she is/who also appears as a good-natured lech* (1943 +) *v*: *when Henry goes leching after Anne/keep Junior from leching* (1911 +) [fr *lecher*, *lechery*, ultimately fr the notion of licking]

leech *n* A human parasite (1784 +) *v*: *insisted that MCI was not leeching off the successful campaign of its competition* (1960s +)

leery or **leary** *adj* Untrusting; suspicious; wary: *He was leery of toting so much money/Cheyfitz and Farrell exchanged leery glances* [1718 +; probably fr British dialect *lere*, “learning, knowledge”]

left *See* HANG A LEFT

Left Coast *n phr* The Pacific Coast: *That’s not what they’re saying out on the Left Coast*

left-field *adj* Unorthodox; unexpected; WACKY: *Abril stuffs her first starring role in an American movie with the kind of willful, left-field behavior that she learned from working with Almodovar* (1950s +) *See* OUT IN LEFT FIELD

left-handed *adj* 1 Undesirable; unlucky (1940s + *Merchant marine*) 2 Irregular; illicit; dubious: *left-handed honeymoons with someone else’s husband* (1612 +)

left-handed compliment *n phr* Praise that is subtle dispraise;
reluctant and dubious praise: *Telling her she has the constitution of a horse is maybe a left-handed compliment (1881 +)*

left-handed monkey wrench *n* A nonexistent tool

left nut *See* GRIPE one's ASS

lefty or **leftie** *modifier: a lefty hurler/leftie tennis ace* **n 1** A left-handed person, esp a left-handed pitcher or other athlete (1886 +)
2 A person of liberal or socialist political beliefs; radical; liberal: *such urban lefties as Bella Abzug (1930s +)*

leg **n 1** An infantry soldier; GRUNT (*Vietnam War Army*) **2** A woman, esp a sexually promiscuous one (1960s + *College students fr black*) *v* (also **leg it**) To go; travel: *I was legging down the line (1601 +)* *See* **an** ARM AND A LEG, BOOTLEG, GIVE someone LEG, HAVE A LEG UP ON someone or something, PEG LEG, PULL someone's LEG, SHAKE A LEG, SHAKE A WICKED CALF, TANGLE-FOOTED

legal eagle (or **beagle**) *n phr* A lawyer, esp a clever and aggressive one: *In 1979 Davis' legal eagles got him acquitted again/Software turns you into a regular legal beagle*

leg art *n phr* Pictures of women in clothing and poses that emphasize their sexuality; CHEESECAKE: *The magazine was once sought for its leg art (1930s +)*

leg-biter *n* A small child or infant; crumb-crusher (1980s + *College students*)

lege (LEDGE) *n* A preeminent and awe-inspiring person: *A few hours after she had beaten the "lege," the legend of her chosen field*

[1990s + ; probably influenced by the phrase *a legend in one's own time*, applied to personages like Ernest Hemingway]

legit (lə JIHT) *adj* **1** Legitimate; KOSHER: *She's a legit farmer/by legit, or honest, people* (1931 +) **2** Having to do with or being of the legitimate theater: *specialists in legit reviewing* (1923 +) *n* The legitimate theater, or one such theater (1897 +) **See** ON THE LEGIT

legless *adj* Drunk (1976 +)

leg man *n phr* **1** A newspaper reporter who goes out to gather facts and may or may not write the story (1923 + *Newspaper office*) **2** Any person who works actively and outside, rather than in, an office (1950s +) **3** A man whose favorite part of the female body is the legs (1940s +)

leg-pull *n* The act of deceiving or fooling someone; PUT-ON: *the wisecrack and the gag, the leg pull and the hotfoot* (1915 +)

Legree *See* SIMON LEGREE

legs *n* The ability of a show, song, public figure, etc, to be an enduring success; staying power: *whether a movie will have legs, the power to entice audiences week after week/runaway success, bigger than disco, with stronger legs/There is no other theory with legs* (1970s + *Show business*) **See** BIRD LEGS, HINDERS

legs that go all the way up *n phr* (Variations: many, some of which are shown below) Long and shapely legs: *a bimbo with legs that go all the way up/legs that go all the way to heaven/Only the floor kept her legs from going on forever/Huston and Bening both have scintillating street wit and legs that go on for days/Tits out to here, legs*

that won't quit (1980s +)

leg up, a *n phr* 1 Aid; a boost: *He'll do OK, but he needs a financial leg up to get started (1837 +)* 2 An advantage: *You can go in with a leg up on other people (1901 +)* **See** HAVE A LEG UP ON something

legwork *n phr* Peripatetic work done outside the office: *I figured Wendell must be somewhere close, and I did a little legwork (1891 + Newspaper office)*

lemme *v* Let me • Casual-pronunciation spelling: *Lemme open that for you*

lemon¹ *n* 1 Anything unsatisfactory or defective, esp a car; CLINKER: *His tale brought back memories of my first lemon/That show's a lemon (1909 +)* <2> A light-skinned and attractive black woman; HIGH YELLOW (1940s + *Black*) 3 A sour, disagreeable person (1925 +) 4 (also **lemonade**) Weakened or diluted narcotics, or a nonnarcotic substance sold as a narcotic; BLANK (1960s + *Narcotics*) **See** HAND someone A LEMON

lemon² *n* A Quaalude™ [1960s + Narcotics; *Lemmon* is the name of a pharmaceutical company that once manufactured the drug]

length *n* Female sexual gratification (1968 +)

<les or lessy or lez or lezzie or lezzy> (LEZ) *modifier*: *It was a fantastic turn-on, watching a lezzie scene* *n* A lesbian: *Mary is a les and John is a fairy/I'd have figured you for a lez (1929 +)*

<lesbo or lesbie> (LEZ boh) *n* A lesbian: *where the Lesbos even come and watch the dress rehearsals/a carefree single lesbo looking for love*

(1940+)

let a fart *See* LAY A FART

letch *See* LECH

letdown *n* **1** A disappointment; COMEDOWN: *Actually meeting him was something of a letdown* (1889+) **2** The gradual descent of an airplane toward a landing (1945+)

let fly (or go) *v phr* **1** To launch vigorously into something; begin with projective energy: *She took a deep breath and let fly* (1654+) **2** To hurl; shoot; fire: *The gunman let go with both automatics* (1624+)

let George do it *sentence* Let someone else besides me take care of it [1910+; perhaps fr a learned journalist's recall of the French *laissez faire à Georges*, "let George do it," referring to Cardinal Georges d'Amboise, a church and government official under Louis XII in the late 15th and early 16th centuries]

let oneself go *v phr* To behave in an unrestrained way; be uninhibited: *Come on, Herbert, let yourself go, have another cookie* (1926+)

let one's hair down *v phr* To be very open and candid, esp about personal matters: *A lot of men that I have been with do not let their hair down/A small-town beauty shop, where city slickers can really let their hair down*

let someone have it *v phr* **1** To hit someone, esp powerfully; CLOBBER: *Then let him have it, right on the chin* (1840+) **2** To attack verbally, esp punitively; GIVE IT TO someone: *He allows me to count on his*

affection. Then he lets me have it (1891 +)

let her (or 'er) rip v phr To let something go at full speed; take off all restraints: *He decided to buckle his seat belt and let her rip (1879 +)*

let it all hang out modifier: I enjoy our let-it-all-hang-out relationship v phr To be entirely candid; be free and unrestrained; LET ONE'S HAIR DOWN: *You'll feel better if you let it all hang out (1960s + Counterculture fr black)*

let it go at that v phr LET IT SIT: *You'll eat half of it? OK, let it go at that (1898 +)*

let it sit v phr To decline to object or interfere; acquiesce: *"He wasn't perfect, but he tried." I let that one sit there, unwilling to challenge her version of events/"Let it sit, then," he said with the slightest of shrugs (1990s +)*

let someone off v phr To decline to pursue or prosecute someone: *The prosecutor let him off because he was a pal of the mayor (1828 +)*

let (or blow) off steam v phr To talk loudly and angrily as a method of relieving the pressure of one's feelings; express one's anger or frustration: *He's not serious, just letting off steam/I've blown off steam/They're bored, just blowing off steam (1837 +)*

let someone off the hook v phr To relieve someone of responsibility or menace: *They had already given me a lot. I wanted to let them off the hook (1960s +)*

let on v phr To reveal; hint: *Guys fool around, they sort of joke about*

it, they sort of let on, you know? (1825 +)

let out (or slip) v phr To reveal: *They let out that they were already married (1870 +)*

let something ride v phr To let something go on as it is; decline to change or intervene: *Let the same order ride for now (1921 +)*

let rip v phr To accelerate; to let something go unchecked (1843 +)

See LET HER RIP

let's blow this Popsicle stand sentence Let's get out of here: *This game is a blowout. Let's blow this Popsicle stand*

let's boogie sentence (Variations: **cruise** or **blaze** may replace **boogie**) Let us leave [1950s+ Teenagers; originally "let's dance to boogie-woogie music"]

let's face it sentence Let us freely admit it; let us accept the unhappy truth: *Let's face it, kids, we're all to blame some (1911 +)*

let's get the (or this) show on the road sentence We should get started; we should become active (1957 +)

letter See DEAD HORSE, FRENCH LETTER, POISON-PEN LETTER, RED-LETTER DAY

letterbox v To show a wide-screen movie on the television screen by reducing its size and putting black bars above and below: *Today we'll see a wide-format, letterboxed edition, which is rarely telecast/"letterboxing," which retains theatrical images on a rectangular shape (1990s + Television)*

letter man See FOUR-LETTER MAN

let the cat out of the bag *v phr* To reveal a secret, usu without intending to: *Her guilty smile pretty much let the cat out of the bag (1760+)*

let the good times roll *v phr* To enjoy oneself; be joyous, gregarious, and bibulous [1900+ Jazz musicians; the phrase is still associated with New Orleans]

lettuce *n* Money, esp paper money; CABBAGE: *That's a lot of lettuce/the man who nipped all this lettuce from the Playboy patch (1929+)* *See* FOLDING MONEY

level *adj* True: *There's never a place for guys like me. That's level* *v* To tell the truth; be honest and candid: *Don't laugh. I'm leveling/It's on this level that they tell you that they are "leveling" with you (1920+)* *See* ON THE LEVEL

level best, someone's *n phr* The utmost one can do; one's honest greatest effort: *I'll do my level best to keep you (1851+)*

level playing field *n phr* Equality of opportunity; fair terms on all sides: *It's no level playing field if you always get to pick first (1981+)*

'leven *See* FORTY-'LEVEN

levies or **Levis** (LEE vīz) *n* Blue denim dungaree pants; blue jeans [1940s+; fr *Levi Strauss*[™], a mid-1800s Western company that made and makes such garments]

lez *See* LES

◁**lezzie**▷ *See* LES

liaise (lee AYZ) *v* To cooperate; get into regular contact: *told her to*

liaise with the FBI [1916 + ; shortening of *liaison*]

lib *n* Liberation, esp as the aim of various movements: *animal lib* (1960s +) **See** GAY LIB, MEN'S LIB

libber *n* A member of one of the liberation movements, esp of the women's lib movement (1960s +)

libe *n* A library, esp a college library *v* To study in a library (1915 + *Students*)

liberate *v* To steal or appropriate, originally something in conquered enemy territory (WWII Army)

liberty *See* AT LIBERTY

license to print money, *a n phr* A very lucrative business: *The railways are not, like some predecessors, a license to print money/In the past, owning a movie studio was like having a license to print money*

lick *n* **1** A blow; stroke: *I got in a couple good licks before he decked me* (1678 +) **2** Censure; adverse criticism; HIT, KNOCK: *The show is no winner, but doesn't deserve the licks it's taken* (1739 +) **3** A try; attempt; CRACK, SHOT, WHACK: *I probably won't make it, but I'll give it a good lick* (1863 +) **4** A time at bat: *So the Yankees come up for their last licks* (1883 + *Baseball*) **5** A short figure or solo, esp when improvised; BREAK, RIFF: *a few solid licks on the sliphorn/that I know are exactly the licks that I play* (1920s + *Jazz musicians*) *v* **1** To beat; pummel; LAMBASTE, LARRUP (1563 +) **2** To defeat; CLOBBER: *Next time well lick 'em for good* (1800 +) **See** HIT IT A LICK

lick and a promise, *a n phr* A hasty job; a cursory performance

[1860+; fr the notion that one does one *lick* or stroke of what is appropriate, and *promises* to do the rest]

lick into shape *v phr* WHIP INTO SHAPE

lick one's chops *v phr* To display hunger and anticipation for food or for something else desired: *We all sat licking our chops as the turkey was carved/I licked my chops when I thought of that huge bonus* (1655+)

lick one's wounds *v phr* To attempt to heal one's injuries or hurt feelings

licker *See* ASS-KISSER, CLIT-LICKER, DICK-LICKER

lickety-split or **lickity-split** *adv* Very fast: *Felt he just had to get a lawyer lickity-split* [1859+; fr *lick*, "speed, a spurt of speed," found by 1809; earlier forms *lickety-cut*, *lickety-click*, *lickety liner*, and *lickety switch* are found in the 1830s and 1840s]

licorice stick *n phr* The clarinet (1930s+ *Jive talk*)

lid *n* 1 A hat (1896+) 2 One ounce of marijuana: *a shutdown on grass, lids were going for thirty dollars/lifted out the back seat and found a lid of marijuana* (1960s+ *Narcotics*) *See* BLOW THE LID OFF, FLIP ONE'S LID, PUT A LID ON something or someone, SKID LID

lie *See* the BIG LIE, A PACK OF LIES

lie doggo *v phr* To stay in hiding; secrete oneself; LAY LOW • Chiefly British: *You better lie doggo a while till it blows over* [1893+; probably fr the silent and unobtrusive behavior of a hunting or herding dog when stalking]

lie like a rug (or wet rug) v phr To be very mendacious: *They say the truth is not in us, first of all. They say we lie like wet rugs* (1940s +)

lie low v phr To hide or behave so as to not attract attention; LAY LOW, LIE DOGGO: *lie low for a month* (1880 +)

lie through one's teeth (or dentures) v phr To be radically untruthful; LIE LIKE A RUG: *Carl, what you already did is called lying through your dentures* (1940s +)

lieut (LŌŌT) n Lieutenant; LOOEY, LOOT (1843 +)

lieutenant See THIRD LIEUTENANT

life See BET YOUR BOOTS, LOWLIFE, NOT ON YOUR LIFE

life, a n phr Another chance to get a hit, score, etc, esp after a fielding error: *The Tigers got a life when the second baseman bobbled an easy one* (1868 + Baseball) **See** GET A LIFE

life, the, or the Life n phr 1 Prostitution, esp as a business: *a hooker from LA who knows this is her ticket out of the life/this latter often purchased "hot" from others in the life* **2** The homosexual life, esp that of an effeminate transvestite male prostitute: *She had lived the life so long now* (1970s +) **See** IN THE LIFE

lifeboat n A pardon from a prison or other sentence; a retrial (1940s + *Underworld*)

lifejacket n A condom: *take a lifejacket to the prom*

life of Riley, the n phr An easy, luxurious, and pleasant life; the GRAVY TRAIN: *I took the money, went to Mexico, and lived the life of Riley*

[1919+; origin uncertain; perhaps fr an 1880s song about a man named O'Reilly, who became rich and sybaritic]

lifer *n* **1** A convict serving a life sentence (1830+) **2** A career Army officer: “lifers” (the contemptuous GI term for career officers) (WWII Army)

lift *n* **1** A surge or feeling of exhilaration; a transport of exuberance; HIGH, KICK, RUSH: *I get a lift from watching that kid* (1861+) **2** A ride: *I need a lift to the bus terminal downtown* (1712+) **v** **1** To steal: *He got caught lifting a chicken from the convenience store* (1526+) **2** To plagiarize: *whole pages lifted from my book* (1892+) **See** HITCH A RIDE

lift a finger *v phr* To help • Used in the negative to denote unwillingness to make an effort (1833+)

lifted *adj* Intoxicated by narcotics; HIGH, STONED (1990s+ *Narcotics*)

light **See** the GREEN LIGHT, IDIOT LIGHT, OUT LIKE A LIGHT, REDLIGHT

light colonel *n phr* A lieutenant colonel (WWII Army)

lighten up *v phr* To become less serious; be easy; relax • Often a more or less gentle admonition: *Schofield lightens up and improves at bat/Aw, come on, everybody, lighten up a little. It wasn't that bad. The decade, I mean/You have to lighten up, Chief. The men are giving it everything they have* (late 1960s+)

light-fingered *adj* **1** Inclined to steal; thievish; STICKY-FINGERED (1547+) **2** Having a light and nimble touch: *The light-fingered thoughtfulness, the ironic lyricism of the most civilized playwright of the era* (1804+)

light-footed *adj* Homosexual; effeminate (1955+)

light into v phr To attack; excoriate; LAY INTO: *He lit into the Administration's tax bill with some sparkling epithets (1878+)*

lightning n Cheap, raw whiskey; WHITE LIGHTNING (1781+) **See** CHAIN LIGHTNING, GREASED LIGHTNING, RIDE THE LIGHTNING, WHITE LIGHTNING

lightning rod n Someone or something that draws the attention, esp criticism, for an issue or problem: *press secretary is the lightning rod for the President*

light on one's feet adj phr Homosexual; effeminate: *Some models are light on their feet (1960s+)*

light out v phr To leave, esp hastily; TAKE OFF, HIGHTAIL: *Jack, estranged from his father by his brother's death in a helicopter crash, lights out for the territories [1870+; fr earlier nautical light out, "move out, or move something out," of obscure origin; perhaps "move or move something lightly, quickly, handily"]*

lights n A police car: *There were five lights at Dunkin' Donuts (1980s+ Teenagers)*

lights out n phr 1 Bedtime: *Lights out is at 10:30* 2 The end; death; CURTAINS: *otherwise lights out for me* **See** PUNCH someone's LIGHTS OUT, SHOOT THE LIGHTS OUT

lightweight adj Inconsequential; unserious (1809+) **n:** *He seems like a lightweight to me, don't pay him any attention (1882+)*

like adv As if; really; you know; sort of • A generalized modifier used to lend a somewhat tentative and detached tone to the speaker, to give the speaker time to rally words and ideas: *Like I was like groovin' like, you know what I mean? (1950s+ Counterculture &*

bop talk) **v** To pick; bet on: *I liked Felton. I took his folder and read it again (1950s +)* **See** MAKE LIKE

like a bandit **adv phr** Very successfully; thrivingly: *coming out of the battle with Bendix like a bandit (1960s +)* **See** MAKE OUT LIKE A BANDIT

like a bat out of hell **adv phr** Very rapidly; LICKETY SPLIT: *They split like abat out of hell (1921 +)* **See** TAKE OFF LIKE A BIGASS BIRD

like a blue streak **See** a BLUE STREAK

like a bump on a log **adv phr** Idly; uselessly; inertly: *He just sits there like a bump on a log (1863 +)*

like a bunny **See** QUICK LIKE A BUNNY

like a dream **modifier** Easily, smoothly: *drove like a dream (1949 +)*

like a hole in the head **See** NEED someone or something LIKE A HOLE IN THE HEAD

like a house afire **adv phr** Forcefully and without delay: *The crowd burst through the gate, like a house afire (1863 +)*

like a million bucks **adv phr** Very good; superb: *In that blouse she looks like a million bucks (1930s +)*

like a shot **modifier** Very fast: *bumblebee went by like a shot (1800 +)*

like a streak **adv phr** LIKE GREASED LIGHTNING (1839 +)

like a ton of bricks **See** COME DOWN ON SOMEONE LIKE A TON OF BRICKS

like crazy **adv** With great speed or effort: *ate chocolate like crazy*

like death warmed over **adv** Looking quite pathetic, tired or ill: *after that nap, looking like death warmed over*

◀**like fuck**▶ **adv phr** LIKE MAD: *coding like fuck every day (1990s +)*

like gangbusters **adv phr** Very energetically and successfully:

Everyone knows I'm getting into your pants like gangbusters/The rest of the year the economy will be going like gangbusters (1942 +) **See** COME ON LIKE GANGBUSTERS

like greased lightning **adv phr** Very rapidly; LIKE A STREAK: *The little car went by like greased lightning (1833 +)*

like hell (or blazes) **adv phr** 1 In an extravagant way; very forcefully: *walleyes feed like crazy and "bite like hell"/Started screaming like hell (entry form 1855 +, variant 1845 +)* 2 (Variations: **fun** or **shit** may replace **hell**) Never; it is impermissible; IN A PIG'S ASS: *Like hell you will!/when the prostitute says "Like fun you are" (entry form 1925 +, fun 1909 +)*

like it is **See** TELL IT LIKE IT IS

like it or lump it **adv phr** Whether or not one wishes: *We have to go now, like it or lump it (1833 +)*

like it's going out of style or **like there's no tomorrow** **adv phr** Extravagantly; wildly; recklessly; with abandon: *spending money like it was going out of style/boozing like there was no tomorrow (1970s +)*

likely story (or tale) **n phr** A probable lie; a statement that seems incredible (1740 +)

like mad (or crazy) **adv phr** Extravagantly; wildly; violently: *tearing around like crazy/Then everybody laughs like mad (entry form 1653 +, variant 1924 +)*

like nobody's business *adv phr* Very much; extraordinarily: *He loves her like nobody's business/That hurts like nobody's business (1938 +)*

like pigs in clover (or **in poo**) *adj phr* Very happy; euphoric: *Paramount's general counsel laughs, "This part of the job I enjoy. We're like pigs in clover"* [1800s +; probably a euphemized version of *happy as a pig in shit*; *pigs in clover* is a children's game first marketed in 1889]

like pulling teeth *adj phr* Very slow and arduous: *Interviewing movie stars can be like pulling teeth, but Nicole Kidman was a delightful surprise: relaxed, natural, and a lot of fun* [1970s +; *like pulling gum-teeth* in the same sense is found by 1872]

like shit through a tin horn *adv phr* (Variations: **a dose of salts** or **a hot knife through butter** or **off a shovel** may replace **through a tin horn**) Very rapidly and easily; effortlessly: *He went through the defense like shit through a tin horn/The pension bill went through like a dose of salts (dose of salts 1837 +, tin horn 1940s +)*

like shooting fish in a barrel *adj phr* Very easy; much too easy: *Home shopping is like shooting fish in a barrel (1940s +)*

like sixty *adv phr* Very rapidly; LIKE A BAT OUT OF HELL: *They went after him like sixty* [1839 +; *sixty* is probably used as an indefinite large number, as *forty* was in similar 1800s contexts, to express extreme briskness]

like something the cat dragged in *adj phr* Revolting; rebarbative; GROSS, YUCKY: *Jesus, get cleaned up. You look like something the cat dragged in/Sometimes the glue smells like something the cat dragged in*

like that *See* ALL LIKE THAT THERE

like there was no tomorrow *adv* In excess, as if there would not be another opportunity: *drinkin' like there's no tomorrow*

like white on rice *adv* Right on top of something; as close as something can get: *The cat's on me like white on rice*

lily *n* <1> A homosexual; PANSY, QUEER (1940s +) 2 Something remarkable, superior, etc; LULU: *I told my best joke. It's never missed, it's a lily*

lily-white *adj phr* Desiring or having only Caucasian residents, workers, etc: *The thugs would never think to look for him in a lily-white suburb (1903 +)*

limb *See* GO OUT ON A LIMB, OUT ON A LIMB

limey or **lime-juicer** *n* 1 An English person: *The "Doctor" was a lime-juicer (1888 +)* 2 A British ship (1919 +) [fr the ration of *lime juice* given to British sailors as an antiscorbutic; the dated use for the first sense is strictly "an English immigrant to the Antipodes"; the generalized term probably reflects the US use, "English sailor or soldier," found by 1918]

limit, the *n phr* A person, thing, etc, that exceeds or outrages what is acceptable: *I've seen some stupid things, but this is the limit/Ain't he awful, ain't he just the limit? (1900 + College students)* *See* GO THE LIMIT

limo (LIHM oh) *n* A limousine: *disapproves of this vast fleet (789 limos) of luxury transportation (1946 +)* *v*: *Check your reso before you limo to Manhattan* *See* STRETCH LIMO

◁**limp-dick**▷ **adj**: *I called myself every limp-dick name I could think of*
n An ineffectual man; an impotent man; WIMP (1970s +)

limp dishrag **n phr** An ineffectual person; NEBBISH, WIMP: *Sandy is discarded as if she were, well, a limp dishrag (1970s +)*

limp noodle **adj**: *outdated postures, overused jokes, and limp-noodle romantic ballads* **n phr** Something or someone feeble, tasteless, and without distinction: *Warren Christopher has shown himself to be a limp noodle of a persuader (1970s +)*

limp wrist **modifier**: *a limp-wrist hangout* **n phr** A male homosexual: *I reminded her that Boke Kellum was a limp wrist/Barbara Hutton could only marry herself seven or eight limp wrists (1950s +)*

limp-wristed **adj** Effeminate; slack and sinuous; homosexual: *His art always has this subtle, limp-wristed style to it/the most limp-wristed “stud” in the Philadelphia metropolitan area (1950s +)*

line **n** **1** One’s way of talking, esp when being persuasive or self-aggrandizing; SPIEL: *of what in a later generation would have been termed her “line”/You’ve got some line (1903 +)* **2** One’s occupation, business, etc; RACKET: *What’s my line? Herring in brine (1655 +)* **3A** musical solo or figure, esp personal and innovative: *Coasters talk of “lines,” not licks, breaks, or riffs (1930s + Jazz musicians)* **4 A** bookmaker’s odds on a sports event: *Baseball, basketball, and hockey lines are available on the day or night of the games (1970s + Gambling)* **5** A dose of cocaine, usu formed into a thin line to be nasally ingested (1980 + *Narcotics*) **v** **1** To hit the ball in a line drive (1892 + *Baseball*) **2** Take cocaine: *They lined twice last night,*

no wonder they're tired **See** someone's ASS IS ON THE LINE, THE BOTTOM LINE, CHOW LINE, HARD LINE, HOT LINE, IN LINE, IN LINE FOR, LAY IT ON THE LINE, MAIN LINE, ON LINE, ON THE LINE, OUT OF LINE, PUNCH LINE, PUT ONE'S ASS ON THE LINE, REDLINE, SHOOT SOMEONE A LINE, STAG LINE, TOE THE MARK

line, the *n phr* **1** The chorus girls of a show **2** An assembly line

(1940s +) **See** TOE THE MARK

linen **See** DIRTY LINEN, WASH one's DIRTY LINEN

line one's nest **See** FEATHER one's NEST

line out v phr **1** To sing, esp in a loud strong voice; BELT OUT (1970s +)

2 To hit a line drive that is caught (1890s + *Baseball*) [musical sense perhaps fr church practice of having a hymn read one line at a time, then having the congregation sing the line]

line (one's own) pocket(s) v phr To be greedy, esp by stealing or extortion: *lining their pockets from the donations at the theater*

liner **See** HEADLINER, ONE-LINER

lineup n **1** A number of persons displayed in line across a platform to find whether witnesses can pick a suspect from among them; SHOW-UP (1907 + *Police*) **2** The roster of a team, esp for a particular game: *Just before the game started, the managers showed their lineups to the umpires (1889 + Baseball)*

line up with v phr To support; take sides with: *Who will you line up with on this thorny issue? (1940s +)*

lingo (LING goh) *n* Language; jargon; idiom (1660 +)

lion's share n phr A major proportion or part of something; the largest portion: *He does the lion's share of the housework*

lip *n* **1** Insolent, impertinent, or presumptuous talk; SASS, SAUCE: *I don't want none of your lip (1821 +)* **2** A lawyer; MOUTHPIECE (1929 + *Underworld*) *v* To play a musical instrument, esp in jazz; BLOW: *He couldn't lip anything proper anymore (1950s + Jazz musicians)* **See** BAT ONE'S GUMS, FLIP **one's** LIP, ZIP **one's** LIP

lip lock *n phr* A kiss: *the Rubbles in a passionate lip lock (1990s +)*

lip-locking *n* Kissing: *Then you might enter into some serious lip-locking (1990s +)*

lip mover *n phr* A dull and stupid person; BLOCKHEAD: *between those countless millions of lip-movers and the minuscule audience for better novels [1980s + ; fr the habit of uneducated or dull people of moving their lips while reading to themselves]*

lippy *adj* **1** Insolent; brash and arrogant: *He's smart, but much too lippy (1875 +)* **2** Talkative (1893 +)

lip service *n* Insincere expression of friendship, admiration, agreement, support, etc: *lip service for the volunteers*

lip-splitter *n* A musician who plays a wind instrument (1950s + *Jazz musicians*)

lip-sync or **lip-synch** (LIP sink) *v* To move the lips silently in synchronism with recorded singing or speaking, to give the illusion of actual performance: *Having taped his lines before the show, he lip-synched his pronouncements/staying home with her sister lip synching to Leon Russell records (late 1950s +)*

liquefied *adj* Intoxicated from alcohol; drunk (1939 +)

liquidate *v* To kill [1924 + ; based on Russian *likvidirovat*, “liquidate, wind up”]

liquid crack *n phr*: 40-ounce bottles of malt liquor sometimes have a nickname among the young people who drink them dry in one sitting: “liquid crack” (1990s +)

liquid lunch *n phr* Excessive drinking at lunch; drinking alcohol instead of eating lunch: *picked Sundays for a liquid lunch*

liquor *See* HARD LIQUOR, POT LIQUOR

liquored up *adj* Drunk (1921 +)

list *See* HIT LIST, SHIT LIST, SUCKER LIST, WISH LIST

listen-in *n* An instance of eavesdropping or wiretapping: *an occasional listen-in on the line* (1940s +)

listen up *v phr* To listen closely; pay strict attention • Often a brusque command: *He can make you listen up with that violin of his* (1960s + *Armed forces fr black*)

lit¹ *n* Literature: **comp lit/black lit** (1850 +)

lit² *adj* Drunk (1917 +)

lit-crit *modifier*: *Gallop, a celebrity in lit-crit circles, could be described as a sort of post-structural Mae West* *n* Literary criticism (1963 +)

lite *adj* Not serious; not scholarly; watered down; popularized: *there’s myth lite apres Joseph Campbell, Pinkola Estes, etc* [1980s + ; fr the misspelling of light used to identify less fattening, less intoxicating, etc, products, esp beer]

litter *See* POCKET LITTER

litterbug *n* A person who throws trash in the streets, parks, etc [1947 +; coined for a New York Police Department campaign against littering; modeled on *jitterbug*]

little bitty *adj phr* Very small; ITTY-BITTY: *I got four little bitty kids* (1940 +)

little black book *n phr* The private notebook in which one is supposed to keep telephone numbers and details of potential and actual sex partners; secret record (1940s +)

little boys' (or girls') room *n phr* The men's (or women's) restroom: *trip to the little boys' room*

little game, someone's *n phr* Someone's devious scheme; someone's wretched stratagem: *The crowd dropped to his little game* (1884 +)

little green apples *See* SURE AS GOD MADE LITTLE GREEN APPLES

little green men *n phr* Aliens from outer space, said to have been seen descending from flying saucers: *Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligence, which has long been derided as a quest for "little green men"* (1961 +)

Little Joe *n phr* The point four, or four on the dice [1890 + Crapshooting; a shortening of *Little Joe from Kokomo*; the relation to four is not patent]

little low on wattage, a *adj phr* Stupid; uncomprehending; DIM: *who is obviously a little low on wattage above the neck* (1990s +)

little Michael (or Mickey) *n phr* MICKEY FINN (1960s +)

little Phoebe (or fever) *See* PHOEBE

little secret *See* DIRTY LITTLE SECRET

little shaver *n phr* A young boy (1843 +)

◁**little shit**▷ *n phr* A nasty or insignificant person; creep: *die, you little shit*

little tin god *n phr* A petty and self-important figure (1886 +)

little woman, the *n phr* One's wife • Once regarded as affectionate, this term is now patronizing and demeaning: *tooling along with the kiddies and the little woman in his costly can* (1881 +)

lit to the gills *adj phr* Drunk (1917 +)

lit up or **lit up like a Christmas tree** *adj phr* 1 Drunk: *I found Uncle Peter and he was also lit up* (1902 +) 2 Intoxicated with narcotics; HIGH (1960s + *Narcotics*)

live *adj* 1 Not recorded or taped: *live music/a live telecast* (1934 +) 2 Of current importance; still to be decided: *Is metrication really a live issue today?* (1900 +)

live high on the hog *See* EAT HIGH ON THE HOG

live-in *adj* Sharing one's domicile: *Coe's former live-in girlfriend/J Edgar's longtime live-in lover*" (1955 +) *n* A housekeeper or caregiver who lives in one's home: *After they had their second child, they hired a live-in* (1955 +)

live it up *v phr* To live joyfully and extravagantly: *After retirement we decided to live it up for a while* (1951 +)

live one n phr 1 A lively person; up-to-date person; LIVE WIRE (1920s +)

2 A likely target for a confidence scheme or fast sell: *Hey, Eddie, looks like we got us a live one here* (1920s + *Carnival*)

live on the edge v phr To live dangerously; court disaster: *dumped about a quarter-cup of salt on top. "I like to live on the edge," she explained/pushing his luck, living on the edge, playing brilliantly by the seat of his pants* (1990s +)

live park v phr To park a car with the motor running (1980s +)

liver See CHOPPED LIVER, THAT AIN'T HAY

liver rounds n phr An after-hours gathering of doctors at a cocktail lounge, bar, or party (1980s + *Medical*)

lives See HIT someone WHERE one LIVES

live wire n phr An energetic, vibrant person: *Jimmy's a live wire, all right* (1909 +)

living doll n phr A notably decent, pleasant person: *Isn't the emcee a living doll?* (1960s +)

living end, the n phr A person, thing, etc, that is about as much as one can stand; the END, the LIMIT • Usual highly complimentary (1950s + *Beat & cool talk*)

living large v phr Doing well: *responded that he is living large*

◁ **living shit, the** ▷ **See** SCARE THE SHIT OUT OF someone **lizard See** LOUNGE LIZARD

load n 1 Enough liquor to make one drunk: *He's taking on a load again* **2** A dose of narcotic smoked in a water pipe (*esp teenagers*) ◁

3▷ The semen of a single orgasm 4 An old car (1980s+ Teenagers)
5 An obese person; CHUBBO: *It's sort of OK to be a load, because it's what's inside that counts/I'm not going to camp with a bunch of fat loads (1990s+)* 6 (also **load of shit**) Nonsense; lies and exaggerations; mendacious cant; BULLSHIT, CROCK OF SHIT: *the whole thing about O J threatening to blow his head off was a load (1990s+)* See CARRY A LOAD, CARRY THE LOAD, FREeload, GET A LOAD OF, HALF LOAD, HAVE A LOAD ON, a SHITLOAD, SHOOT **one's** LOAD, THREE BRICKS SHY OF A LOAD

loaded *adj* 1 Drunk: *Men should act different when they get loaded/Jerry got so loaded at the party last night that we were afraid to let him drive home (1886+)* 2 Containing whiskey or other liquor: *We sipped our loaded coffee (1930s+)* 3 Intoxicated with narcotics; HIGH, STONED: *And then you get loaded and like it (1940s+ Narcotics)* 4 Well supplied; abounding in; LOUSY WITH: *She's loaded with talent/He died loaded with honors (1709+)* 5 Wealthy; FILTHY RICH: *They're all loaded in that neighborhood (1910+)* 6 Full of information; prepared (1895+ Students) 7 Carrying significance beyond the obvious or surface meaning: *That was a loaded remark (1942+)* 8 Prearranged; biased: *The interview was loaded in my favor (1940s+)*

loaded dice *n phr* Dice of which the weight distribution has been altered so that the roll is predictable (1781+)

loaded for bear *adj phr* Ready and anxious for a fight; heavily prepared for conflict, debate, etc: *I went to the board meeting loaded for bear* [fr the notion that a hunter must use particularly powerful ammunition, or *load*, to kill a *bear*; the phrase meant "very drunk" by 1896]

loader *See* FREELOADER

loadie or **loady** *n* **1** A person who uses narcotics, drinks beer and liquor, etc: *for every high school loadie you will find a National Merit Scholar (1970s + Teenagers)* **2** A drunkard; an alcoholic; LUSH (1970s + College students)

loading *See* FREELOADING

loads of something *n phr* A great number; many; much: *The old lady has loads of charm and loads of money (1880 +)*

load off someone's mind, a *n phr* A great mental and emotional relief; an end to fretting: *When I heard she was OK it was a great load off my mind (1852 +)*

load the dice *v phr* To prearrange or bias some result: **a man who helped load the dice against the dissidents within the government** [1714 +; the date applies to the literal sense; the metaphorical is hard to date]

load up *v phr* **1** To tamper with the ball by covertly applying spit, hair oil, Vaseline, etc (1980s + Baseball) **2** To drink heavily; get drunk: *John always loads up before he goes to fraternity parties (1980s + Students)*

loan shark *n phr* An underworld usurer; JUICE DEALER, SHYLOCK (1905 +)

lobster shift (or trick) *n phr* A working shift beginning about midnight [1920s + Newspaper office; perhaps fr *lobster*, "fool, dupe," found by 1896]

local yokel *n phr* **1** A town or city police officer (1970s + Citizens

band) **2** A resident of a small town or rural area (1940s +)

lock *v* To be seemingly paralyzed and helpless; CHOKE: *He locked on Letterman (1990s +)* **See** LOCKDOWN

lock, a *n phr* A certainty; SURE THING, SHOO-IN: *This guy looks like a lock now/no longer a lock to win the NFC East [1940s + ; fr lock, “wrestling hold”]* **See** HAVE A LOCK ON something, MORTAL LOCK

-lock combining word A stoppage or restriction of or by the indicated thing: *gridlock/job lock/marriage lock/timelock [1980 + ; modeled on gridlock; perhaps based on wrestling holds called locks]*

lockdown (or **lock**) *n 1* The state of being grounded and denied privileges: *can’t go to the mall; I’m on lockdown 2* A relationship in which one is controlled or confined by the other: *wanted to go to the party, but his girl’s got him in lockdown*

lock down *v phr* To confine all prisoners to their cells: *The prison was locked down and sharpshooters were aiming their guns at the barred windows (1980s + Prison)*

locker **See** CHAIN LOCKER

lock horns *v phr* To contend with; fight: *They had locked horns with a better man/She has also locked horns with the network (1839 +)*

lockjaw *n*: *McKellen’s Richard, his defects minimized and with a ruling-class lockjaw accent, is elegantly carved in ice (1980s +)* **See** HAVE LOCKJAW, LOCUST VALLEY LOCKJAW

lockup *n* A cell, esp a detention cell or holding cell; the COOLER, TANK (1839 +)

lock someone up and throw away the key *v phr* To imprison someone for a very long time: *A lot of people feel good when you lock these criminals up and throw away the key (1940s +)*

loco¹ *adj* Crazy; *NUTS*: *He took one look and just went loco (1887 +)* *n*: *She's acting like a loco [fr Spanish, "insane"]*

loco² *n* A locomotive (1940s + *Railroad*)

locomotive *n* **1** A cheer that resembles a steam locomotive starting: *We all had to stand up and give him a locomotive (1950s + Students)*
2 A strong motive force; prime mover: *free trade, which has been a locomotive of prosperity since World War II*

Locust Valley (or **Larchmont**) **lockjaw** *n phr* A somewhat stifled way of speaking, associated with US and British aristocracy [1980s +; the places named are affluent suburbs of New York City]

log *See* BEAT **one's** MEAT, EASY AS PIE

logjam *n* An immovable static situation; *GRIDLOCK*: *He broke the logjam of negotiations with the cable companies (1890 +)*

log roll *n phr* A way of carefully turning a patient out of a cart onto a bed: *She said she needed my help with a log roll in Room 643 (1970s + Medical)*

logrolling *n* The congressional practice of canny reciprocal assistance in getting votes: *Thus, when members of Congress find themselves not able to secure the passage of a measure of purely local interest, they are apt to resort to logrolling [1823 +; said to be based on a proverbial phrase, "You roll my log and I'll roll yours"]*

loid v 1 To open a locked door by moving the catch with a strip or card of celluloid: *The cards could be used to loid any door with a spring latch (1958 +)* **2** To burglarize an apartment, building, etc (1960s +) [fr *celluloid*]

lol v phr Computer network abbreviation for “laughed out loud” (1990s + *Computer*)

lollapalooza (lah lə pə LŌŌ zə) (Variations: **lollapaloosa, lallapaloosa, lala-, lolla-, -palooser, -paloozer**) **n** A person or thing that is remarkable, excellent, wonderful, superior, etc; BEAUT, HUMDINGER: *He’s got a lollapalooza of a cold (1904 +)*

loll (or laze) around v phr To dispose or comport oneself idly; GOOF OFF, LOLLYGAG, LOUNGE AROUND: *We were lolling around at the pool when the thing fell [1940s +; loll, “lean idly,” is found by 1377]*

lollipop n A pitch that is easy to hit: *will they chuckle when out-of-shape lefties lob up lollipops? (1960s + Baseball)*

lollygag or lallygag (LAH lee gag) **v 1** To idle about; GOOF OFF: *He has the summer free for play, swimming, berry picking, and general lallygagging/when my nephew and his companion lollygagged back to my house (1862 +)* **2** To kiss and caress; dally; MAKE OUT, NECK, trade spit (1868 +)

loner n 1 (also **lone wolf**) A person who prefers to be alone, do things alone, etc; a solitary or recluse: *He became more of a “loner,” almost a man apart from the rest of the team/that breed of loners who wandered through the Rockies in the first half of the nineteenth century* **2** One person or thing by itself: *“Make it two and I’ll be true.”*

“Here’s a loner to get you started” (1940s +)

lonesome *See* ALL BY ONE’S LONESOME

long arm, the *n phr* A police officer; the LAW [1940s +; fr the phrase *the long arm of the law*]

long as your arm, as *See* AS LONG AS YOUR ARM

long ball *See* GO FOR THE LONG BALL

long block *v phr*: A “long block” is a complete engine minus the oil pump and oil pan (1990s + Car mechanics)

long (or tall) drink of water, a *n phr* A very tall, thin person: *Bill Bradley is sure a long drink of water/We have an expression in the Midwest: “a tall drink of water” (1940s +)*

long dry spell *n phr* A period of disappointment; sterile period: *It’s been a long, dry spell for Atari game players (1970s +)*

long green (or bread) *n phr* Paper money; bills; FOLDING MONEY: *that dear old affectionately regarded long green* [1891 +; perhaps influenced by earlier sense “home-grown, home-cured tobacco”]

longhair *adj* 1 (also **longhaired**): *longhair tastes in poetry* 2 (also **longhaired**): *sonatas and other longhair stuff* **n** 1 An intellectual; EGGHEAD (1920 +) 2 Classical music • Originally the term was used for musicians who play from written music, and for the music they play: *sometimes called Western music, sometimes European music, and sometimes just longhair (1920s + Jazz musicians)* 3 A young man with long hair, esp a hippie: *another longhair, a member of our commune (1960s +)* [earlier senses fr the stereotype of an

intellectual or esthete as being strange and wearing *longhair*]

long haul *n phr* A long and arduous period: *It looks like it'll be a long haul* (1940s +) **See** FOR THE LONG HAUL, OVER THE LONG HAUL

longies *n* Long underwear; LONG JOHNS: *that day's version of today's longies* (1950s +)

long in the tooth *adj phr* Aged; advanced in age: *The actor is a bit long in the tooth to be playing Tom Sawyer* [1852 +; fr the practice of judging the age of horses by the *length of teeth*]

longjohn *n* A man who is copulating with a prisoner's wife; JODY: *That longjohn out there is gonna die when I hit the street* (1990s + *Prison*)

long johns or **long ones** *n phr* Long winter underwear: *A generation or so ago, men, women, boys and girls put on long ones in October and wore long ones until spring/Pop, will you dig that dish out of your long johns* (1940s +)

long on *modifier* Having a large amount of something: *long on patience* (1913 +)

long run, the **See** IN THE LONG RUN

long shot *modifier: a long-shot victory n phr* **1** A person, horse, project, etc, that seems not likely to win or succeed; DARK HORSE: *But it's a pretty long shot I'm afraid* (1869 +) **2** A scene photographed from a distance; a long-range photograph (1940s +) **See** NOT BY A LONG SHOT

long story short *v phr* To make a longer tale into a nutshell: *long story short, school's out baby*

long suit, someone's *n phr* Someone's best gift or quality; forte; strong point: *His gift of gab is his long suit. He can call a bird off a tree* [1895 +; fr card-playing, "suit in which you hold originally more than three cards," found by 1876]

long time no see *sentence* I haven't seen you for a long time (1900 +)

loo¹ *n* A toilet • Chiefly British: *everything you'd find in a powder room except the loo* [1940 +; origin uncertain; perhaps fr *Waterloo* in proportionate analogy with *water closet*; perhaps fr the Edinburgh cry "Gardyloo" uttered when one threw the contents of the slopjar into the street; Mrs. Virginia Burton of Lynchburg, VA, suggests it may be a pronunciation of French *lieu*, "place," in the phrase *lieu d'aisance*, "toilet, lavatory"]

loo² *n* (also **Loo**) A lieutenant, esp of police: *All lieutenants were called Loo* (1990s +)

looey or **looie** or **louie** *n* A lieutenant; LOOT²: *They demoted me to second looey* (WWI Army)

loogan *n* **1** A stupid person; BOOB (1929 +) **2** A thug; GOON, HOOD: *What's a loogan? A guy with a gun* [origin uncertain; perhaps fr Irish *luigean*, "a weak person"]

loogie *n* A mass of phlegm and saliva that is ejected from the mouth: *The immature kids hocked loogies*

look *See* a HARD LOOK

look-alike *n* **1** A person who closely resembles another; DEAD RINGER,

DOUBLE: *Barratt had an interview with his noted look-alike (1947 +)* **2** A compatible machine: *an IBM PC look-alike (1980s + Computer)*

Look alive! *interj* Get ready; act alert; get ready to move: *Look alive, the train's coming*

look at someone cross-eyed *v phr* To commit even a tiny fault; offend in the least way: *who would yell copper if you looked at them cross-eyed (1940s +)*

look daggers *v phr* To look at with anger; glare at: *I wondered why they were looking daggers at me (1833 +)*

look down one's nose *v phr* To behave with hauteur; act condescendingly: *He looked down his nose at me as if I were some loathsome thing in his path (1921 +)*

look down on someone or something *v phr* To hold in contempt; scorn: *He looks down on us as newcomers (1711 +)*

looker *n* **1** A good-looking person of either sex, but esp a woman: *That waitress is a looker, a real dish (1902 +)* **2** (also **lookie-loo**) A person who inspects merchandise but does not buy: *A "looker" is to the used car lot what a browser is to a bookstore/Yard/garage/tag sales are plagued by "lookie-loos" (1940s + Salespersons)* **See** GOOD-LOOKER

looking *adv* Watching the pitch without swinging the bat: *The Russian infielder struck out three times, looking (1970s + Baseball)*

looking at (or talking), be *v phr* To have as a subject; direct the mind to; specify; contemplate: *We're looking at about 3 billion here/John Glenn, not known for his humor, slammed Reagan's top*

aides. Instead of serving four more years, he said, some are looking at ten to 20/What we're talking here is seventy-five a key/Rita Rose.

You're talking Rita Rose, right? (late 1970s +)

looking good *interj* An exclamation of encouragement, praise, reassurance, etc; WAY TO GO: *They hollered "Looking good!" as the leader passed (1970s +)*

look like a drowned rat *v phr* To have a singularly disheveled, subdued, and unsightly appearance: *When they got off the boat after a weekend they looked like drowned rats (1508 +)*

look like death warmed over *v phr* To look miserable; look ill and exhausted; have a wretched mien: *I don't know what the news was, but Frank looks like death warmed over (1939 +)*

look-see, a *n phr* A look; an inspection: *Let's have a look-see at our friend/I stopped in at Jerry's for a lager and a look-see (1883 +)*

look see *v phr* To look; have a look: *I'm dropping down to look see (1930s +)*

loon *See* CRAZY AS A LOON

loony or **looney** or **luny** *adj* Crazy; NUTTY: *You looney punk/"I think, sir, he's a little lunny," replied Ginger Nut, with a grin (1853 +)* **n** (also **loon** or **loonball**): *the inspired looney who hated killing/would have shown up in a Mel Brooks epic had that loonball thought of it first (1884 +)* [probably fr both *lunatic* and *crazy as a loon* (found by 1845)]

loony bin *n phr* A mental hospital; NUTHOUSE: *that fugitive from a loony-*

bin/So how come I felt like a loony in a loony-bin? (1919+)

loony-tune or **loony-tunes** (Variations: **looney** may replace **loony**; **toon** may replace **tune**) *modifier: the loony-toon acting debut of writer Stephen King/It's been kind of a looney-tunes week n* A crazy person; NUT: *Jesus, what a loony tune/Loony-tunes Dennis Hopper wires a city bus to blow up (1980s+)* [fr *Looney Tunes*&Trade;, a series of short cartoon-film comedies, a paraphrasing of *Silly Symphonies*, also short cartoon-film comedies]

loop See IN THE LOOP, KNOCK someone FOR A LOOP, OUT OF THE LOOP, THROW someone FOR A LOOP

looped or **looping adj** *Drunk: The end result is a looped group/Was she drunk? Looping (1934+)*

looper n A fly ball hit between the infield and outfield (1937+ *Baseball*)

loopy or **loopy-loo adj** Crazy; silly; NUTTY: *that loopy guy whose handkerchief you cry into/visually complemented the singer's loopy Balkan bop/even loopier bids for the few works in Wood's small mature oeuvre (1925+)*

loose adj 1 Relaxed; easy; COOL: *No wonder you guys were really loose/You are loose in the rush, misty and safe (1950s+ Cool talk) 2 Sexually promiscuous (1595+)* **See** ALL HELL BROKE LOOSE, HANG LOOSE, a SCREW LOOSE

loose as a goose adj phr 1 (also **loosey-goosey**) Very relaxed; perfectly easy; COOL: *loose-as-a-goose, completely relaxed on the field/a big party place; people slept with each other, it was loosey-goosey*

(1950s+ *Cool talk*) **2** Of a car engine, needing new bearings and other repairs (1950s+ *Hot rodders*) [probably both fr the rhyme and the perception that a goose has loose bowels; first sense may be related to an earlier “weak, flimsy,” with the notion of “loosely articulated,” hence relaxed to the point of languor]

loose cannon *n phr* A person who is quite likely to cause damage; a wildly irresponsible person: *Haig is a loose cannon on a pitching deck/His detractors call him a loose cannon who makes recommendations in public before consulting* (1977+)

loose change *n phr* Money at hand and to spare; available money: *I wanted to help, but didn't have any loose change* (1827+)

loose in the bean (or upper story) *adj phr* Crazy; NUTTY (1940s+)

loosen (or loose) up *v phr* To speak more freely; become loquacious; loosen one's tongue: *Fatigue and a drink or two loosened him up and he told us the whole story/Debating Perot is a mistake. They will loose him up* (1911+)

loot¹ *n* Money, esp a large amount of money: *Rich planters would come and spend some awful large amounts of loot/There's a lot of loot there, kiddo* (1930+ *Jazz musicians*)

loot² *n* A lieutenant; LIEUT (1898+)

lop *n* A tedious, contemptible person; DORK, JERK, NERD: *Lop: a dork* [1980s+ Teenagers; origin unknown]

lord *See* TIGHT

lose a bundle *v phr* To lose a lot of money: *lost a bundle on that*

handbag

lose one's ass v phr To be badly defeated; lose everything: *We would have lost our ass if we had gone in the way Colin wanted (1960s +)*

lose one's cookies See SHOOT one's COOKIES

lose one's cool v phr To become angry or flustered; lose composure; LOSE IT: *Easy, dude, don't lose your cool (1950s + Cool talk)*

lose one's gourd v phr To become insane; go crazy; GO APE, FREAK OUT: *Have you lost your gourd? [1960s + ; fr gourd, "head"]*

lose it v phr To become very distraught; lose control of oneself; suffer a kind of breakdown; CRACK UP: *told me to keep an eye on Dennis, that he looked like he was losing it/of being totally stressed out, of "losing it"/Thieu was really tough, but that day he lost it. His spirit was broken [1990s + ; probably fr the notion of losing one's grip on reality]*

lose one's marbles v phr To become foolish, irrational, forgetful, etc, as if senile [1920s + ; fr an earlier phrase *let his marbles go with the monkey*, fr a story about a boy whose marbles were carried off by a monkey; *lose one's taw* (a choice playing marble), "go crazy," is found by 1902]

loser n (also **born loser**) A person or thing that fails, esp habitually; BUST, DUD, LEMON, NONSTARTER (1950s + Students) v: *I don't want them to think I'm losered out*

lose one's shirt v phr To lose one's money or property; go broke: *lost his shirt on investments*

lose sleep over something *v phr* To worry overmuch about something; be very anxious about something • Often in the negative: *Murray doesn't seem to have lost a lot of sleep over working without a strong black literary tradition to rely on/Do you lose sleep over your investments? (1942 +)*

lose one's wig *v phr* BLOW one's TOP (1950s + *Cool talk*)

losing *See* someone CANT WIN FOR LOSING

losses *See* CUT one's LOSSES

lost *See* GET LOST

lost cause *n phr* A hopeless or worthless pursuit; a person or thing that can no longer hope to succeed or be changed for the better: *tried to reform her, but she is a lost cause*

lot *See* ALL OVER THE LOT

lot of weight *See* CARRY A LOT OF WEIGHT

lotsa *adj* Lots of: *needs lotsa attention (1927 +)*

lots of luck or **good luck** *interj* A rueful and ironic way of wishing someone success when it is obviously impossible: *Vance played a key part in negotiating the Camp David agreements on the Middle East, but lots of luck in getting him to say so/Looking for a lady loan shark? Good luck; mob jobs remain male turf* [the first form is sometimes uttered in a jokey Asian way: "Rots of ruck"]

Lotus Land *See* LA-LA LAND

loud *adj* Vulgar and gaudy in taste; garish: *Isn't his dress rather loud?*

(1849 +) **See** FOR CRYING OUT LOUD, READ **someone** LOUD AND CLEAR

loudmouth *n* A loud and constant talker, esp a braggart and self-appointed authority; WINDBAG: *Maybe poking Loud Mouth in the kisseroo would solve everything* (1934 +) **v**: *Don't you loudmouth me!*

loud-talk **v** To provoke trouble by talking loudly about real or supposed violations of rules (1920 + *Prison*)

louie **See** LOOEY

lounging around **v phr** LOLL AROUND: *What are you lounging around here for? Get to work!* (1940s +)

lounge lizard *n phr* LADIES' MAN [1918 + ; fr the notion that such a man *lounges*, frequents cocktail *lounges*, and is as colorful, indolent, and reptilian as a *lizard* in the sun]

louse *n* An obnoxious and despicable person, esp one who is devious and undependable; BASTARD, CRUMB: *We kicked the dirty louse out when he said that* (1633 +)

louse up **v phr** **1** To ruin or spill; botch; BOLLIX UP: *Boy, you certainly loused that up* **2** To fail; SCREW UP: *He'll get promoted next month if he doesn't louse up* (1938 +)

lousy *adj* Bad; nasty; CRUMMY: *Crab was all she ever did. What a lousy sport/Yuh lousy boob* (1690 +) **adv**: *I did pretty lousy on that test*

lousy with *adj phr* Well provided with; swarming with: *Everybody will come home lousy with cash/That hotel was lousy with perverts* (1843 +)

love **See** CALF LOVE, FOR THE LOVE OF PETE, PUPPY LOVE

love, a n phr Any notably decent, pleasant, generous person; LIVING
DOLL: *Be a love and bring me another drink (1841 +)*

love affair n phr An attraction or affinity that is strong but not
sexual: *The fishing industry is well aware of the love affair anglers
have with records (1970s +)*

lovebirds n Lovers: *the two lovebirds (1911 +)*

love bug n phr 1 An imagined insect whose bite causes one to fall in
love (1937 +) 2 A notably decent, pleasant, generous person; DOLL,
LIVING DOLL, LOVE: *But once you know her, she's a love bug (1975 +)*

love drug n phr A drug thought to be an aphrodisiac, such as
methaqualone (1960s + *Students*)

**love handle modifier: who come in rarely, and mostly for love-handle
removal n phr** A bulge of fat at the side of the abdomen: *when I
have strapped the metal thing to my love handles (1960s +)*

love-in n A gathering, esp of hippies, devoted to mutual love and
understanding: *Tulsa recently had its first love-in (1960s +
Counterculture)*

lovely n An attractive woman: *where flabby lovelies in polka-dot bikinis
lobbed beachballs around (1940s +)*

love me, love my dog sentence If you accept me, you must accept
what belongs to me or comes with me: *Our stations are not for sale
separate from the network. Our attitude is Love me, love my dog
(1546 +)*

◁**love-muscle**▷ **n** The penis (1930s +)

love nest *n phr* A place where two can make love, esp adulterous love (1930s +)

lover *See* MOTHERFUCKER

lover-boy *n* 1 A handsome man; matinee idol 2 A womanizer; CASANOVA, LADIES' MAN, STUD, WOMAN-CHASER (1940s +)

◁**lovesteak**▷ *n* The penis; COCK, DONG, DORK: *Playgirl* always has men with big lovesteaks as their centerfolds (1980s + Students)

love (or like) the sound of one's own voice *v phr* To have a high opinion of one's self; enjoy self-esteem: *Clifford was a man who clearly loved the sound of his own voice* (1960s +)

love-up *n* An instance of caressing, fondling, etc (1953 +)

love-dovey *adj* Affectionate; amorous: *My, aren't they lovey-dovey?*
n 1 Affection; friendship: *a reign of peace, prosperity, and lovey-dovey* 2 A wife, mistress, sweetheart, etc: *their foreign lovey-doveys* (1904 +)

loving *See* EVER-LOVING, MOTHERFUCKING

low *adj* Sad; melancholy: *I was so low and depressed* (1744 +) *n* A bad reaction to a narcotic; BUMMER (1960s + *Narcotics*) *See* KEEP A LOW PROFILE, LAY LOW, LIE LOW

lowball *v* To report as lower; reduce: *Had Feldstein deliberately lowballed the original numbers?/But he apparently lowballed the amount of money he gave Medlar*

low blow *n phr* An unfair and malicious stroke; CHEAP SHOT: *"They'd be rendered mute if they couldn't use sports analogies."* *"Low blow, Alice"*

[1940s + ; fr the illegal *blow* below the belt in boxing]

lowbrow *adj*: *What are you always pulling that lowbrow stuff for?* *n* A person lacking education and refinement; an ignorant lout (1902 +) [said to have been coined by the humorist Will Irwin]

low camp *n phr* Entertainment or art characterized by very broad and vulgar features: *Low camp would mean doing it with winks and leers at the audience, in jeering collusion* (1960s +)

lowdown, the *n phr* The truth; the authentic facts: *eager to get the lowdown on new aircraft* (1915 +)

lowdown *adj* **1** Vulgar; despicable; vile: *a dirty lowdown trick* (1888 +) **2** Intense and insinuating, in the blues style: *a babe with a lowdown voice* (1900 + *Jazz musicians*) **See** a DIRTY SHAME

lowdown dirty shame **See** a DIRTY SHAME

lower the boom *v phr* **1** To deliver a knockout punch: *When he got his Irish up, Clancy lowered the boom* **2** To punish; exact obedience and docility: *if we lower the boom on every nonconformist in society/My patience evaporated and I lowered the boom on them* (1940s +)

low five *n phr* A greeting or gesture of approval made by slapping hands at about waist level: *San Diego hand-slapping, high fives, low fives* (1980s +) *v phr* GIVE someone FIVE

low-key *adj* Quiet; modest; unassertive: *She is low-key but is happy to talk about things that Wayans doesn't do for himself* (1965 +) *v* To treat with little emphasis; PLAY DOWN: *They were low-keying it because*

of the controversy (1960 +) [in adjective sense, a technical term in photography, “with tones lying in the gray scale,” found by 1907]

lowlife *adj*: *fancies himself in love with the raucous, lowlife Doreen (1794 +)* **n** A person of reprehensible habits; BUM (1909 +)

low-octane *adj* Feeble; ineffectual; low-powered: *The songs earned the obligatory pan from Rolling Stone: “low-octane operatic drivel” (1990s +)*

low profile *adj*: *a low-profile discreetness* **n phr** Inconspicuousness; recessiveness; modesty: *He thought he’d do better with a low profile the first year or so (1960s +)* **See** KEEP A LOW PROFILE

low-rent or **low-end** *adj* Cheap; second-rate; inferior: *and from that low-rent lunch at the Century Plaza/Plug themselves into some low-rent section of the brain. Some dud bit of the brain/I’m having trouble deciding whether he’s classically Rabelaisian or just low-end*

low rent **n phr** A sexually promiscuous woman; PUSHOVER (1960s + *Students*)

low-res or **lo-res** *adj* Low resolution; of lesser or poor quality: *low-res monitor*

low ride *adj phr* Socially inferior; vulgar; TRASHY: *For teenagers any mixing with the Indians or low ride Mexicans down in the valley is slumming (1950s + Southern California)*

low rider **n phr** **1** A person who drives a car with a radically lowered suspension **2** A car with a lowered suspension **3** A motorcyclist, esp one who rides a customized motorcycle with the handlebars very

high 4 A rough young man from a black ghetto: *A group of low riders from Watts assembled on the basketball court/There are what the blacks call low riders, these people who run around pushing their weight around* [1950s+ Southern California; extended fr the ghetto style, among blacks and Chicanos, of the cool young man who wished, according to Calvin Trillin, “to lower his car to within a few inches of the ground, make it as beautiful as he knows how and drive it very slowly”]

LSD *n* Lysergic acid diethylamide, a hallucinogenic drug; **ACID**: *There is no rite of passage, such as smoking pot or tripping with LSD* [1960s+ Narcotics; found as a chemical abbreviation by 1947 in a Swiss journal]

LT¹ (pronounced as separate letters) *n* Living together: *the subject of living together (“LT” in college lingo) (1970s+ College students)*

LT² (pronounced as separate letters) *n* Lieutenant; **LOO, LOOEY**: *I still say there’s something rocky in his bedroll, LT (1990s+)*

lube modifier: lube rack *n* 1 (also **lube job**) A lubrication; grease job; a greasing: *accused the Packers of giving their jerseys a lube job to prevent offensive linemen from holding (1950s+)* 2 (also **lubricant**) Butter (*Students*) [last sense from the likening of *butter* and *grease*]

lubricated *adj* Drunk; **OILED** (1927+)

luck *interj* A wish that one have good luck: “*Luck,*” I said. “*You too,*” Conway said (1980s+) **See** **BREAK LUCK, IN LUCK, OUT OF LUCK, POT LUCK, SHIT OUT OF LUCK**

luck into *v phr* To get something by luck: *Alain lucked into a goldmine*

with an idea for a magazine (1950s +)

luck of the draw, the *n phr* The way fortune would have it; THAT'S THE WAY THE BALL BOUNCES (1967 +)

luck out v phr **1** To be very unlucky; be doomed (*WWII Army*) **2** To be lucky; get something by good luck: that he will luck out after his search and create operation (1954 +) [one of the slang expressions that can mean opposite things]

luck up v phr To become lucky: *Before I lucked up (1954 +)*

lucky break n phr A stroke of good luck; HIT: *Finding the guy was sure a lucky break (1938 +)*

lucky stiff (or dog) n phr A fortunate person: *You've done it again, you lucky stiff (first form 1914 +, variant 1844 +)*

lucre See FILTHY LUCRE

lude or 'lude *n* Quaalude^{&Trade;}, a depressant drug; any methaqualone capsule or pill: *Only this year "ludes" (Quaaludes or "downs") were the hot sellers/Dropping the Last 'Lude (1960s + Narcotics)*

luded out adj phr Intoxicated with depressants, esp QuaaludeTM: *The folks who use it are usually too luded out or preoccupied (1960s + Narcotics)*

luff See FIRST LUFF

lug n **1** A stupid man; dull fellow; BOZO: *Those lugs in the band would begin to kid me about it/a simple-minded lug like Moose Malloy (1924 +)* **2** A demand for money, esp bribe or protection money: *a*

captain of detectives who was collecting the lug from the gambling houses (1934 +) **v** To solicit money; borrow [origins and derivations uncertain; the first noun sense is probably fr *lug*, “something heavy and clumsy,” attested in the 16th century and retained in several English dialects where it is used derogatorily of persons]

LUG n: *At colleges as diverse as Smith and Ohio State, for example, episodic lesbians are numerous and open enough to have spawned an acronym: LUG, short for Lesbian Until Graduation (1990s +)*

lughead n A stupid person: *lugheads lifting weights*

lulu n A person or thing that is remarkable, wonderful, superior, etc; *darb*, HUMDINGER, PISSER: *He said the aquarium was a lulu/Burrows was permitted his own bower, and it was a lulu* [1886 +; origin unknown; earlier *looly*, “beautiful girl,” is attested; perhaps fr the cowboy term *loo loo*, “a winning hand,” explained as a hand invented by local people in order to win a game from a stranger “for the good of the *loo*,” where *loo* means “party, set, community”; this sense of *loo* is related to the popular 18th-century card game of the same name, fr *lanterloo* fr French *lanterlu*, a nonsense phrase in the refrain of a song]

LULU n phr An undesirable use of land [1989 +; acronym of *locally undesirable land use*]

lumber n A bat (1940s + *Baseball*) **v** To take advantage of someone; make someone a scapegoat • Chiefly British: *He was totally lumbered. It was a terrible travesty (1845 +)* [verb sense fr *lumber*,

“to fill up or obstruct with lumber,” found by 1642]

lumber facial *n phr* A blow to the face with a hockey stick: *That cementhead gave him a lumber facial, but the ref didn't call it (1990s + Hockey)*

lummox or **lummux** *n* A stupid, clumsy person; KLUTZ [1841 + ; fr British dialect fr *lummock*, “lump”]

lump *n* **1** A packet of food: “*Lumps*” are possible at any time during the day (1912 + *Hoboes*) **2** A dull, stupid person; CLOD, KLUTZ: *What an unspeakable lump I was (1597 +)*

lumper *n* A person who loads and unloads trucks: “*Lumpers*” unload the trailer for him [1940s + *Truckers*; found by 1796 as “those who load and unload ships”]

lump it *v phr* To accept or swallow something one does not like: *It was a lousy deal, but I just had to lump it* [1791 + ; fr earlier sense of lump, “dislike, reject,” probably related to the sense “strike, thrash”] **See** LUMPS, LIKE IT OR LUMP IT

lumps *n* Severe treatment; punishment; a beating: *Somebody was out to give him his lumps* [1935 + ; ultimately fr late 1700s lump, “beat, thrash”] **See** GET ONE'S LUMPS, TAKE ONE'S LUMPS

lumpy *adj* Badly played (*Cool talk*)

lunatic fringe *n phr* The radical and irresponsible sector of a group or party: *The party has been turned over to its lunatic fringe* [1913 + ; apparently coined by Theodore Roosevelt in *History as Literature*]

lunch (also **lunching** or **lunchy**) *adj* **1** Stupid; ineffectual; useless: A

lunch guy might as well be out to lunch for all the good he's doing **2**
Old-fashioned; passé; out of style: *That bow tie is stone lunchy*
(1960s + *Students*) **See** EAT someone's LUNCH, OUT TO LUNCH, SHOOT one's
COOKIES

lunchbox or **lunchsack** *n* A confused or ignorant person; someone
out of touch with reality; DITZO (1960s + *Students*)

lunch-bucket or **lunch-pail** *modifier* **1** Working-class; blue-collar;
proletarian and ordinary: *Phillips is a regular commentator on NPR,
that bastion of lunch-bucket values/The fight made Tomashek a lunch
pail hero/hard worker, good player, overlooked contributor, a lunch-
pail guy* **2** Favoring the political interests of the working class:
*Traditional lunch-pail liberals and progressive Democrats are beginning
to question the vitality of their own programs* (1990s +)

lunch-hooks *n* The hands; fingers; MEATHOOKS: *get a set of predatory
lunch-hooks into him* (1896 +)

lunch (or **fatten**) **up on** *v phr* To profit from; take great advantage
of: *They proceeded to lunch up on a carnival of bad pitching and
sloppy fielding* (1980 +)

lunger (LUNG əɾ) *n* A person with tuberculosis: *at once a lunger and
lifer* (1893 +)

◁**lung-hammock**▷ *n* A brassiere (1940s +)

◁**lungs**▷ *n* A woman's breasts; BOOBS, KNOCKERS: *pushed a whole blouse full
of lungs against my arm/She has a great pair of lungs*

lunk *modifier*: *four books about a lunk hero Carlo Reinhart* *n* A stupid
person; LUNKHEAD: *Lunks, Hunks and Arkifacts/a character whom*

Tristan describes as “a big lunk” (1867+)

lunker *n* 1 A very big fish, often the apocryphal one that got away:

In the ocean there’s nothing but lunkers (1920+) 2 An old car; CLUNKER,

HEAP: *in old cars known as clunkers, lunkers, winter rats (1970s+)*

lunkhead *n* A stupid person; BOOB, DOPE, LUNK: *a bulky, duckfooted*

lunkhead/Tenors have been traditionally stereotyped as vain lunkheads

(1852+)

lunky *adj* Stupid: *conflict between paternal authority and lunky*

adolescent waywardness (1940s+)

lurk *v* 1 To ride about looking for sex partners; CRUISE: *Me and the boys*

are going lurken’ tonight to pick up some foxy broads (1960s+ Black)

2: *Lurk: To log onto a bulletin board and read the discussion without*

participating or making your presence known (1990s+ Computer)

lurker *n* 1 A person who “lurks”: *according to David Brooks, a pro-gun*

control lurker/You just sneak around and listen without revealing your

presence, thus becoming what internauts pejoratively call a lurker

(1990s+ Computer) 2 A person who enters a computer system

illegally; an uninvited computer eavesdropper: Ian had found a

lurker in the system (1970s+ Computer)

luscious *adj* Very attractive; DISHY, SEXY, ZOFTIG (1748+)

lush *n* A drunkard; an alcoholic; DIPSO: *She is still plastered, the little*

lush/The father was by no means a lush, but the son carried

temperance to an extreme (1890+) *v*: *lushing, stowing wine into our*

faces [origin unknown; probably related to lush, “liquor, booze,”

which is found by 1790 and may be fr Romany or Sehltä (tinkers’

jargon)]

lushed or lushed up *adj* or *adj phr* Drunk (1926 +)

lusher *n* A drunkard: *City editors are roughnecks and urbane gentlemen, lushers and Puritans* (1895 +)

luv *n* A woman, said affectionately: *Please pass the potatoes, luv* (1957 +)

luxo *adj* Luxurious; POSH: *Sapporo/Challenger luxocoupe* (1970s +)

luxobarge or luxomobile *n* A large, showy car; BOAT: *The era of the luxobarge has been scuttled/Cadillac remains Nation's leading luxomobile* (1990s +)

M

M *n* **1** Morphine: *You've got to get M to get that tingle-tingle* (1912 + *Narcotics*) **2** Marijuana (1960 + *Narcotics*)

ma'am *See* WHAM-BAM THANK YOU MA'AM

ma-and-pa *See* MOM-AND-POP

mac¹ *n* Man; fellow; BUSTER, JACK • Used in direct address, often with a mildly hostile intent: *Take it easy, mac* [1928 + ; fr the many surnames beginning *Mac* or *Mc*]

mac² *v* (also **mac out**, **mac on**) To eat; gorge: *Let's go mac/He really macked out last night/mac on hamburgers and fries* [1980s + Students; fr the *McDonald's*TM chain of fast-food restaurants]

macaroni *n* **1** Sawdust (1940s + *Loggers*) **2** A gangster; mafioso: *The macaronis are shooting each other* (1980s +) [*macaroni*, "an Italian," is found by 1845]

MacGuffin or **McGuffin** *n* A plot or movie device that raises a seemingly crucial question in the minds of the audience, but may well be a cunning deception: *The writers wanted a MacGuffin which would set up a series of absurd rules for us/You still haven't told me what the McGuffin is. Why were the government and Mr D so interested* [1930s + ; first used by the director Alfred Hitchcock, and perhaps

suggested by *McGuffin*, “a gift that is not to be opened until Christmas,” hence something tantalizing, found by 1925]

machinery *n* **1** A drug user’s paraphernalia; ARTILLERY (1940s + *Narcotics*) **2** The male genitals: *You could see the bulge of his machinery there at the crotch* (1980s +)

machisma (mah CHIZ mə) *n* The female counterpart of machismo: *Machisma, Women, and Daring* (1970s +)

machismo (mah CHIZ moh) *n* Aggressive masculinity; blatant virility: *machismo, a he-man complex/with Chicago machismo, also universal adolescent horniness* [1960s + ; fr Spanish]

macho (MAH choh) *adj*: *a typical macho Mailerism/list of macho jobs as long as a master sergeant’s sleeve of hash marks* **n** **1** An aggressively masculine man; HEMAN **2** Aggressive maleness; MACHISMO: *It was not just a question of executive macho* [1970s + ; fr Spanish]

macho it out *v phr* To behave with masculine courage and stamina; TOUGH IT OUT: *I machoed it out all the way into the men’s room before I threw up* (1970s +)

mack *n* A pimp: *copped you a mack* [1887 + ; fr 15th-century *mackerel*, “pimp,” fr Old French *macquerel*, perhaps related to Dutch *makelaar*, “trade, traffic,” hence ultimately to *make, macher*, etc] *See* MAC¹

macking *n* **1** Heavy petting and other sex play: *Mackin’ Making Out* **2** To drive slowly and watchfully in the streets, walk about vigilantly in bars and parties, etc, looking for a sex partner; CRUISE [1990s + Teenagers; perhaps related to *mack*, “pimp”]

mack on v phr 1 To make a sexual proposition: *mack on anything with breasts* 2 To make out with someone: *macking on his girlfriend*

Mack truck n phr Something very powerful; SIX-HUNDRED-POUND GORILLA: *Marilyn Horne, the greatest coloratura mezzo of our time, is a Mack truck of a voice with awesome flexibility* [1980s + ; fr the trademark of a line of heavy trucks]

mad adj 1 Angry (1400s +) 2 Excellent; exciting; CRAZY (1950s + *Bop & cool talk*) **See** LIKE MAD

-mad combining word Devoted to, manic over, obsessed with what is indicated: *money-mad/computer-mad/horse-mad*

mad about someone or something adj phr CRAZY ABOUT: *Aren't you just mad about her new book?* (1744 +)

mad as a wet hen adj phr Very angry; infuriated; PISSED OFF: *When he got the letter he was mad as a wet hen* (1823 +)

mad-dog v To stare at someone steadily and provocatively; stare someone down: *Torres thought the man had challenged or "mad-dogged" him/He kept his stare on Hawk. It was what the gang kids called mad-dogging* (1990s + *Street talk*)

made n Straightened hair; a head of straightened hair (1950s + *Black*) **See** HAVE something CINCHED, TAILOR-MADE

made, be v phr be TAKEN (1950s +)

made for someone adj phr Exactly fitted to one's desires, looks, etc: *Mr and Mrs Smith were not exactly made for each other*

made man (or guy) n phr A man who has been initiated into the

Mafia: *He was a mob hanger-on, but not a made man/a made guy, one of them (1960s +)*

made of money *adj phr* Very rich; LOADED: *Well off? Why the guy's made of money (1849 +)*

madhouse *n* A scene of confusion: *a madhouse at the grocery store*

Madison Avenue or **Mad Ave** *modifier:* *Madison Avenue hype* *n phr*
The values, behavior, business, milieu, etc, of advertising and public relations (1950s +)

mad money *n phr* **1** Money carried by a woman with which to pay her way home if her escort becomes offensive **2** Money saved by a woman against the time when she wants to make an impulsive or therapeutic purchase (1922 +)

Mae West *n phr* **A bulky life preserver** [1930s + British aviators; fr the generous bosom of the actress]

mafia *n* A group prominent in and suspected of controlling some organization, institution, etc: *Chernenko was a member of the Brezhnev mafia in the Politburo* [1960s +; fr Italian *mafia* or *maffia*, designating the Sicilian secret society supposed to be deeply involved in organized crime both in Italy and the US; the Italian word derives fr Old French *mafler*, "to gluttonize, devour," perhaps cognate with German *maffelen*, "chew"]

mag *n* **1** A magazine (1801 +) **2** A magneto (1920 +) **3** A car wheel made of a magnesium alloy (1960s +) **v** To search someone with a magnetometer device: *no unscheduled stops and limited contact with people who haven't been magged (1990s +)*

magazine *See* SKIN MAGAZINE

maggot *n* A white person; OFAY: *Maggot: street slang for anyone white (1980s + Black)* *See* ENOUGH TO GAG A MAGGOT

magic *See* TRAGIC MAGIC

magic bullet *n phr* A miraculous remedy for some social, economic, etc, ill: *We know no one chancellor has a magic bullet to turn the school system around* [1960s +; fr the name given in 1910 to salvarsan, formerly a trademark, discovered and proposed by the bacteriologist Paul Ehrlich as a cure for syphilis]

magic (or sacred) mushrooms *n* A type of mushroom (genus *Psilocybe*) that when eaten causes hallucinations, etc

magnum-force *adj* Very powerful: *one of Thomas Hearn's magnum-force punches* [fr the powerful Magnum revolver (a trademark since 1935)]

magoo (mə ɡoo) *n* **1** Custard pie, esp as used in comic stage and movie scenes **2** An important person; BIG SHOT: *Darryl Zanuck, chief magoo of the studio (1940s + Show business)*

mahoff *n* An important person; personage; BIG SHOT: *Ogden-Allied sent a mahoff down from the corporate office in New York yesterday to look into the case/He used to be a big marketing mahoff at Dorney Park* [1940s + Philadelphia; origin unknown]

maiden *n* A racehorse, regardless of sex, that has never won a race; BUG (1880 + Horse racing)

mail *See* AIR MAIL, CARRY THE MAIL, GREENMAIL, JUNK MAIL

mail drop *n phr* A place or address where one can receive mail clandestinely (1959+)

main *adj* Favorite; most admired; beloved: *This is my main nigger, my number one nigger* (1960s+ *Black*) **See** MAINLINE

main brace **See** SPLICE THE MAIN BRACE

main cheese *n* A high-ranking or important person (1900+)

main drag (or **stem**) *n phr* The major street of a town or city • **Main stem** was used of a railroad line by 1832: *We begged together on the "main drag"/We sifted along the main stem* (entry form 1851+, variant 1900+)

mainline or **main v 1** To inject narcotics into a blood vessel; SHOOT UP: *after mainlining heroin the night before* (1930s+ *Narcotics*) **2** To take or administer stimulants or depressants of various sorts: *because the economy was mainlining bigger and bigger fixes of inflation/LA and the San Joaquin valley mainlined northern California water and couldn't wait for the next fix*

main line *n phr 1* (also **Main Line**) The wealthy and fashionable elements of a place; high society and its area of residence, esp that of Philadelphia: *so young and handsome and so popular with the Main Line* (1930s+) **2** A vein in the arm, the median vein, into which narcotics may be injected (1920s+ *Narcotics*) [first sense fr the railroad between Philadelphia and the wealthy suburbs to the west]

main man *n phr 1* One's best friend: *Lou Reed, he my main man* (1960s+ *Black*) **2** The most important player, person, etc: *the*

team's main man (1990s +)

main queen *n phr* **1** One's steady girlfriend (1950s +) **2** A male homosexual who takes the passive role, esp one much sought after by other homosexuals (*Homosexuals*)

main squeeze *n phr* **1** The most important person; BIG ENCHILADA, BOSS: *Vance seems to be the main squeeze (1896 +)* **2** One's sweetheart, lover, etc: *which center on his main squeeze, a girl in his Shakespeare class (1980 +)*

mainstream *adj* Conventional; materialistic: *It's a mainstream movie; don't waste your time (1980s + Students)*

maintain *v* To stay under control; to keep one's composure: *While he gives this silly speech, I need to maintain*

maintain a low profile *See* KEEP A LOW PROFILE

maisie *See* S AND M

major *adj* Impressive; weighty; IMPORTANT, SERIOUS: *The TV pictures of the smoking problem showed over-accessorized secretaries with major hair smoking in dark doorways of an office building (1990s +)*

major-league *adv* Very much; totally; BIG TIME: *We've been major-league screwed. I just found out the trains are stopped (1990s +)*

major leaguer *n phr* A person of achievement; an expert; HEAVY HITTER: *If Eric Valdez had gotten it on with Mrs Esteva, he was a major leaguer*

majorly *adv* Very; extremely: *Both are majorly distraught over the wife/mommy's death/I remember once when I was majorly depressed (1990s +)*

make n 1 Positive identification: *The woman gave us a make on the guy who slugged her* <2> A person regarded merely as a sex partner; LAY: *an easy make* (1918 +) **v 1** To rob; steal; HEIST (1700 + *Underworld*) **2** To recognize or identify; make an identification: *The dealer-suspect “made” (i e, correctly identified) one of the staked-out 53 cars/He made me the minute he saw me* (1906 + *Underworld & police*) **3** To understand; grasp; DIG: *I don’t make you, kid. What did the boy do?* (1912 +) **4** To bring fame, success, wealth, etc: *That one show made her* (1460 +) <5> To do the sex act with; LAY, SCREW: *Not only is the King in love with me, but the Queen tried to make me too/in the sense of “making” handsome men* (1918 +) **6** To arrive at; HIT: *We’ll never make Padanaram before dark* (1624 +) **7** To defecate; DUMP, SHIT (1950s +) **8** To initiate one into the Mafia: *The purpose of a particular meeting had been to make us “to incorporate individuals as new members of the family”* (1960s +) **9** (also **make up**) To shuffle playing cards: *Peter made the cards and handed them to Stern to deal*
See EASY MAKE, ON THE MAKE, ON THE TAKE, PUT THE MAKE ON someone, RUN A MAKE

make a believer out of someone **v phr** To convince someone, esp by forceful or harsh means: *I never worried about it much, but that one wreck made a believer out of me* (1960s +)

make a big production (or **big deal**) **out of** something **v phr** To overdo; overreact, overplan, etc; MAKE A FEDERAL CASE OUT OF something: *All she wanted was a simple wedding, but he had to make a big production out of it* (1960s +)

make a bundle v phr To acquire a lot of money; CLEAN UP: *John really made a bundle on the deal* (1905 +)

make a federal case out of something v phr To overemphasize the importance of something; exaggerate or overreact; BLOW UP: *I merely bought a new car, so don't try to make a Federal case out of it* [1950s +; popularized after being spoken by a judge in the 1959 movie *Anatomy of a Murder*]

make a go of v phr To achieve success in: *to make a go of the list book business* (1877 +)

make a hash of something v phr To make a jumble of; mangle; botch: *The newspapers made a total hash of what I had said* (1735 +)

make a hit v phr To be successful; be received with approval, gratitude, etc: *She made a hit with my family* (1829 +)

make a killing v phr To get a large, quick profit; win hugely: *Where did he get all that money? Made a killing on the stock market, he says* (1888 +)

make a mess v phr To defecate; CRAP, SHIT: *I'm afraid the kid has made a mess in his pants* (1903 +)

make a mess of something v phr To make a jumble of; mangle; botch; MAKE A HASH OF something: *He gave it his best shot, but made a mess of it* (1862 +)

make a monkey out of someone v phr To make someone seem stupid or inept; make a fool of someone: *Are you trying to make a monkey out of me?* (1900 +)

make a move on someone See PUT A MOVE ON someone

make (or get) an offer one can't refuse v phr To coerce or menace,

esp with an ostensibly plausible offer: “*He’s a businessman,*” *the Don said blandly. “I’ll make him an offer he can’t refuse”/The North Atlantic allies last week got an offer they couldn’t brusquely refuse* [1960s + ; popularized by Mario Puzo’s 1969 novel *The Godfather* and the subsequent movie]

make an omelet *See* YOU CAN’T MAKE AN OMELET WITHOUT BREAKING EGGS

make a pass at someone *v phr* To make a sexual advance; PROPOSITION, PUT A MOVE ON someone: *He got high one time and made a pass at her* [1928 + ; fr early 1800s in the sense of “strike at, attack”]

make a pitch *v phr* To make a persuasive case; advocate strongly • **Do a pitch** in the same sense is found by 1876: *The theatrical agent came in and made a pitch for her client* (1960s +)

make a pit stop *v phr* To urinate [1970s + ; fr the *pit stop* for refueling, etc, in a car race, found by 1932]

make a play for *v phr* To attempt to get or seduce, esp by applied attractiveness: *He’s making a play for that cute millionaire* (1905 +)

make a scene (or a stink) *v phr* To exhibit anger, indignation, fiery temper, hysterics, etc, in a public outburst: *I asked her to be quiet and not make a scene/Why don’t these pay cable services make a public stink about the Time Inc-Manhattan Cable monopoly?/“I never made a big stink about it,” says Righetti* (entry form 1804 + , variant 1812 +)

make a score *v phr* **1** To buy narcotics; SCORE: *this Jewish cat looking to make a score* (1960s + *Narcotics*) **2** To win a bet: *But I make scores and they keep me going for a while/ran wild in the cabaret as soon as*

they made a big score (1950+ Gambling)

make a splash v phr To produce a strong and usu favorable impression; be very conspicuous: *That's the book that made such a big splash a couple of years ago (1820+)*

make (or have) a stab at something v phr To make an attempt; have a try: *I've never done this before, but I'll make a stab at it (1895+)*

make a thing of (or about) v To overexaggerate the importance of something • Usu used in the negative: *Don't make a thing about my going to Monday Night Football (1934+)*

make one's bed v phr To be the cause of one's own bad situation or misery: *make your bed and lie in it*

make one's (or the) blood boil v phr To make one very angry; infuriate one: *a devastating combination of logic, analysis, and case studies, makes the blood boil (1859+)*

make one's bones v phr: *"In order to be a real mobster, you have to kill somebody," Matt said evenly. "They call it 'making your bone'" (1990s+)*

make book on something v phr To bet on; offer odds on: *This time she really means it, and you can make book on that (1940s+)*

make one's butt pucker v phr To frighten one; SCARE SOMEONE SHITLESS: *Some criminals have faces that'll make your butt pucker (1990s+)*

make one's day v phr To ensure the pleasure and distinction of one's whole day: *getting the computer fixed made her day (1909+)*

make deals, not See NOT MAKE DEALS

make for v phr 1 HEAD FOR (1633+) 2 To encourage; promote: *This will make for renewed confidence (1526+)*

make one's getaway v phr To escape; flee; fly, esp from the scene of a crime: *The thugs made their getaway in a souped-up Sherman tank (1893+)*

make good v phr To succeed; do what one set out to do in career or life (1899+)

make goo-goo eyes v phr To look at someone longingly, lovingly, seductively, etc: *make goo-goo eyes near a tropical lagoon (1900+)*

make hamburger (or hash or mincemeat) out of someone or something v phr To defeat definitively; trounce; CLOBBER: *They made hamburger out of the wilting opposition [entry from 1980s+, mincemeat variant 1708+; make meat of, "to kill," is found by 1841]*

make it v phr 1 To succeed; GO OVER: *The charts showed we had made it, and big (1925+)* 2 To survive; live: *He's so sick, I don't think he'll make it (1940s+)* 3 To get to a particular goal or place: *He didn't quite make it to the john (1885+)*

make it big v phr To succeed extraordinarily well • *Big* in this adverbial sense is found by 1886 (1960s+)

make it (or things) hot for someone v phr To make things unpleasant for someone: *Maybe if we make it hot for them they'll leave/citizens of obvious substance, who might make things hot for them (1830+)*

make it snappy v phr To hurry; go faster; act quickly; GET THE LEAD OUT,
SNAP TO IT (1915 +)

make it with someone v phr <1> To do the sex act with or to
someone; SCORE: *Man, don't think I didn't make it with her* 2 To
succeed with someone: *Talking that way hell never make it with the
committee (1950s + Cool talk)*

make kissy-face v phr To purse the lips and imitate a kiss; give an
“air kiss”: *Rush guffaws, he blusters, he bats his eyes, he makes kissy-
face (1980s +)*

make like v phr To pretend to be; imitate: *A cop picked it up and
made like a bookie/Brewster's gonna make like a canary [1940s + ; fr
Yiddish *makh vi*]*

make mincemeat out of someone or something See MAKE HAMBURGER OUT
OF someone or something

make money hand over fist v phr To earn a large income; prosper
hugely; COIN MONEY • *Hand over fist* is used about winning money by
1833 (1888 +)

make one's move v phr To take a first and crucial action, esp one
that will start a chain of reactions: *The cops are just waiting for the
guy to make his move [1970s + ; probably fr sports, where opponents
watch the person with the ball to see where he moves]*

make my day sentence Go ahead and do what you appear to
threaten, so that I can trounce you and have a successful day:
“*Make my day*” is much used in the New York subway system, where
life is raw and tempers are short [1971 + ; popularized by the movie

star Clint Eastwood, who used the line in one of his *Dirty Harry* police thrillers]

make nice v phr To pet; cosset, caress: *Public officials make nice to politicians they cannot stand because they need their goodwill*
[1970s + ; perhaps fr Yiddish syntax]

make (or have) no bones about v phr 1 To be entirely candid about; to be open about; be UP-FRONT: *They make no bones about what they're going to do (1548 +)* **2** To show or feel no doubt or hesitation about: *This spirited Labrador had no bones about venturing out* [origin unknown; the form *find no bones*, found by 1459, may indicate that the reference is to bones in soup or stew, which would hinder the eating, hence hold the matter up]

make noises v phr 1 To express oneself; speak, esp initially and somewhat vaguely: *The Russians began to make noises about leaving* **2** To talk insincerely or uselessly: *Do they mean it, or are they making noises? (1951 +)*

make no never mind v phr To make no difference; be insignificant: *Makes no never mind what he thinks, I'm going (1940s + Black)*

make out v phr 1 To understand; DIG: *I couldn't quite make out what he was getting at (1646 +)* **2** To succeed, esp by a slim margin; manage; GET BY: *Did you make out OK with that new machine? (1776 +)* **3** To pet heavily; kiss and caress; NECK: *holding hands, slow dancing, making out to a point/nostalgic for duck-tail haircuts, and making out in the back seat (1940s + Teenagers & students)* **4** To succeed in sexual conquest (1939 +)

make-out artist *n phr* **1** A man known for sexual success; COCKSMAN, STUD, Swordsman: *The correct description for such a fellow is “make-out artist”* (1940s +) **2** A man who tries to charm and impress his superiors (1950s +)

make out like a bandit *v phr* To emerge very successfully; win everything: *You’d make out like a bandit/Some of the people who came on early were making out like bandits/“How did you make out?” “Like a thief”* [1960s +; based on Yiddish *bonditt*, “bandit; clever, resourceful fellow”]

make one’s pile *v phr* To earn or win a fortune: *George made his pile investing in Microsoft* (1975 +)

make (or score) points with someone *v phr* To be more highly prized with someone: *That’s no way to make points with the voters these days* (1960s +)

maker *See* WAVE-MAKER, WIDOW-MAKER

make oneself scarce *v phr* To depart, esp hastily and under threat; BUG OUT, SKEDADDLE: *Yonder comes the law; we better make ourselves scarce* (1749 +)

make something out of *v phr* To interpret as a cause for combat; regard as a challenge or insult: *So you heard what I said, huh? You want to make something out of it?* (1940s +)

make something stick *v phr* To cause an accusation, assertion, etc, to be believed; validate or prove something: *They accused him of rape, but they’ll never make it stick* (1932 +)

make the cheese more binding v phr To make things more difficult or complicated; clutter or snarl the matter: *And just to make the cheese more binding, they're also sold through mail order* [1960s+; a humorous pun based on the fact that cheese is thought to be binding, "constipating," and certain elements of a situation are also *binding*, "constraining"]

make the cut v phr To survive an elimination when a team or group is being chosen: *those mediocre actresses even made the cut* (1980s+ *fr sports*)

make the fur fly v phr To promote a lively conflict; stir things up: *When the Senator hears about this, he'll make the fur fly* (1834+)

make the grade v phr 1 To succeed: *He made the grade as a lawyer* 2 To meet certain standards: *His work just didn't make the grade* [1912+; perhaps *fr* a train's ability to climb up the *grade* or slope of the track]

make the rounds v phr To be passed from person to person; circulate: *A theory about the cause is making the rounds now* [1970s+; *go the rounds* in the same sense is found by 1669]

make the scene v phr 1 To arrive; appear: *I hope I can make the scene Saturday night* 2 To succeed; achieve something: *With this album they'll sure make the scene* 3 To do; experience: *I think I'll make the political scene next* (1950s+ *Beat & cool talk*)

make time v phr To go fast; travel at a good speed: *They really made time after they let the passengers off* (1887+)

make time with someone v phr To succeed sexually with someone,

esp to make or approach a rapid conquest: *He was making time with Ezra's girl (1934+)*

make tracks v phr To depart; CLEAR OUT, MAKE oneself SCARCE: *If you know what's good for you, make tracks right now (1839+)*

make up for lost time v phr To work, play, travel, etc, very fast to compensate for a slow start (1774+)

make waves v phr To cause trouble; upset things: *What he said has made waves/John Quinn had always been a team player who didn't make waves/The case continues to make waves in the state [1962+; fr the joke in which a person just arrived in hell, and hearing beautiful serene singing, finds that it is being done by inmates standing in chin-high excrement and cautiously chanting "Don't make waves"]*

make whoopee v phr 1 To have a very good time; PARTY: *70 degrees and humidity 50 percent, which is when fleas make serious whoopee (1928+)* <2> To copulate; SCREW: *"What do you mean, done, Ethan?" "You know, made whoopee, for Christ's sake"*

make with v phr To use; exercise: *The poor man's Bing Crosby is still making with the throat here in Chi [1939+; fr Yiddish machen mit, "swing or wave something about, brandish something"]*

-making combining word Causing what is indicated: *nervous-making/puke-making/shy-making/sick-making (1970s+)*

makings, the n phr The ingredients; what is necessary for: *He's young, but he's got the makings of a real pro (1613+)*

makkes (MAW kuss or MAH kuss) *n* Nothing; BUBKES, DIDDLY, ZIP

[1940s + ; fr Yiddish fr Hebrew *makot*, “plagues, blows, troubles”]

malarkey *interj* BULLSHIT *n* Lies and exaggerations; empty bombastic talk; BALONEY, BULLSHIT: *Hollywood is in the business of manufacturing malarkey as well as movies/That’s a lot of malarkey* [1929 + ; origin unknown]

male chauvinist pig or **porker** *modifier*: *male-chauvinist-pig-type man to the contrary notwithstanding/the arrogant male chauve resident n phr* A man who believes in and proclaims the superiority of men over women; MCP: *Is it all right to call a priest a male chauvinist pig?/And the men who ran the AVP were even worse oinking porkers (entry form 1972 + , variant 1990s +)*

male member *See* MEMBER

mall *n* The shopping and social activity of visiting a mall: *everyone in South Florida decided to go malling (late 1980s +)*

mall rat or **mallie** (MAW lee) *n* or *n phr* A person, esp a teenager, who frequents shopping malls for sociability, excitement, etc: *“Mallies” always hang around the pay telephone/A mall rat is someone who is here every day (first form 1980s + , second 1986 +)*

mama *n* **1** A sexually attractive or sexually available woman: *“Say, baby, you sportin’ tonight?” “Yeah, Mama, if I could find somebody to sport with” (1925 + Black)* **2** A woman who belongs to a motorcycle gang: *If a girl wants to be a mama and “pull a train,” she’ll be welcome at any Angel party (1960s + Motorcyclists)* **3** The passive partner of a homosexual couple (1970s + *Homosexuals*) *See* RED-HOT MAMA, SWEET MAMA

mama-and-papa *See* MOM-AND-POP

mama's boy or mammy boy *n phr* A soft or effeminate boy or man; a male overly attached to his mother: *the stale old mama's-boy-liberated-by-looney-lovely* (1896 +)

man *interj* An exclamation of surprise, delight, emphasis, etc; JEEZ, WOW: *Man! I almost missed it!* (1896 +) *n* A dollar; IRON MAN: *You oughta grab about 300 men* (1921 +) [in the first sense, the very similar man alive is found by 1839] *See* ASS MAN, BACKDOOR MAN, BOX MAN, BUTTER-AND-EGG MAN, CANDY MAN, COMPANY MAN, CON MAN, DIRTY OLD MAN, FANCY MAN, FINGER MAN, FIRST MAN, FOUR-LETTER MAN, G-MAN, HAMMER-MAN, HATCHET MAN, HE-MAN, HIT MAN, HONEY MAN, HOOP-MAN, IRON MAN, JIGGER-MAN, JUICE MAN, LADIES' MAN, LEG MAN, OUNCE MAN, PETE-MAN, PETERMAN, POINT, POOR MAN'S **something**, ROD-MAN, SANDWICH MAN, SEEAMAN ABOUT A DOG, SHACK MAN, STRAIGHT MAN, SWEET MAN, TIT MAN, TRIGGER MAN, VENT MAN, WHEEL MAN

man, the, or the Man *n phr* 1 Any man in authority; BOSS, HIS NIBS: *See the guy in front? That's the man* (1918 +) 2 A police officer, detective, prison guard, etc; the HEAT: *Careful, here's the man* (1960s + *Narcotics & underworld*) 3 A supplier of narcotics; DEALER (1960s + *Narcotics*) 4 A white man; the white establishment: *a super nigger who spends his life trying to prove he's as good as the Man/That's what "the man" wants you to do—to riot, so he can shoot you down* (1963 + *Black*)

man about a dog, a *See* SEE A MAN ABOUT A DOG

man-about-town *n* A sophisticated urban man and cynosure; boulevardier (1734 +)

manage *v* To cope satisfactorily; survive; GET BY: *It's a lot to pay, but we'll manage* (1655 +)

man bag or **purse** *n phr* A handbag carried by a male, esp a metrosexual

man boobs (or **breasts**) *n phr* Abnormally enlarged pectoral area on a male, giving the illusion of being breasts

man-eater *n* A sexually voracious woman; also, a femme fatale (1906 +)

mangy with *adj phr* LOUSY WITH (1940s +)

manhandle *v* To treat roughly; beat; BANJAX, CLOBBER: *They manhandled him pretty thoroughly before they let him go* (1865 +)

Manhattan eel *n phr* A condom; CONEY ISLAND WHITEFISH [1980s +; fr the fact that so many of these are seen floating among the offal in New York Harbor]

Manhattan side *n phr* The right side of the bowling alley as one faces the pins [1940s + Bowling; fr the location of Manhattan as one looks south along the East River]

manicure *v* To care for meticulously • The standard sense “care of the hands and fingernails” is found by 1889: *Dutch farmers’ constant manicuring of the land has driven out numerous native plant and animal species/the manicured playing fields of international finance* (1922 +)

mano a mano *n phr* A hand-to-hand fight or duel: *Hemingway’s subject was the mano a mano between Spain’s two leading matadors/a literary mano a mano with some good books as weapons* [1970s +; fr Spanish, “hand-to-hand”]

man on (or in) the street *modifier*: *and some man-on-the-street TV commercials for post-convention use* **n phr** The average person; the ordinary person; JOE AVERAGE, JOHN Q CITIZEN (1830 +)

man-sized or man-size *adj* Large; HEFTY: *Crump bet man-sized money* (1934 +) **man upstairs, the** **n phr** God: *I'm talking about the man upstairs. God himself* (1961 +)

◁**man with a paper ass**▷ **n phr** A person whose ideas are not important; a trivial man; LIGHTWEIGHT (1970s + *Black*)

many *See* ONE TOO MANY

map **n 1** The face: *A funny look spread over Kenney's crimson map* (1908 +) **2** A bank check (1950s + *Gambling*)

map out **v phr** To plan: *Let's map out what we're gonna do tomorrow* (1853 +)

◁**maracas**▷ **n** A woman's breasts; BOOBS: *gams and a pair of maracas that will haunt me in my dreams* (1939 +)

marble-dome **n** A stupid person; BLOCKHEAD (1940s +)

marble orchard **n phr** A cemetery: *You'll get your names in this marble orchard soon enough* (1929 +)

marbles *See* GO FOR ALL THE MARBLES, GO FOR BROKE, HAVE ALL **one's** BUTTONS, LOSE **one's** MARBLES, MISSISSIPPI MARBLES

marching orders **n phr** A directive to get going or carry out instructions: *marching orders for the husbands* (1937 +)

marge **n 1** The passive, "feminine" partner in a lesbian couple; MAMA

(1970s + *Homosexuals*) 2 Margarine (1940s +)

Mari See MARY

Maria See BLACK MARIA

◁**maricón**▷ (MAH rih kahn, MA-, -KOHN) *n* A male homosexual:
“*This it is, maricón,*” *snarled the Puerto Rican* [1932 + ; fr Spanish]

marinate v To think about something or to wait for something to happen: *Let me marinate on that idea*

Marines See TELL IT TO THE MARINES

mark n 1 The target or victim of a swindle, esp one who is easily duped; PATSY, SUCKER: *not that he’s more of a mark than other horse nuts/his “marks,” as the gullible are called by a pitchman* (1883 +) 2 An outsider or member of the local community; HOME GUARD: *Marks aren’t allowed in* (1940s + *Carnival*) **v** To inform; SQUEAL: *He swore he wouldn’t mark if they caught him* (1970s + *Teenagers*) **See** EASY MARK, HASH MARK, TOE THE MARK, UP TO SCRATCH

marker n 1 IOU: *He is willing to take Charley’s marker for a million* (1887 +) 2 A point or score: *eight markers in the first period* (1940s + *Sports*)

market See GRAY MARKET, MEAT MARKET, SLAVE MARKET

marks the spot See X MARKS THE SPOT

mark time v phr To wait or do nothing while waiting: *marking time while she looked through clothing stores*

marmalade n MALARKEY (1950s +)

marquee adj Famous and influential; star; stellar: *Sawyer is likely to*

escalate demands from other marquee names/When you play a marquee player like Shaquille O'Neal, if you block his shot, you want to let him know modifier Publicity; HYPE: That Pasolini was offered these public forums suggests that there was a certain marquee value attached to his name [late 1980s + ; fr the important names featured on a theater marquee]

marriage *See* SHOTGUN WEDDING

marry *v* To join; bring together: *He tries to marry the Canadian producers with the foreign buyers (1526 +)*

marshmallow *n* A white person: *an Oreo fronting for a "marshmallow"/Not bad for a kid whose mother was probably knocked up by a marshmallow (1960s + Black)*

Mary *n* **1** A male homosexual who takes the passive, "feminine" role: *He passed two willowy-looking queers, Mary's who'd decided to settle for each other (1970s + Homosexuals)* **2** (also **Mari**) Marijuana (1960s + Narcotics)

Mary Ann or **Mary Jane** *n phr* Marijuana or a marijuana cigarette (1920s + Narcotics)

Mary Warner *n phr* Marijuana (1920s + Narcotics)

mash *n* **1** Love or a love affair: *just another mash (1920s +)* **2** A lover, of either sex: *her latest big mash (1879 +)* *v* **1** To make a sexual advance to; PROPOSITION: *I wouldn't try to mash anybody like you (1882 +)* **2** To neck, pet, etc; MAKE OUT: *My blind date and I felt just a little uncomfortable when you guys started mashing in the backseat last night (1980s + Students)* [apparently fr Romany, "allure, entice,"

and so used in mid-1800s vaudeville by a Gypsy troupe] **See**
MISHMASH

masher *n* A man who habitually makes sexual approaches to women;
LADY-KILLER, WOLF (1875 +)

mash note *n phr* A very flattering letter, esp one proposing or
offering sex: *He gets mash notes by the ton/showered him with
embroidered pillows, mash notes, and cigars (1880s +)*

massage *v* **1** To beat; drub; ROUGH someone UP: *caught and massaged
with rubber hoses (1924 +)* **2** To handle, process, or manipulate
data, esp computer data: *The results all depend on how you massage
it (1966 +)*

massage someone's **ego** *v phr* To soothe and flatter someone; STROKE:
*He felt all strong and confident after she massaged his ego at lunch
(1980s +)*

massage parlor *n phr* A place that provides sexual services under the
guise of legitimate body massage; RAP CLUB (1970s +)

master **See** RINGMASTER

master cylinder *n* The most important part of a system, esp that can
start or stop a process: *Who's the master cylinder in this operation*

mat *n* The floor; deck (1950s + Navy) **See** GO TO THE MAT, ON THE MAT

match **See** the WHOLE SHOOTING MATCH

mate or **matey** *n* A friend of the same sex; a friend or companion:
Give me a hand, mate (1380 +)

math *n* Mathematics (*Students*)

matter *See* GRAY MATTER

mau-mau (MOU MOU) *v* (also **mao-mao**) To coerce with rough treatment; terrorize: *The pressure ladies half-successfully mau-maoed Communications Minister Francis Fox to censure the offending shows/I've been a mayor for nine years and I've been Mau-Maued by the best* [1970+; fr the *Mau Maus*, a terrorist group in Kenya in the 1950s]

maven or **mavin** or **mayvin** (MAY vən) *n* An expert; an authority; a connoisseur: *growing clientele of pizza mavins/A real advertising mavin must have thought that up* [1960s+; fr Yiddish fr Hebrew, “understanding”]

max *adv* At the most; at the highest limit: *I do three cars a week, max* (1970s+) *v* To win; do the very best (1950s+ *College students*) [fr *maximum* “the highest possible grade,” found by 1851] *See* TO THE MAX

maxed *adj* Intoxicated with a narcotic; STONED [1960s+ *Narcotics*; perhaps related to *max*, “gin, brandy, liquor,” found from 1811]

maxed out *adj phr* Having reached a specified upper limit: *People have less money and are maxed out on their credit cards* (1990s+)

maxi *adj*: *long black pants under a maxi coat* **n** **1** A below midcalf or ankle-length skirt or coat **2** The ankle-length depth of hemline: *Is the new length a midi or a maxi?* [1960s+; fr *maximum*]

max out *v phr* **1** MAX To make the best score, or one’s best score (1970s+ *Army*) **2** To do or contribute the maximum possible amount: *go to the people with the potential of, as they say in the*

business, “maxing out” **3** To go to sleep (1970s+ College students) **4** To reach the highest possible point; peak: *It doesn’t look to be a trend that’s maxed-out* (1990s+) **5** To be used to the maximum: *There’s been a great outpouring of affection. The phones have been maxed out/teen angst is something that happens when your credit cards max out* (1990s+)

mayo *n* Mayonnaise (1930+)

mazel (MAH zael) *n* Luck: *When a man has mazel, even his ox calves* [1968+; fr Yiddish fr Hebrew]

mazuma (mæ ZOO mə) *n* (also **mezuma** or **mazume** or **mazoomy** or **mazoo** or **mazoola** or **mazula**) Money: *You have to leave your mazuma behind* [1901+; fr Yiddish fr Hebrew; perhaps fr a Chaldean word meaning “the ready necessary”]

Mc- prefix Indicating various qualities associated with the McDonald’s™ restaurant chain and its food, such as rapidity, brevity, disposable packaging, small size, strict standardization, etc

- The prefix reflects a scornful comparison with the things: *McFirm/McJob/McLibrary/McLunchroom/McMyth/McNews/McPublic center/McTheater/McWine/McWorld* [1980s+]

MC or **emcee** (pronounced as separate letters) *n* A master of ceremonies (1929+) *v*: *MC’d by Bob Hope/George Jessel emceed the event*

McCoy *adj* Genuine; legitimate; KOSHER: *like every other McCoy biz* (1930+)

McCoy, the *See* the REAL MCCOY

McDs or McDucks or Mickey Ds *n* McDonald's™, a fast-food restaurant [1980s+ College students; reference to Disney's *Donald Duck*]

McFly *n* A stupid or simple-minded person: *duh, McFly* [1985+ ; fr character in the film *Back to the Future*]

McGee *See* JERK MCGEE

MCP or mcp modifier: *a sort of anarcho-Marxist MCP/Somehow his senior mcp act doesn't really threaten women* *n* MALE CHAUVINIST PIG (1971+)

MD *n* Dr Pepper™, a soft drink (1970s+ *Lunch counter*)

MDA *n* Methyl diamphetamine, a stimulant that is somewhat like LSD (1960s+ *Narcotics*)

meadow muffin *n phr* A large, flat, dried piece of dung; a buffalo chip: *the meadow muffin, better known as the cow pie* (1980s+)

meal *See* SQUARE

meal ticket *n phr* 1 A superstar athlete who constitutes the drawing and earning power of a team, manager, etc; the FRANCHISE: *with his meal ticket, the Brown Bomber himself* (1905+ *Sports*) 2 Any person, skill, part of the body, instrument, etc, that provides one's sustenance: *His looks are his meal ticket* (1902+)

mean *adj* Excellent; wonderful; CLASSY, WICKED: *This girl has already proved she can play a mean game of tennis/And Wheelright had a great, mean ear for dialect* (1900+ *Black*) *See* LEAN AND MEAN, SHAKE A WICKED CALF

mean bean *n phr* An expert; MAVEN: *John, who's a mean bean at squash and horseback riding (1980s +)*

mean business *v phr* To be seriously in earnest: *show these guys that we mean business (1857 +)*

mean gene *n phr* A postulated genetic basis for a violent personality (1990s +)

mean green *n phr* Money: *Mean green won out over neighborhood purity in the end (1970s + Black)*

meany or **meanie** *n* A cruel, unkind person; villain; HEAVY (1927 +)
See BLUE MEANIE

measly *adj* Contemptibly inadequate; petty: *Should I work for a measly five bucks an hour? (1864 +)*

meat *n* <1> A person considered merely as a sex partner or object; ASS (1597 +) <2> The vulva; CUNT (1611 +) <3> The penis; PRICK (1595 +) 4 A stupid person; MEATHEAD: *to see a bunch of meats play (1970s + Students)* 5 The depth of tread on a car tire (1970s + *Car racing*) 6 Solid value or meaning; substance: *The ones that contained real meat were milked capably by the cast (1886 +)* *See* BEAT one's MEAT, COLD MEAT, DARK MEAT, EASY MEAT, JUMP ON someone's MEAT, MAKE HAMBURGER OUT OF someone or something, WHITE MEAT

meat, one's *n phr* 1 An easy and favorite opponent; a chosen opponent: *He wins every time, guess I'm his meat* 2 One's preferred work, play, effort, etc: *Tennis is his meat* [1899 +; probably based on the older sense of meat, "food, sustenance, game"]

meat, the *n phr* The essential part; core: *Now we see the meat of the problem* (1901 +)

meat and potatoes *modifier*: *It's the meat-and-potatoes appeal, the old pull at the heart-strings* *n phr* The simple fundamentals; the NITTY-GRITTY (1940s +)

meatball *n* **1** A stupid, tedious person; an obnoxious or disgusting person; CREEP, JERK: *"How come?" "Because he's a meatball"* (1940 +) **2** A signal flag with a black dot on a yellow field (WWII Navy) **3** The Japanese flag (WWII Navy)

meat grinder *n phr* A place or situation of extreme destruction: *An Iraqi battalion had blundered badly, sending thinly armored personnel carriers across the border into a meat grinder, where Saudi and American missiles had all but demolished the invaders* (1951 +)

meathead *n* A stupid person; MEATBALL: *The copper was a big meathead/Take your hand off that door, you meathead* (1945 +)

meatheaded *adj* Stupid: *some meatheaded tart* (1949 +)

meathooks *n* The hands or fists; biscuit hooks (1919 +)

meat market *n phr* **1** A place where one looks for sex partners; the milieu of the singles; MEAT RACK: *men, who are now in the meat market, just like women have always been/They go out to the meat markets, then come back and say how awful it was* (1896 +) **2** Any place where people are displayed, appraised, etc, and generally treated like cattle: *the free gear, the summer job, the horrific meat market of the Nike summer camp for prime national hoop prospects* (1980s +)

meat rack *n phr* A gathering place, often public like a park bench or a shopping mall, where one seeks out sex partners; MEAT MARKET: *trailers parked near the river in Greenwich Village, the strip some people call “the meat rack”/Crescent Beach was the local meat rack where the beautiful young women from the university drifted across the sand (1972 + Homosexuals)*

meat run *n phr* Any fast train (1950s + Railroad)

meat wagon *n phr* **1** An ambulance: *He woke up in the meatwagon/I got a lift in the meat wagon to the hospital where I got the treatment of a fuckin’ king (1925 +)* **2** A hearse: *They have the meat wagon following him around (1950s +)* **3** A group or stable of second-rate fighters: *Montoya was known for running a meat wagon, a wholesale source of journeymen opponents (1980s + Prizefighting)*

mechanic *n* **1** An expert cardplayer, esp one adept at cheating; CARDSHARP: *No “mechanics” (sharps) were tolerated (1909 + Gambling)* **2** A professional killer; HIRED GUN, HIT MAN: *Some prison mechanic will take him out on the lunch line (1973 +)*

med *modifier* Medical: *med school/a med alert (1933 +)* *n* A medical student (1851 +)

medal *v* To win a medal: *Flo-Jo medaled in the 100-meter (1980s + Sports)*

media blitz *n phr* An intensive publicity campaign: *A new coalition of fiscally conservative groups is planning a \$10 million media blitz (1990s +)*

media circus *n phr* An occasion of very extravagant media coverage,

esp television: *It'll be a media circus (1990s +)*

media hype *n phr* Concentrated favorable publicity for a person, corporation, candidate, etc: *Instead of dealing in the media hype, Coplon should have pursued the reasons (1970s +)*

medic *n* **1** A medical student (1823 +) **2** A military medical orderly, attendant, stretcher-bearer, etc (1925 + *Armed forces*) **3** (also **medico**) A physician (1661 +)

medicine *See* GOD'S MEDICINE, TAKE ONE'S MEDICINE

meds *n* Medications: *an angry, alienated 25-year old who swallows anti-psychotic "meds" to curb his demons (Medical)*

meemies, the *See* the SCREAMING MEEMIES

meet *n* **1** A point where trains are scheduled to meet (1940s + *Railroad*) **2** A meeting, esp for some illegal purpose: *She went out to make a "meet" to buy more bogus bills/I'll call you next Friday, same time, and set up a meet (1879 +)* **3** JAM SESSION (1950s + *Bop musicians & cool musicians*)

meets the road *See* WHERE THE RUBBER MEETS THE ROAD

mega *adj* Much: *I got mega homework tonight* **adv** Very: *This dude is mega gross (1980s + Students & teenagers)*

mega- *prefix* A very large specimen, quantity, etc, of what is indicated: *megabitch/megablitz/mega-cost/megafame/megagreed/megahopes/megamodel/megatravel (1981 +)*

megabucks *n* (also **megageeters**) Much money, literally, "millions

of dollars” • **Megabuck**, “a million dollars,” was coined by nuclear scientists in 1946, but the plural form was not popularized until the 1960s and ‘70s: *the simple faith that moves mountains and grosses megabucks/He was doing okay, but she’s got megabucks of her own/after two years on the road you’ll be knocking down megageeters* (1946 +)

megillah, the, or the **whole megillah** (mə GILL ə) *n phr* Something very long and tedious told or explained exhaustively: *I’ve been listening to all this here Megillah/Let’s not have the megillah/a whole megilla (song and dance)* [1909 + ; fr Yiddish fr Hebrew, “scroll, volume,” esp the Book of Esther read aloud in its entirety at Purim celebrations]

MEGO (MEE goh) *sentence* This is a smashingly boring affair [1980s + chiefly news media; fr *mine eyes glaze over*]

MEGOGIGO (MEE goh GĪ goh) *sentence* This is totally tedious [1980s + Teenagers; fr *mine eyes glaze over, garbage in garbage out*]

-meister combining word Very active in, adept at, or in charge of what is indicated • These words have proliferated hugely since the 1960s, apparently on the model of **schlockmeister**:
admeister/attackmeister/blurbmeister/budgetmeister/burgermeister/coumeister/processmeister/quote-meisters/rapmeister/schlockmeister/shuttlemeister/sleazemeister/spinme
[fr German, or fr Yiddish *mayster*, “master”; what was probably a Yiddish word was given, as is the custom, a German spelling] *See*
SCHLOCKMEISTER

mell of a hess, a *n phr* A dire situation; SNAFU: *You better come over,*

Doc, there's a mell of a hess here/Some mell of a hess you got us into
[spoonerism for *hell of a mess*]

mellow *adj* **1** Slightly drunk; TIDDLY (1690+) **2** Sincere and skillful •
Said of a musical performance (1935+ *Jazz musicians*) **3** Relaxed;
at ease; LAID-BACK (1950s+ *Cool use*) **4** Very friendly; intimate
(1950s+ *Cool use*) *n* A close friend; BUDDY (1950s+ *Cool use*) **v**
MELLOW OUT (1980s+ *Students*)

mellow-back *adj* Smartly dressed (1930s+ *Black*)

mellow out **v phr** (also **mellow**) To become relaxed and easy:
wondering why the family in "The Grapes of Wrath" didn't move to LA
and mellow out/Even the testiest groups and crews can be mellowed out
after spending time at Alpine (1970s+ *Students*)

mellow yellow *n* A banana peel used as an intoxicant; also, LSD
(1967+)

melon *n* The sum of profits, loot, etc, to be divided: *The stockholders*
have a meager melon to share this year (1906+)

melonhead *n* A stupid person; KNUCKLEHEAD, MEATBALL: *She called*
Greenwood a "melonhead" (1980s+)

◀**melons**▶ *n* A woman's breasts, esp large • Usu objectionable: *the*
melons on that girl

meltdown *n* A disaster: *They are facing a credibility meltdown/The*
Glenn campaign has achieved almost total meltdown [1970s+; fr the
nuclear power-plant disaster in which the core of radioactive
material *melts down* into the earth below, the term found by 1963]

melt down *v phr* To be disastrously affected: *When you put on that kind of outfit, boys are going to melt down (1990s +)*

melted out *adj phr* Penniless, esp from gambling; BROKE, TAPPED OUT (1950s + *Gambling*)

Melvin or melvin *n 1* A disgusting and contemptible person; CREEP, NERD (1950s + *Teenagers*) *2* The prank of pulling the underwear upward from behind by the waistband; WEDGIE, MURPHY (1980s + *Students*)

member *n 1* A fellow black person; BROTHER, SISTER (1958 + *Black*) <2> The penis (1356 +) [second sense a euphemism for the even more euphemistic *membrum virile*]

mend one's fences *v phr* To establish or restore good relations: *I had better get home and mend my fences (1880s +)*

mensh or **mensch** *n 1* An admirable and substantial person; a decent and mature person: *wear good clothes and look like a mensch/A generous little mensch gets French manicure gift certificates for his girlfriend 2* A virile man • Can also be used of women: *mensch, a stand-up he-man/Trigere, almost alone, is mensch enough to candidly dismiss the misogynous midi [1909 +; fr Yiddish, literally “person, man”]*

men's lib *n phr* Men's liberation, the counterpart, and possibly reaction, to women's liberation: *Only men's lib and women's lib can alert society (1970 +)*

mental *adj* Crazy; deranged; NUTTY: *And the son, William, went absolutely mental (1927 + British)* *n* A deranged person; NUT (1913 +

British)

mental job *n phr* A neurotic or psychotic person; NUT (1950s +)

meow *See* the CAT'S MEOW

merchant *combining word* A person who esp indulges or purveys in what is indicated: *heat merchant/speed merchant* (1914 +)

merry ha-ha, the *n phr* A ridiculing and dismissive laugh at someone; the HORSELAUGH (1906 +)

merry hell *n phr* A severe rebuke or punishment: *He gave us merry hell for that caper* (1911 +) *See* CATCH HELL, GIVE someone HELL

merv *n* A student who studies hard; PENCIL NECK, POINDEXTER (1980s + *Students*)

mesc *n* Mescaline, a hallucinogenic drug (1960s + *Narcotics*)

meshegoss or **meshugas** *See* MISHEGOSS

meshuga (mə SHŏŏ gə, -SHIH-) *adj* (also **meshigga** or **meshugah** or **meshiggah** or **mishugah** or **mishoogeh**) Crazy; NUTTY: *Mishoogeh or mishugah, spelled either way, means crazy* [1892 +; fr Yiddish fr Hebrew; the variant pronunciations reflect major dialects of Yiddish]

meshugana or **meshiggana** or **meshiganer** (mə SHŏŏ gə nə, -SHIH-) *n* A crazy person; NUT [fr Yiddish fr Hebrew]

mess *n* **1** A desperately confused situation; trouble; chaos; FOUL-UP, FUCK-UP: “*You seem to have got into a mess,*” said the officer (1834 +) **2** An incompetent, disorganized, and confused person: *Honey, I’m a mess*

(1936 +) **3** Dirt, garbage, trash, etc; a dirtying: *Clean up your damn mess (1851 +)*

message v To send a message on the Internet • The sense “to send a message” is found by 1583: *“I need to do it,” Baker messaged a man with whom he had been discussing rape, torture, and murder (1990s + Computer)*

mess around v phr To idle about; loaf; work indolently; GOOF OFF: *Stop messing around and get to work (1932 +)*

mess someone around (or over) v phr To victimize and exploit; maltreat; FUCK OVER: *being messed over by Goldberg all the time/Here’s a young black dude in a Cadillac, well just mess him around (1960s + Black)*

mess around with or mess with v phr 1 To become involved with: *I don’t mess with married or attached women (1913 +) 2* To defy or challenge; provoke; FUCK WITH: *Nobody dared to mess around with Slippers/They go around messing with us, because we’re trying to do something (1950s +) 3* To play or tinker with: *I caught him messing around with the heating control (1940s +)*

messed up adj phr 1 Quite confused: *messed up over the breakup 2* Intoxicated from drugs or alcohol: *got messed up last night*

mess up v phr 1 To disarrange; muddle: *Who messed up these figures? (1909 +) 2* To injure; damage: *The drugs and booze messed up her mind (1919 +) 3* To get into trouble; make a botch; FUCK UP: *If you don’t mess up you get an automatic promotion (1915 +)*

mess someone up v phr 1 To thrash; beat up; WORK someone OVER: *They*

sent a couple of goons to mess him up when he wouldn't pay **2** To damage or injure someone: *The wreck messed him up so he can't walk* (1940s +)

messy *adj* **1** Confused; chaotic; FUCKED UP **2** Nasty; DIRTY: *There'll be a lot of messy publicity about this* (1940s +)

metal *n* HEAVY METAL **v** To play loudly amplified rock and roll music:
Nobody can metal like Blue Oyster Cult (1973 +) **See** HEAVY METAL, PUT THE PEDAL TO THE METAL

metal head *n* A devotee of heavy-metal rock music: *The standard uniform of the metal-head is Led Zeppelin T-shirt, jeans, shoulder-length hair* (1970s +)

meth *n* Methedrine™; methadone, or methamphetamine: *Eight hours after snorting cocaine for two days and doing crystal meth* (1960s + *Narcotics*)

meth head (or **freak**) *n phr* A habitual user of Methedrine™ (1960s + *Narcotics*)

me-too or **me-tooistic** *adj* Imitative; COPYCAT: *Big companies brought out many me-too drugs and had to slim down* (1940s +)

metrosexual *adj* Of a male, exhibiting a strong aesthetic sense and inordinate interest in appearance and style *n* An urban male of any sexual orientation who has a strong aesthetic sense and spends a great deal of time and money on his appearance and lifestyle (1994 +)

◀**Mex**▶ *adj* Mexican: *Ensenada is all Mex* *n* A Mexican (1854 +)

◀**Mexican breakfast**▶ *n phr* A cigarette and a glass of water or cup of coffee (1950s +)

◀**Mexican promotion (or raise)**▶ *n phr* Advancement in rank or status with no raise of salary (1950s +)

Mexican standoff *n phr* A stalemate; deadlock; STANDOFF • First referred to a tie baseball game (1891 +)

mezonny (mee ZUHN ee) *n* Money, esp money spent for narcotics [fr *money* disguised by insertion of *-ez-* by carnival people]

mezuma *See* MAZUMA

mezz *adj* Excellent; MELLOW *n* A marijuana cigarette; REEFER [1938 + Jazz musicians; fr the name of the jazz clarinetist *Mezz Mezzrow*]
See the MIGHTY MEZZ

MF or **mf** *n* A despicable person; MOTHERFUCKER: *He used to look right at them MFs/kill some of the Uncle Tomming mfs* (1960s + *Black*)

mice *n* Children [1950s + Television studio; fr the popular children's program *The Mickey Mouse Club*]

Michigan bankroll (or roll) *n phr* A bankroll having a note of large denomination on the outside and small notes or paper making up the rest [1932 +; the date is probably earlier; in the 1850s, Michigan bankers outwitted auditors by taking barrels of nails, with a thin top layer of silver coins, from bank to bank ahead of them]

mick¹ *modifier* Easy: *Russian 27A is a mick course* *n* An easy course;
GUT COURSE, PIPE COURSE: *I heard that Astro 3 is a mick* [1980s + Students;

fr *Mickey Mouse*]

◀**mick² or Mick**▶ *adj* 1: a mick politician 2: my one mick friend, although he isn't Irish *n* 1 An Irishman or person of Irish descent 2 A Roman Catholic [1856 + ; fr the nickname of the common Irish name *Michael*]

mickey or Mickey *n* 1 A potato: *We stole our first mickies together from Gordon's fruit stand/roast mickies in the gutter fires (1940s +)* 2 MICKEY FINN: *Mickeys act so drastically that one may kill a drunk with a weak heart (1915 +)* 3 A half-bottle of liquor (1914 +) 4 (also **Mickey Mouse**) A white person; IRISH, OFAY: *and the Mickey, which is you, be dead a long time ago, except he says no (1970s + Black)* [potato sense probably by association with the common phrase *Irish potato*] **See** SLIP someone A MICKEY

Mickey Ds *n phr* A McDonald's™ fast-food restaurant (1970s + *Teenagers*)

Mickey Finn or mickey finn *n phr* 1 A strong hypnotic or barbiturate dose, esp of chloral hydrate, put secretly into a drink; KNOCKOUT DROPS: *The drug, sometimes known as "knockout drops" or Mickey Finn is a sedative/Sometime during the nineties, technology finally brought refinement to the art, in the form of the Mickey Finn (1890s +)* 2 A purgative similarly administered (1935 +) [origin unknown and richly conjectured, chiefly being fathered on various bartenders or saloon proprietors with names like *Mickey Finn*]

Mickey Mouse or mickey mouse *adj phr* 1 (also **micky-mouse**) Sentimental and insincere: A "*micky-mouse band*" is a real corny

outfit/to the dead beat of mind-smothered Mickey Mouse music
 (1935 + Musicians) **2** Showy; meretricious, merely cosmetic: *And I don't think Mickey Mouse changes are going to work* (1951 +) **3**
 Shoddy; inferior: *The carpentry work was just Mickey Mouse*
 (1960s +) **4** Simple; elementary; easy: A "Mickey Mouse course" means a "snap course" (1950s + Students) **5** Petty; inconsequential: *A Mickey Mouse survey of popular culture/A lot of the Mickey Mouse stuff has been eliminated from the program/got picked up on a Mickey Mouse thing in August by the State Patrol* (1951 + Students) **n phr 1:** *It's hard to get past the mickey mouse and see what the hell they're driving at* (1960s +) **2:** *That book's pure mickey mouse* (1960s +) **3** A blunder due to confusion and stupidity; SCREW-UP: *The only big Mickey Mouse was a brief shortage of jungle boots* (1960s + Armed forces) **4** (also **Mickey**) A stupid person, esp a white person or a police officer (1970s + Black) **v phr** To treat someone shabbily; ill-use someone; SCREW, SHAFT: *"I think we got Mickey Moused," Williams said. "My best pitcher is washed right down the drain, and I don't like it"* (1980s +) [apparently this pejorative trend began after the wide distribution of cheap *Mickey Mouse* wrist watches, showing the cartoon character on the face, with his arms as the watch's hands, which were regarded as shoddy, gimmicky, etc, at that time; the diminutive rodent continues to be extremely popular with children]

Mickey Mouse around v phr To waste time; FOOL AROUND: *We can't Mickey Mouse around while faced with technological challenges* (1970s +)

microskirt *n* A very short skirt, shorter than a miniskirt: *Lena, 20, has dyed blond hair, a black microskirt and black high-heeled boots (1990s +)*

middle-aged crazies *n phr* A kind of foolishness that afflicts middle-aged persons: *The middle-aged crazies take possession of America's first neurotic and No. 1 storyteller [1990s + ; perhaps a slang variant of midlife crisis]*

middlebrow *adj*: *a middlebrow magazine/middlebrow audience* *n* A person of average intelligence and taste (1925 +)

middle kidney *See* GRIPE one's ASS

◁**middle (or third) leg**▷ *n phr* The penis (1922 +)

middle name, someone's *n phr* Someone's most characteristic feature, gift, concern, etc; someone's forte or "trademark": *The CIA's middle name is intelligence, which Webster defines as the faculty of understanding/Baseball is my middle name (1920 +)*

middle of nowhere, the *n phr* A very remote area; an isolated place; the BOONDOCKS: *They moved out of Manhattan way into Jersey, the middle of nowhere (1960 +)*

middy *n* A midshipman (1818+ *Nautical*)

midnight requisition *n phr* A wrongful acquisition, esp of military property in a nonregulation manner: *One of our sergeants was quite skillful at the midnight requisition (WWII armed forces)*

miff *v* To anger; offend: *The way I came on to you the other night; I thought you'd be miffed (1811 +)*

miffed *adj* Angered; offended: *miffed over failure of pleas to raise his bail/Dad, although miffed, took pity on Ethan and decided not to get huffy* (1824 +)

miffy *adj* Angry; MIFFED, PISSED OFF: *after a good bit of miffy correspondence* [1810 +; the earlier form *mifty* is found by 1700]

miggle *n* **1** A playing marble (1940s +) **2** A marijuana cigarette; JOINT (1960s + *Narcotics*)

mighty mezz, the *n phr* Marijuana (1930s + *Jazz musicians*)

mike *n* **1** A microphone (1927 +) **2** A Mikado engine, a type of locomotive having eight drive wheels, produced in the 1890s for the Japanese state railroad and also used in the US (1950s + *Railroad*) **3** A microgram; a millionth of a gram: *I feel like I've been up on 300 mikes of acid* (1970 +) **v** To amplify with a microphone: *The club was so small they decided not to mike the show*

mike fright *n phr* A disabling fear felt when one tries to speak into a microphone; stage fright (1937 +)

mile *See* GO THE EXTRA MILE, STICK OUT

mileage *n* Profit; productive potential: *Do they think there's any mileage in my idea?* (1945 +)

mile-high club *n phr* The putative association of persons who have done the sex act more than a mile high in the sky: *They had stayed behind to renew their membership in the mile-high club by sinking into one of the leather banquettes and making passionate love* (1970s + *Airline*)

military marriage (or wedding) *n phr* SHOTGUN WEDDING (1940s +)

milk *v* 1 To exploit something to the utmost: *The ones that contained real meat were milked capably by the cast (1921 + Show business)* **2** To get something, esp money, unfairly or fraudulently: *The agents had regularly been milking the tenants for exorbitant rents (1532 +)* ◁
3▷ To masturbate (1970s +)

milk cans *See* KNOCK SOMEONE FOR A LOOP

milk run *n phr* 1 A scheduled airline passage with many stops; followed by a milk run to Charleston, Jacksonville, Daytona Beach, and Tampa (1970s + Airline) **2** An easy bombing mission: *It looked like a milk run (WWII Air Forces)* [fr the stoppingofa trainatevery rural station to pick up milk for delivery to the cities]

◁**milk the lizard▷ *v phr*** To masturbate; JACK OFF, SPANK THE MONKEY (1990s +)

milk wagon *n phr* A police van; PADDY WAGON (1950s +)

mill¹ *n* A million dollars: *That'll cost the government a cool six mill (1955 +)*

mill² *n* 1 A prizefight: *the night of the KO Kelly mill (1842 + Prizefighting)* **2** A military prison or guardhouse (WWI armed forces) **3** A car or motorcycle engine: *Has it got the magnum mill?/They both chuckled and fired up their mills (1918 +)* **4** A car: *A squirrel is a reckless driver of a mill (automobile) (1950s + Teenagers)* **5** A locomotive (1925 + Railroad) **6** A typewriter (1919 + Newspaper office) ***See*** GIN MILL, GO THROUGH THE MILL, GROG-MILL, RUMOR MILL, RUN-OF-THE-MILL, THROUGH THE MILL

million bucks *See* LIKE A MILLION BUCKS

milquetoast or **milktoast** *n* A mild, ineffectual person; a timid person; WIMP [1924+; fr or popularized by the comic-strip character Caspar Milquetoast in “The Timid Soul” by H T Webster]

Milwaukee goiter (or **tumor**) *n phr* A protuberant belly; BEERBELLY, German Goiter, POTBELLY [1940s+; fr the fame of the *Milwaukee* breweries]

mince *n* An unfashionable or tedious person; bore; DRIP: *Anybody who still wears saddle shoes is a “mince” (1960s+ Students)*

mincemeat *See* MAKE HAMBURGER OUT OF someone or something

mince words *v phr* to restrain oneself in conversation to avoid offense

mind *See* BLOW someone’s MIND, DIRTY MIND, HAVE A MIND LIKE A SIEVE, a LOAD OFF someone’s MIND, MAKE NO NEVER MIND, ONE-TRACK MIND

mind-blower or **mind-bender** *n* 1 A hallucinogenic drug 2 Something exciting, beautiful, shocking, etc: *That little book’s a mind-bender (1960s+ Counterculture & narcotics)*

mind-blowing or **mind-bending** *adj* 1 Hallucinogenic; psychedelic 2 Overwhelming; exciting; staggering: *The speech was mind-blowing (1960s+ Counterculture & narcotics) (1960s+ Counterculture & narcotics)*

mind-boggling *adj* So astonishing or complex as to overwhelm the mind: *The school problem is absolutely mind-boggling* [1964+; *boggle*, “to be disablingly frightened, take alarm,” is found by 1598; a *bogle*

or *boggle* was a spook that horses were reputed to see]

minded *See* DIRTY-MINDED

◀**mind-fuck**▶ *n:* such supposedly Caucasian specialties as stance and persona and pop *mind-fuck* *v* To manipulate someone to think and act as one wishes; BRAINWASH: *He was totally mind-fucked but he seemed to know his stuff (1970s +)*

◀**mind-fucker**▶ *n* 1 A person who manipulates others, esp for his or her own profit: *Most gurus are magnificent and filthy-rich mind-fuckers (1970s +)* 2 A distressful situation; BAD SCENE (1970s +)

mind game *n phr* A toying with psychological influence for one's advantage: *She was moving with a fast bunch of kids who did drugs and played mind games and had group sex and I don't know what else/It isn't a subtle mind game to make the airport seem bigger than it is (1990s +)* *v* PSYCH, psych out: *They try to mind-game you*

mind one's p's and q's *v phr* To take care of one's affairs carefully and exclusively: *What the hell are you staring at, madam, you mind your p's and q's [1779 +; fr the fact that the two similar letters are particularly hard to distinguish in type, where their ordinary shapes are reversed]*

mind the store *v phr* To attend to routine business; carry on: *Who'll mind the store while Mr Clinton is overseas? [1970s +; fr the joke about the dying man who, finding by patient inquiry that all his children are at his deathbed, inquires testily who is minding the store]*

mine *See* RUN-OF-THE-MILL

mingy (MIN jee) **adj** Parsimonious; mean; tight-fisted [1911 + ; said to have been coined by the author Noel Busch; perhaps a blend of *mean* and *stingy*]

mini adj: *She looked out of place in her mini dress* **n 1** A very short dress, skirt, or coat ending well above the knee **2** The fashion or style of wearing such short garments (1965 +)

mini- prefix used to form nouns Small; miniature; short:
minibus/minicab/minivan/minicam/mininuke/minisemester/miniskirt
[late 1930s + ; fr *miniature*]

mink n 1 A sexually promiscuous person; lecher; nymphomaniac: *The doctor was a regular mink* **2** A pert and attractive young woman; DISH, FOX **<3>** A woman's genitalia, pubic hair, etc; BEAVER (1940s +) **See**
FUCK LIKE A MINK, TIGHT

Minnie n Minneapolis (1940s +)

minor-league adj phr Not of the highest quality or type; second-rate:
This author exhibits a minor-league talent/With my 50-word vocabulary I'd be a busher in that company, having had no minor league experience [1926 + ; the original baseball use is found by 1884]

mint, a n phr Very much money; MEGABUCKS: *The old guy must be worth a mint* [1874 + ; the full phrase *mint of money* is found by 1655]

minus n A disadvantage: *that degree is actually a minus for him* (1708 +)

minuteman n: *Youth gangs use minors as gun runners, calling them "minutemen" because if they're caught they're out (of jail) in a minute*

(1990s + *Street gang*)

Mirandize *See* GIVE SOMEONE HIS RIGHTS

mishegoss (MISH ə gahs) *n* (also **mishigas** or **meshegoss** or **meshugas**) Craziness; absurdities: *a mishegoss of mixed-up crap/and free-lance mishigas/Mailer's old meshugas about cancer* [1890s + ; fr Yiddish fr Hebrew]

mishmash (MISH mahsh) *n* (also **mish-mosh**) A confused mixture; an indiscriminate miscellany: *regarded as a hopeless mishmash/as untidy as untangling the Starrett mishmash* [1450 + ; apparently originally fr German *Mischmasch*, but probably in its modern use chiefly fr Yiddish]

mishugah or **mishoogeh** *See* MESHUGA

miss, a *See* GIVE someone or something A MISS

Miss Emma *n phr* Morphine: *She got sent to the principal for suspicion of having some Miss Emma* (1940s + *Narcotics*)

missile *See* DUMB BOMBS

missionary position *n phr* The sexual posture in which the male lies over the female between her spread legs: *Most of them have never gone beyond three furtive minutes in the missionary position/enjoying sex in that reliable missionary position* [1960s + ; fr the fancied distinction between this coital configuration of Christian missionaries and those of the peoples among whom they labored]

Mississippi marbles *n phr* Dice (1940s +)

miss out on something *v phr* To fail to see, enjoy, etc, something; MISS

THE BOAT: *I'm sorry I missed out on the ice cream (1929 +)*

Miss Right See MISTER RIGHT

miss the boat or bus v phr To lose an opportunity; fail; BLOW IT: *Tom really missed the boat when it came to making friends/In Bartlett's book the Byzantine Empire and Kievan Russia seem to have missed the bus (1940s +)*

missus, the, or the missis or the Mrs n phr One's wife; the LITTLE WOMAN: *He wanted the missus to get some sleep (1833 +)*

mister n Man; fellow; GUY • Always used in direct address, usu to a stranger: *Hey, mister, where's the turn-off for Bogota? (1760 +)*

Mister Big n phr The chief or most important person; BIG ENCHILADA, HONCHO: *I predict in three or four years hell be Mister Big (1940 +)*

Mister Blewit n phr A man who has failed in some effort (1987 + Canadian)

Mister Charlie n phr A white man; the MAN (1960 + Black)

Mister Clean modifier: *Ramos operated in the cutthroat Marcos administration and emerged with his Mr Clean reputation largely intact*
n phr A man, esp a politician, unsullied by suspicion of corruption or bad character; DUDLEYDO-RIGHT: *a female version of a managerial Mr Clean (1970s +)* [fr the trademark name of a household detergent]

Mister Fixit n phr A person who can and does repair, adjudicate, resolve, etc, difficulties: *has earned a reputation as an ingenious Mr Fixit/Peter Ueberroth, the Mr Fixit of the 1984 Olympics, was called upon to save Los Angeles even as the fires were raging*

Mister Happy *n phr* The penis; COCK, DORK: *Is Mr. Happy taking longer to snap back to attention? Sexually speaking, a man is never what he used to be* (1980+ Students)

Mister Man *n phr* The leader of a gang: *He was trying to be Mister Man* (1990s+ Street gang)

Mr Nice Guy *n* A sweet, friendly person, often male: *postman is Mr. Nice Guy*

Mister (or Miss or Ms) Right *n phr* The person one would and should happily marry; one's dream mate: *The Kathleen Norris heroine who didn't wait for Mr Right* (1937+)

Mister Tom *n phr* A black man who wishes to be or has been assimilated into the white middle-class culture; UNCLE TOM (1960s+ Black)

mitt *n* **1** The hand: *snatched right out of his mitt* (1896+) **2** A boxing glove: *have the big mitts on* (1812+ *Prizefighting*) **3** MITT-READER (1914+ *Circus & carnival*) **v** **1** To clasp hands above one's head as a sign of victory and acknowledgment of applause: *sitting in his corner and mitting the crowd* (1920s+ *Prizefighting*) **2** To shake hands: *Mitt me, pal, I done it* (1924+) [fr *mitten*] **See** TIP one's MITT

mitt-reader *n* A palmist; fortune-teller: *every confounded swami-woman and mitt-reader in the nation* (1914+ *Circus & carnival*)

mitts *n* A pair of handcuffs (1950s+ *Underworld*)

Mitty **See** WALTER MITTY

mix *n* (often **the mix**) A mixture; combination of components;

medley: *most important element in an auto maker's marketing mix/I enjoy what callers bring into the mix (1959+)* **v** To fight; **MIX IT:** *Them last two babies mixed many times a month (1921+)*

mixed up **adj phr** **1** Confused; chaotic; **MESSY:** *His mind's all mixed up (1862+)* **2** Involved; implicated: *I think he was mixed up somehow in the failure of those banks (1912+)*

mixer **n** **1** A person who easily becomes acquainted and sociable with others; a gregarious person (1896+) **2** A party or other gathering intended as an occasion for people to meet and become acquainted with one another (1920s+) **See** CEMENT MIXER

mix it or mix it up **v phr** To fight; **HASSLE:** *Candidates for the Milwaukee School Board took off their gloves and mixed it up a little with each other/didn't seem to want to mix it/Richards, the traditional marketing man, mixing it up with the culture gang (1900+)*

mixologist **n** A bartender (1856+)

mix-up **n** **1** Confusion; chaos; **MESS:** *There's an awful mix-up over at the plant today (1898+)* **2** A fight, esp a free-for-all (1841+)

MJ **n** Marijuana [1960s+ Narcotics; fr *Mary Jane*, an earlier name for marijuana]

mo **n** A moment: *Give me half a mo (1896+)*

mob **modifier:** *mob infiltration/a mob boss* **n** **1** Any group, gathering, class, etc; **BUNCH:** *as a member of the ruling mob (1688+)* **2** An underworld grouping; organized-crime family • The older instance refers to “a number of thieves working together”; the organized-

crime sense is found by 1927: *a narcotics mob/the Genovese mob*
(1839+)

mob (or **Mob**), the **n** Organized crime; the Mafia; the syndicate: *I heard it's controlled by the mob* (1927+)

mobbed up **adj phr** Controlled by or implicated with organized crime: *real hard evidence that Schiavone or Donovan are mobbed up* (1970+)

mobile **adj** Attractive; DISHY (1990s+ *Teenagers*) **See** PIMPMOBILE

mob scene **n phr** A very crowded place or occasion: *And the secretaries soon report that the reception room is a mob scene* (1922+ *fr motion pictures*)

mobster **n** A member of a criminal grouping; a Mafioso; GANGSTER: *nickname he got from the mobsters* (1917+)

moby **adj** Very large, complicated, and impressive: *Some MIT undergrads pulled off a moby hack at the Harvard-Yale game* [1980s+ Computer; probably *fr* the white whale in Herman Melville's *Moby Dick*]

mock-up **modifier**: *blend computer-generated imagery and full-size mock-up dinos seamlessly* **n** A model; a simulation, often full-sized: *They made a mock-up of the wing to study the lift* (1920+)

mod **adj** Modern; up-to-date, esp in the styles of the 1960s: *shows off her attributes in a mod wardrobe* (1960s+)

mod cons **n phr** The amenities and furnishings of a house or apartment: *The place has a good view and all mod cons* [1934+; *fr*

modern conveniences]

Model-T *adj* Old-fashioned; OLD-TIMEY: *a real Model-T speakeasy out of an early Warner Brothers movie* [1940s + ; fr the Model T Ford car of the early 1900s]

modoc (MOH dahk) *n* **1** A dummy set up to be knocked down with a thrown baseball (*1930s + Carnival*) **2** A stupid person; BOOB, KLUTZ (*1930s + Carnival*) **3** (also **modock**) A person who becomes or pretends to be an aircraft pilot for the glamour and status of the occupation (*1930s + Aviators*) [origin unknown]

Moe, Larry, and Curly *n phr* The pilot, copilot, and navigator of an airplane (*1990s + Airline stewardesses*; from the Three Stooges comedy team)

mohasky *adj* Intoxicated with marijuana; STONED *n* Marijuana [1940s + Narcotics; fr *mohoska*]

Mohawk *n* A haircut in which the side hair is shaved off, leaving a brushlike line of hair down the middle of the scalp: *like this guy that comes into Mattie's all the time with a Mohawk/all make a good Mohawk* [1970s + ; fr its fancied resemblance to the hairstyle of Mohawk Indian males; the style was much affected by the punk rockers]

mohoska *n* Energy; strength; MOXIE, PIZZAZZ [WWII merchant marine; origin unknown]

mojo¹ *n* **1** A charm or amulet worn against evil; hence power, luck, effectiveness, etc: *When you got the mojo, brother, when you're on the inside, the world is fantastic/gets his mojo going for conventions and*

elections/The office bears a sort of superstitious, bad-mojo stamp **2** Power; charisma: *her mojo gets her into a lot of high places* **3** Sex appeal; also, one's sex drive: *He had his mojo going at the party*
[1920s + Black; origin unknown; probably fr an African language]

mojo² *n* Any narcotic, esp morphine [1935 + Narcotics; perhaps fr Spanish *mojar*, "celebrate by drinking"]

moldy fig *adj*: *my moldy-fig tastes* *n phr* **1** A prude; pedant **2** A person who prefers traditional jazz to the more modern styles: *Barry Ulanov and Rudi Blesh hit upon the idea of having a battle of styles, Moldy Figs vs Moderns (1940s + Bop & cool talk)*

mole *n* A person who works undercover within an organization and passes information about it to others (1974 +)

moll *n* **1** A woman (1700s + *British*) **2** A prostitute (1604 +) **3** A criminal's woman companion, accomplice, girlfriend, etc; GUN MOLL (1823 +) [fr *Molly*, nickname for Mary]

Molotov cocktail *n phr* A grenade made by pouring gasoline into a bottle, adding a cloth wick, and igniting it [WWII; fr Vyacheslav *Molotov*, Soviet premier, used and satirically named by Finnish fighters against the Soviet invasion of 1940]

momaflage *v*: *And don't forget to "momaflage the kind" when you go home (hide whatever kind of drug you use in your suitcase, so your mother can't find it) (1990s + Students)*

mom-and-pop *adj* Run by a couple or a family; small-scale: *still seem wedded to the "mom and pop store," small-business approach/All kinds of neighborhoods have them, mom-and-pop stores, laundromats/The*

constitution says nothing about a mom and pop presidency (1951 +)

moment *See* BIG MOMENT

momism (MAHM izm) *n* Maternal domination; matriarchalism; mother worship • Disseminated by Philip Wylie's book *Generation of Vipers* (1942 +)

momma *n* Any specified object, esp a large, admirable, or effective one; MOTHER, MOTHERFUCKER: *It's time to put this momma in the oven* (1970s + *Black*)

mommy track *n phr*: *Should corporations set up a two-track system for women managers, a fast track for childless women and a slower "mommy track" for women with children?* (1987 +)

mom-word *n* MOTHERFUCKER: *"Hit the ground, you (obscenity)." (All right, if you must know, he was using the mom-word)* (1990s +)

momzer or **momser** (MUHM zər, MAHM-) *n* **1** A person who expects many loans and favors; MOOCHER, SPONGER **2** A contemptible person; BASTARD, SHITHEEL: *A very cool customer, this momzer* [1562 +; fr Yiddish fr Hebrew, "bastard"; used in the 4th-century Latin Vulgate Bible; despite this ancient lineage, modern use is ordinary demotic Yiddish]

mon or **mun** (MUHN) *n* Money (1894 +)

Monday morning quarterback *n phr* A person who is good at predicting things that have already happened and at pointing out the errors of quarterbacks and other leaders; ARMCHAIR GENERAL [1932 +; fr the fact that *Monday* is the first weekday or business

day after the weekend, when school and college football games are played]

mondo or **mundo** or **mongo** *adj* Very large or very much; HUMONGOUS, IMPORTANT: *She had a lot of things on her desk top, including a mondo-size slo-mo printer/I've got a mongo bruise on my leg from field hockey/You'd think it took some kind of miracle, or some mondo engineering breakthrough* *adv* Very; totally; FULLY, WAY: *Your dad is mondo cool!/mondo fun at the beach* [1979 + ; fr Italian *mondo*, "world"; the *mongo* variant is probably just imitative]

money *See* BAIT MONEY, BLACK MONEY, BUG MONEY, CHICKEN FEED, COIN MONEY, FALL MONEY, FOLDING MONEY, FRONT MONEY, FUNNY MONEY, GREEN MONEY, HEAVY MONEY, IN THE MONEY, a LICENSE TO PRINT MONEY, MAD MONEY, MAKE MONEY HAND OVER FIST, ON THE MONEY, PUT **one's** MONEY WHERE **one's** MOUTH IS, RIGHT MONEY, **the** SMART MONEY, SOFT MONEY, THROW MONEY AT **something**, TIGHT MONEY, WHITE MONEY

moneybags *n* 1 A rich person: *some aged moneybags* (1818 +) 2 A military paymaster (WWII Navy)

money from home *n phr* Something very welcome and useful, esp when gratis and unexpected: *but for the TV news boys this was money from home* (1913 +)

money grubber *n* A stingy person: *refuses to buy a newspaper, he's such a money grubber*

money pit *n phr* A project, possession, etc, that costs more and more money: *See that boat? I call it my Money Pit* (1990s +)

moneypuker *n* An automatic teller machine; ATM: *Frank went to get some cash from the moneypuker at Becker's* (1990s +)

money talks *sentence* 1 Wealth is power: *In New York, boy, money really talks, I'm not kidding* (1891 +) 2 (also **money talks, bullshit walks**) PUT UP OR SHUT UP, PUT **one's** MONEY WHERE **one's** MOUTH IS: *Money talks and you know what walks/Money talks, bullshit walks* [the second sense's variant is found by 1987]

money-washing *n* The “laundering” of illicit money to make it seem legitimately earned: *Soon the Caymans became a great capital of money-washing* (1972 +)

mongo *n* Something valuable found in an abandoned building, a trash bin, etc [1979 + ; origin unknown] **See** MONDO

monicker *n* (also **moniker** or **monniker** or **monacer** or **monica** or **monaker**) A person's name, nickname, alias, etc; HANDLE: *His “monica” was Skysail Jack/Ricord picked up a new moniker among US narcotics agents* [1849 + British street talk; origin unknown and very broadly speculated upon; perhaps fr transference fr earlier sense, “guinea, sovereign,” when used by hoboes as an identifying mark; perhaps related to the facts that early 1800s British tramps referred to themselves as “in the monkery,” that monks and nuns take a new name when they take their vows, and that *monaco* means “monk” in Italian; perhaps, as many believe, an alteration of *monogram*]

monk *n* 1 A monkey (1843 +) ◀2▶ A Chinese or Chinese-American: *known to their Occidental neighbors, the Irish especially, as monks* (1925 +)

monkey *n* 1 A man; person; GUY • Mildly contemptuous: *a smart*

monkey (1914+) **2** A child or young person • An affectionate use (1605+) ◀**3**▶ A Chinese or Chinese-American (1912+) **4** A person who is not a hobo, carnival worker, etc; ordinary person (1940s+ *Hoboes*) **5** A victim; MARK (1940s+ *Carnival*) **6** Narcotics addiction; a drug habit: *went from monkey to nothin' in twenty-eight days* (1940s+ *Narcotics*) **7** A kilogram of a narcotic: *And you call and you want 100 monkeys* (1960s+ *Narcotics*) **v 1** To tinker or tamper; intrude one's action: *Look, it's running fine, don't monkey with it* (1881+) **2** monkey around or about **See** GET THE MONKEY OFF, GREASE MONKEY, HAVE A MONKEY ON one's BACK, POWDER MONKEY

monkey around v phr 1 To idle about; loaf; GOOF AROUND: *I'm just monkeying around, nothing special* (1891+) **2** To tinker or tamper; attempt to use or repair: *Please stop monkeying around with that machine* (1894+)

monkey (or funny) business n phr 1 Frivolous pranks; japes and jests, etc: *He was full of monkey business, the clown* **2** Dubious and dishonest stratagems; trickiness: *Show these kids that you're going to stand for no monkey business* (1883+)

monkey drill n phr Calisthenics; physical training exercises [late 1800s+ Armed forces; fr the fact that the exercisers follow the movements of the instructor, as "*monkey see, monkey do*"]

monkey jacket n phr 1 Any tight, short jacket, esp one that is part of a uniform (1830+) **2** A medical patient's gown (1970s+ *Medical*) [fr the fact that *monkey* was a nautical term for anything small, in this case a short, informal jacket as distinct from a formal frock coat; *monkey jackets* are also the traditional garb of an organ

grinder's *monkey*]

monkey-monk *See* HIGH MUCKETY-MUCK

monkeyshines *n* Tricks; japes and capers; pranks (1832 +)

monkey suit *n phr* **1** A fancy uniform or formal suit; tight uniform:
Neither of my two hats went well with the monkey suit (1886 +) **n 2** A
baseball uniform (1929 + *Baseball*)

monkey's suncle *See* I'LL BE DAMNED

Monkey Ward *n phr* The Montgomery Ward retail company
(1930s +)

monkey-wrench *modifier* Promoting preservation of the
environment by sabotage [1975 +; fr Edward Abbey's novel *The
Monkey-Wrench Gang*; ultimately fr throw a monkey wrench into the
machinery]

monniker *See* MONICKER

mono (MAH noh) **n 1** Mononucleosis (1960s + *Students*) **2** A
monophonic recording (1950s +)

monokini *n* A one-piece bathing suit that leaves the breasts bare
[1964 +; fr *bikini*, interpreting *bi-* as "two" referring to the number
of pieces]

monster *modifier* **1:** *users of scag and monster drugs **2** Enormous;
overwhelming; HUMONGOUS: *his monster ego/a monster rally* (1837 +) **3**
Very good; COOL, KILLER, RAD (1990s + *Teenagers*) **n 1** A narcotic that
acts on the central nervous system (1960s + *Narcotics*) **2** A
bestseller, esp a recording (1970s +)*

Montezuma's revenge *n phr* Diarrhea, esp traveler's diarrhea; AZTEC

TWO-STEP, TURISTA: *It was regarded as unfortunate that the President joked about Montezuma's revenge when he introduced the president of Mexico (1962 +)*

month of Sundays, a *n phr* A very long time: *He hadn't seen the family in a month of Sundays (1841 +)*

moo¹ *n* 1 Beefsteak: *slab of moo (1916 +)* 2 Milk (1940s +)

moo² *n* MOOLA (1945 +)

mooch *n* Marijuana [1940s + Narcotics; origin unknown; perhaps an alteration of *mooter, moot*]

mooch *n* 1 MOOCHER (1914 +) 2 A gullible customer; dupe; MARK (1929 + *Carnival*) 3 A person who listens to the pitch, but does not buy (1940s + *Carnival*) 4 A customer who painstakingly examines the merchandise before buying (1940s + *Salespersons*) **v** 1 To beg; borrow; CADGE, SPONGE: *The geisha girls are forever mooching chocolates (1857 +)* 2 To steal (1862 +) 3 To stroll; loaf along (1851 +) [fr earlier *mowche*, "to pretend poverty; play truant," found by 1460, fr Old French *muchier*, "to hide, skulk"]

moocher *n* A beggar; borrower; DEADBEAT, SPONGER: He heard a moocher deliver the following spiel/Minnie the moocher, she was a low-down hootchy-cootcher (1857 +)

moo-juice *n* Milk or cream (1941 + *Lunch counter & Army*)

moola or **moolah** *n* Money: *So put a little moola in your portfolio and get yourself a cash cow/He who rips off jazz makes mucho moolah*

[1920+; origin unknown]

moon *n* Cheap whiskey, esp whiskey made by unlicensed distillers;

MOONSHINE: *a couple of pints of moon/using it to transport moon*

(1928+) **v** **1** To behave in a pleasantly listless and dreamy way: *I was sitting there mooning over her latest letter* (1848+) **2** To exhibit one's bare buttocks as a defiant or amusing gesture, usu out a window (1960s+ *Teenagers & students*) [second noun sense fr *moon*, "buttocks," found by 1756]

mooner *n* **1** A criminal or eccentric active during the period of the full moon (1950s+ *Police*) **2** A person who "moons" (1960s+ *Teenagers & students*) **See** FULL-MOONER

moonlight **v** To work at a job in addition to one's regular job: *a million guys moonlighting, holding a little back* (1957+)

moonlight requisition *n* A nighttime foray to steal something: *moonlight requisition in the cafeteria*

moonshine *n* **1** Whiskey made by unlicensed distillers; corn whiskey; MOUNTAIN DEW: *the moonshine distilled in the mountains* (1877+) **2** Any cheap, inferior whiskey; ROTGUT (1920+) **3** Any liquor or whiskey (1920+) **4** Exaggerated talk; vain chatter; BALONEY, BULLSHIT: *His story's plain moonshine* (1843+)

moony *adj* Behaving in a pleasantly listless and dreamy way: *in a back booth at Caballero's where Carolyn and I talked and became drunk and moony* (1848+)

◁**Moony** or **Moonie**▷ *n* A member or disciple of the Unification Church [fr the name of the leader, Sun Myung Moon]

moose¹ *n* A large, powerful man; HOSS: *The man fills a doorway. Oh, he's a big man. They should call him Bob Moose* [1940s + ; fr Narraganset *moos*, fr *moosu*, “he trims or cuts smooth,” referring to the animal’s feeding on the lower banches of trees]

moose² *n* A prostitute [Korean War armed forces; fr Japanese *musume*, “girl”]

moosh (MOOSH) *v* To mash; squash: *I see it's all mooshed out of shape* [1990 + ; the date should certainly be much earlier, since this is a variant spelling of *mush*, which is found by 1781] **See** MUSH²

mooter *n* (also **moota** or **mootie** or **mutah** or **mu**) A marijuana cigarette; JOINT [1930s + Narcotics; fr Mexican Spanish *mota*, “marijuana,” of uncertain origin; since the word also means “bundle of herbs” and “sheaf of hay,” it seems semantically akin to *grass*, *hay*, *bale of hay*, and *herb*, all of which are disguising names for marijuana or marijuana cigarettes]

mop *n* **1** The last item or act; the final result: *And the mop was he got caught* **2** A head of hair; hairdo [1944 + Black; probably from the notion of mopping or cleaning up, influenced by earlier jazz use “the last beat at the end of a jazz number”]

mope *n* **1** A stupid person; fool; BOOB: *They weren't a bunch of mopes/make it easy for regular mopes to use the Internet* (1540 +) **2** A criminal; suspect; PERP (1980s + *Police*)

mopery *n* A trivial or fabricated offense against the law: *If he'd lived long enough they'd have had him up for mopery/Gotti sanctioned guilty pleas for what he called malicious mopery, minor offenses that had*

nothing to do with the existence of La Cosa Nostra

mopped *adj* Thoroughly beaten; CLOBBERED (1990s + Teenagers)

mop (or **mop up**) **the floor with** someone *v phr* To defeat thoroughly; trounce; CLOBBER (1940s +)

mop top *modifier*: curly-haired mop-top headshop owner *n phr* A person with a thick head of hair: *Those with only a receding hairline are in no greater danger than the mop tops* (1990s +) [*mop-head* in the same sense is found by the late 1700s, so the date is probably earlier than shown]

more fun than a barrel of monkeys *adj phr* A very good time; a pleasant occasion (1895 +)

more than you can shake a stick at *n phr* Much; a lot: *He's got more money than you can shake a stick at* (1818 +)

morning glory (or **missile**) *n* A penile erection upon waking: *a morning missile wakes him up*

morph *n* **1** Morphine (1912 + Narcotics) **2** MORPHODITE (1940s +) *v* To change one image into another by a computer technique: *One of the most popular techniques in TV ads has been to "morph" a Democratic rival into Clinton, employing special effects to have the candidate's face change into the President's/One thing morphs into another before your very eyes* (1990s +) [fr Greek *morphe*, "form"]

morphodite *n* (also **morphrodite** or **mophradite**) A hermaphrodite: *You morphadite* [1896 +; fr a probably naive rather than humorous mispronunciation of *hermaphrodite*]

mortal lock *n phr* A certainty; CINCH, SURE THING: *Brown is what bettors would call a mortal lock to win/a mortal lock to get on the front page* [1950s + Gambling; fr a wrestling hold]

mortar *See* BRICKS AND MORTAR

mosey or **mosey along** (MOH zee) *v* or *v phr* To move along, esp to walk slowly; saunter; EASE ON: *A mild river that moseyed at will/The Wheaton cruiser moseyed on by me and turned back toward town* [1829 + ; perhaps fr Spanish *vamos*; perhaps fr British dialect *mose about*, “walk in a stupid manner”] *See* VAMOOSE

mosh (MAHSH) *v* To dance to heavy metal music in a tight-packed arena called a “mosh pit,” with a certain amount of physical violence: *They don’t dance. They mosh. They slam. They skank and thrash, too/Gearshift would give the crowd something to mosh to* [late 1980s + fr British; fr British dialect, “mash, smash,” found by 1848]

moshing *n*: *Pearl Jam pulled out of a concert in a dispute with security forces over how to handle “moshing,” the rowdy, high-contact dancing common at their shows (late 1980s +)*

mosh pit *n phr* The place where “moshing” is done: *It’s unspeakably hot, often painful, certainly claustrophobic, all in all, just another night in the mosh pit/Mosh pits are a lot like armpits; they both are sweaty, hairy, and they stink (late 1980s +)*

mosquito *See* KNEE-HIGH TO A GRASSHOPPER

moss *n* Hair; among black people, straightened or processed hair: *Moss is hair (1940s + Black)* *See* HOUSE MOSS, RIGHTEOUS MOSS

mossback *n* A very conservative person; FOGY: *The real mossbacks will vote for the governor* [1878 + ; said to have been a description of a group of poor white Carolina swamp dwellers who had lived among the cypresses until the *moss* grew on their *backs*]

most, the *n phr* The best; the GREATEST: *New Jetliner The Most, Reds Say* (1950s + *Beat & cool talk*)

mostest, the *n phr* the MOST [1885 + ; fr Southern dialect and black normal superlative of *much*] **See** FIRSTEST WITH THE MOSTEST, the HOSTESS WITH THE MOSTEST

mothball *v* To take something out of active use and preserve it for the future, as clothing is stored with mothballs: *“It’s really sad to see Buran on the ground.” It was used in 1988 and then mothballed* (1949 +) **See** IN MOTHBALLS

moth-eaten *adj* Worn out by long or rough usage or by neglect: *moth-eaten school* (1550 +)

mother modifier: *Every mother other one of ‘em cried foul* **n 1** The leader, usu the elder and mentor, of younger homosexuals (1970s + *Homosexuals*) **2** A despicable person; MOTHERFUCKER: *I looked into the wallet of one of the mothers* (fr black) **3** A fine, interesting, or remarkable event, object, or person; MOMMA: *Grab these mothers. They’ll really do the job/When a good-looking girl passes a “big man” on the street, instead of a whistle she gets an approving Motha Higby, especially if she’s a cool mother* (1950s + *Black*) **4** A problem or difficulty; MOTHERFUCKER [both black senses fr the very useful and general *motherfucker*]

◀**motherfucker**▶ (Variations: **eater** or **grabber** or **jumper** or **kisser** or **lover** or **nudger** or **rammer** or some other two-syllable agent word may replace **fucker**; **mammy** or **mama** or **momma** may replace **mother**; other alliterating or rhyming terms like **motorscooter** may replace the whole form) *modifier: a mammyrammer blowhard fart that has no respect* **n 1** A detestable person; **BASTARD, SHITHEEL**: “*You motherfucker!*” she screamed, “*You bastard!*”/blew this motherfucker’s brain out **2** An admirable or prodigious person: We will joyfully say, “*Man, he’s a motherfucker*”/You old benevolent motherjumper, I love you **3** A fine, interesting, or remarkable event, object, or person; **MOMMA, MOTHER, SUCKER**: We had a motherjumper of a winter. Snow up theyin-yang **4** A problem or difficulty; **MOTHER (1950s + Black)**

◀**motherfucking**▶ *adj* (Variations: see *motherfucker* for base forms from which *-ing* forms may be made) Detestable; disgusting; nasty; accursed; **GOD-DAMN** • Often used for rhythmic and euphonious emphasis: went down there with his motherfucking gun, knocked down the motherfucking door/what he describes as “three hard mothergrabbin’years” (1950s + Black)

motherhood *See* **APPLE-PIE-AND-MOTHERHOOD**

mothering *adj* Disgusting; accursed; **MOTHERFUCKING**: till you put them motherin’ dogs on me (1968 + Black)

mother-nudger *See* **MOTHERFUCKER**

mother of all something *n phr* The largest, most impressive, utterly unsurpassable example of something; **GRANDDADDY OF ALL something**:

The plan to fix the Hubble telescope in orbit is the mother of all repair missions/I have the mother of all pains in the back [1991 + Gulf War; Muslim tradition fr Ayesha, second wife of Mohammed, and the Mother of Believers; used by Iraqi President Saddam Hussein to describe the battle in which he would annihilate invading forces]

motor *n* An amphetamine, esp Methedrine™; **SPEED:** “What’s motor? Speed?” “Un huh” (1990s + Narcotics) **v 1** To perform well and without apparent effort; **CRUISE:** *Agassi is motoring through the match* (1970s +) **2** To leave; **BOOGIE, BOOK, SPLIT:** *I have to motor if I want to be ready for the funeral* (1980s + Teenagers)

motormouth *adj:* *I didn’t know he was motormouth/The gangsta rapper is wrecking the mike with motormouth rhymes* *n* A very talkative person; a compulsive jabberer; **FLAPJAW, WINDBAG:** *What else can you do with this motormouth but grin and bear it?/He keeps on talking. A motormouth, this guy* (1971 +)

Motown *n* Detroit, the Motor City: *records made in Motown*

mountain (or Rocky Mountain) canary *n phr* A donkey; burro (1905 +)

mountain dew *n phr* Raw and inferior whiskey, esp homemade bootleg whiskey; **MOONSHINE** (1839 +)

mountain (or prairie) oysters *n phr* Sheep or hog testicles used as food (1890 +) **See** ROCKY MOUNTAIN OYSTER

mouny **See** COUNTY MOUNTY

mouse *n 1* A bruise near the eye, caused by a blow; **BLACK EYE, SHINER:**

One of the Kid's eyes has a little mouse under it (1842+) **2** A young woman: *a little mouse I got to know up in Michigan/I'm pouring Dom Pérignon and black eggs into this little mouse (1655+)* **3** A term of endearment for a woman: *Just stepping out for a minute, mouse (1520+)*

mouse potato n phr: *Mouse potato, the digital age's version of the couch potato: a person who is habitually on-line or otherwise occupied at the computer (1990s+)*

mousetrap n A small, inferior theater or nightclub: *He walked out on the stage of a mousetrap called the Blue Angel (1950s+)* **v** To trick someone into a trap, esp by various feints (1950s+ *Sports*)

mouth n Impudence; backtalk; SASS: *I've had about enough of your mouth (1926+)* **v:** *They jounced and mouthed each other See* BAD-

MOUTH, BIGMOUTH, BLOW OFF **one's** MOUTH, COTTON MOUTH, FOOT-IN-MOUTH DISEASE, FOULMOUTH, FOULMOUTHED, FROM THE HORSE'S MOUTH, LOUDMOUTH, MOTORMOUTH, MUSHMOUTH, POOR-MOUTH, RATCHET-MOUTH, RUN OFF AT THE MOUTH, SHOOT OFF **one's** MOUTH, SMARTMOUTH, WATCH **one's** MOUTH, ZIP **one's** LIP

mouth-breather n A stupid person; moron; idiot: *Some mouth-breather in the office told me it would be OK [1970s+; fr the noisy breathing of an adenoidal idiot]*

mouth-breathing adj Stupid; moronic: *If the dumb mouth-breathing bastards in the street only understood/a quirky Canadian sport run by morons, played by barbarians, and watched by mouth-breathing, two-fisted slobbers (1970s+)*

mouthful, a n phr Something hard to pronounce or speak; JAWBREAKER:

Diphosphopyridine nucleotide is a mouthful (1884 +) **See** someone SAID
A MOUTHFUL

mouth full of South, a *n phr* A Southern accent: *a man with a mouth full of South (1970s +)*

mouth off v phr 1 To talk; make comments; chat **2** SHOOT OFF one's
MOUTH (1970s +)

mouth on someone *v phr* To inform on; SQUEAL: *He got busted, and he mouthed on everybody he knew (1960s +)*

mouthpiece n 1 A lawyer; LIP: *inability to hire a professional bondsman and "good front," "mouthpiece" or lawyer (1857 +)* **2** A
spokesperson: *Each tong has an official "mouthpiece" (1805 +)*

move v 1 To steal; pilfer **2** To sell merchandise; dispose of a stock:
We better move these monster Teddy Bears quick 3 To be desirable to
customers; sell quickly: *Those pet rocks are not moving any more*
(1950s +) **See** MAKE one's MOVE, PUT A MOVE ON someone

move someone back v phr To cost someone; SET someone BACK: *a
chinchilla flogger that moves Israel back thirty G's (1930s +)*

move into high gear **See** SHIFT INTO HIGH GEAR

move on v phr To attempt to seduce someone: *She moved on the single
men at the bachelor party*

movers and shakers n People who accomplish things, get things
done: *Movers and shakers are influential people*

moves **See** HAVE ALL THE MOVES

move up v phr To buy a more expensive or more cherished thing:

The smoker is exhorted to “move up” to a particular brand of cigarettes, the motorist to a new car (1970s +)

movie *See* BLUE MOVIE, B MOVIE, GRIND-HOUSE, SNUFF FILM, SPLAT MOVIE

moviedom *n* The motion-picture industry; Hollywood (1916 +)

mower *See* LAWNMOWER

moxie *n* **1** Courage; *GUTS: You’re young and tough and got the moxie and can hit* **2** Energy; assertive force; *PIZZAZZ: We knew you had the old moxie, the old get out and get* **3** Skill; competence; shrewdness: *showed plenty of moxie as he scattered seven hits the rest of the way* [1908 + ; the semantic history is not entirely clear; best known for the advertising slogan “What this country needs is plenty of Moxie,” used for a brand of soft drink registered in 1924; but other Moxie drinks preexisted this: a patent “nerve medicine” of the same name was marketed in 1876; the name may be based on a New England Indian term found in several Maine place names and perhaps in the name of a plant, *moxie-berry*]

Ms Right *See* MISTER RIGHT

mu *See* MOOTER

mucho *adj* Very; a lot of: *mucho dinero/wanting mucho nachos*

muck *n* HIGH MUCKETY-MUCK • Always used with *big, high, etc: the way some of these big mucks do*

muck-a-muck *See* HIGH MUCKETY-MUCK

muck around *v phr* To tinker or tamper; interfere in; *FUCK AROUND: I found myself mucking around my life as well as Jean’s/He believed that*

other Brewer coaches were mucking around too much in his area of expertise [a euphemism for fuck around]

mucker *n* A crude and unreliable man; lout: *cheap muckers with fine bodies* [1891 +; fr German, “sanctimonious bigot”]

mucket *n* THINGAMAJIG (1920s +)

muckety-muck *See* HIGH MUCKETY-MUCK

muck-mouthed *adj* Given to uttering obscenities; foul-mouthed: Def Comedy Jams *begins its fourth season with Joe Torry replacing muck-mouthed Martin Lawrence* (1990s +)

muck up *v phr* To damage; ruin; FUCK UP: *And let’s not muck up our public spaces before we find the answers/Mucking up the enterprise are fatuous passages about smugglers, espionage, and computers [a euphemism for fuck up, probably influenced by mid-1800s mucks, “disarrange, discompose, make a muddle,” fr British dialect muxen, “make filthy”]*

mucky-muck *See* HIGH MUCKETY-MUCK

mucky-muckdom *n* High circle of power: *the stratosphere of Washington mucky-muckdom* (1970s +)

mud *n* **1** Defamatory assertions and accusations: *Watch out, they’ll throw a lot of mud at you* (1786 +) **2** Opium before it is readied for smoking (1922 + *Narcotics*) **3** Coffee (1925 + *Hoboes*) *See* someone’s NAME IS MUD, STICK IN THE MUD

mudder *n* A racehorse that runs very well on a muddy track (1905 + *Horse racing*)

mud (or **here's mud**) **in your eye** *interj* A toast; a health: *He raised his glass and said "Mud in your eye" (1927+)*

mudslinging *n* The use of defamation, insinuation, etc, esp in politics; SMEAR (1884+)

mud wrestle (or **wrestling**) *n phr* Low and slanderous political devices; DIRTY TRICKS: *The mud wrestle was mostly over how to craft a law that would fatten the ranks of new Democratic voters at the expense of Republicans/What we have now is mud wrestling and dirty tricks and Willie Horton [1980s+ ; fr a form of entertainment in which lightly clad women wrestle in mud]*

muff *n* **1**: *dropped the ball, "the \$75,000 muff," as it was called* **2** A wig; a toupee; RUG: *wasn't wearing his muff (1940s+)* **3** The vulva and pubic hair; BEAVER (1699+) **v** To fail; botch, esp by clumsiness • The older example refers to playing cricket: *This is a ripe one. Don't muff it, Billy (1837+)* [verb sense fr the clumsiness of someone wearing a *muff* on the hands]

◁**muff-dive**▷ **v** To do cunnilingus • Sometimes used as a plain insult: *You muff-diving, motherfucking son of a bitch (1935+)*

◁**muff-diver**▷ *n* A person who does cunnilingus; CLITLICKER (1935+)

muffin *n* A young girl, esp one's girlfriend (1856+ *Canadian*) *See* STUD MUFFIN

◁**muffins**▷ *n* A woman's breasts (1950s+)

mug or **mugg** *n* **1** The face: *showing so unperturbed a face, so impudent a "mug" (1708+)* **2** A photograph of the face; MUG SHOT: *a police mug, front and profile (1887+)* **3** A man; fellow, esp a tough, rude sort or

a pugilist or hoodlum: *Those mugs on the corner seem menacing* (1895 +) **v1** To photograph a person's face, esp for police records: *When crooks are photographed they are "mugged"* (1899 +) **2** To make exaggerated faces, grimaces, etc, for humorous effect: *while Danny mugs through his program* (1855 +) **3** To assault and injure someone in the course of a robbery: *The victims were mugged in the hallways of their homes* (1818 +) [probably fr drinking *mugs* made to resemble grotesque human faces; the sense of violent assault comes fr mid-1800s British specialization of the term "rob by violent strangulation," probably fr *mug-hunter*, "a thief who seeks out victims who are mugs" (easy marks)]

mugger n 1 An actor or comedian who makes exaggerated faces, grimaces, etc, for humorous effect: *where this trivial mugger is performing* (1892 +) **2** A thief who uses extreme physical violence: *apparently the victim of muggers/A knife or an armlock around the throat has been the favorite technique of muggers* (1865 +)

muggle n 1 A marijuana cigarette: *desk clerk's a muggle-smoker* (1920s + *Narcotics*) **2** An ignorant or common person

muggles n 1 Marijuana, esp dried and unshredded leaves: *Some kid was shoving muggles* **2** A marijuana cigarette [1920s + *Narcotics*; origin unknown]

mug's game n phr A futile effort; a sure failure • Chiefly British: *All this case-making and courtroom argument and laying out of certain facts is a mug's game, a no-win proposition/Reliving past glory is a mug's game* [1910 +; fr British sense of *mug*, "dupe, fool, sucker," found by 1851]

mug shot *n phr* A photograph of a person's face, esp the front and side views made for police records; ART: *passed around a mug shot of Willie/She had identified a "mug shot" from the books as the man who attacked her (1940s +)*

mug up *v phr* **1** To have a snack (1897+ *Canadian*) **2** To have a cup of coffee (WWII Navy)

◁**muh-fuh** or **mo-fo**▷ *n* A despicable person; MOTHERFUCKER: *Them muh-fuhs are superb (1970s + Black)*

mule *n* **1** A stubborn person: *He's a hardheaded mule (1848 +)* **2** Crude raw whiskey; MOONSHINE, WHITE MULE (1926 +) **3** A person who carries, delivers, or smuggles narcotics or other contraband: *The danger to the mule is that a packet may rupture/"Mules" carry coke in picture frames and sealed in the sides of suitcases/American currency was spirited out of the country then, often by "mules" (1935 + Narcotics)* **4** A condom stuffed with narcotics, carried in the vagina or rectum (1970s + *Narcotics*) *v:* *Sometimes they mule it in small amounts/otherwise law-abiding countrymen into performing muling favors*

mulligan *n* **1** A stew, esp one made of any available meat and vegetables (1904+ *Hoboes*) **2:** *A mulligan is the taking of an extra shot contrary to the rules (1940s + Golf)* [perhaps fr the proper name *Mulligan*]

mulligrubs, the *n* the BLUES [1619+; origin unknown]

mullion *n* An unattractive person: *Either you're a mullion, a dog* [1970s+ *Baseball*; origin unknown]

multi-culti modifier Multicultural; expressing or advocating multiculturalism: *Kalman wasn't hired by Benetton because they hoped his multi-culti graphics would put the company out of business (1990s +)*

mum's the word interj Please keep quiet; don't say anything (1704 +)

munchies n Snacks; food: *take the joy out of America's favorite munchies, from burgers to pasta to popcorn* • Often with *the* (1950s +)

munchies, the n phr Desire for food after smoking marijuana (1971 +) **See** HAVE THE MUNCHIES

Munchkin n A low-ranking employee, staff member, etc; a menial: *Justice Department spokesman Thomas De Cair sniffed that Honegger was "a low-level Munchkin"/Most of the munchkins, junior campaign aides, won't make it to the transition staff [1970s +; fr the name of the dwarfish helpers in L Frank Baum's 1900 book *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*]*

munch out (or up) v phr To eat, esp to consume hungrily; **PIG OUT**: *You'll get together with your friends, right, and you'll be munching up or something/She knew she shouldn't be munching out on carbs like this*

mung n Anything nasty; filth; **GLOP**: *Jones noticed the mung on Lydon's never-brushed teeth/Fold the table down, and generations of crud and mung appear (1960s + Students) v 1 (also mung up) To spoil; botch (1960s + Students) 2 To make changes, often undesirable ones, in a file (1980s + Computer) 3 To destroy: *The system munged my whole**

day's work (1980s + *Computer*) [origin unknown]

mung up v phr To make filthy: *I munged up my shoes walking across the field* (1970s + *Teenagers*)

mungy adj Messy, gloppy, often gooey or oily: *mungy leftovers*

◁**munjacake**▷ **n** A Canadian of English descent; a WASP Canadian • Used by Italian-Canadians: *What does he know about style? He's such a munjacake* [1990s + Canadian; fr Canadian Italian *mangiakokka*, "cake-eater"]

murder n 1 the MOST, the GREATEST • Sometimes pronounced with equal stress on each syllable, as noted by 1943 (1935 + *Jive talk*) **2** A very difficult or severe person or thing: *Baseball is murder on families* **v 1** To defeat decisively; trounce; CLOBBER: *They murdered them all season* (1950s +) **2** To make someone helpless with laughter; FRACTURE, KILL: *This one'll murder you* (1970s +) **See** BLOODY MURDER, GET AWAY WITH MURDER

murder board n phr A committee or board convened esp to examine a candidate for presidential appointment before the name goes to the Senate for confirmation: *grilled by lawyers at the Justice Department in a ritual known as "a murder board"/With Senator Mitchell, even the murder board and the whole business may be unnecessary* (1980s +)

murderer's row n phr A set of formidable athletes or other persons: *Gathered at the 92nd Street Y, a murderer's row of poets came together for an evening in hell: to read from their joint translation of Dante's Inferno* [1858 + Baseball; fr the part of New York City's Tombs

prison where *murderers* were housed; most recently used of the New York Yankees lineup of 1927: Lou Gehrig, Babe Ruth, Earle Combs, Tony Lazzeri, and Bob Meusel]

murder one *n phr* The criminal offense of murder in the first degree: *when he did get to trial, and they were going to go for murder one* (1971 +)

murphy *n* **1** A potato (1811 +) **2** A confidence game in which the victim is left with a sealed envelope supposed to contain something valuable, but in fact filled with blank paper (1960s + *Underworld*) **3** WEDGIE (1980s + *Students*) *v*: *Mayor Smitherman was “murpheyed” by the Negro confidence man*

Murphy’s Law *n phr* The supposed principle that if anything can go wrong, it will • Called “an old military maxim” in the earliest known printed example (1958 +)

muscle *n* **1** A strong-arm man; GORILLA: *some gowed-up muscle* (1929 +) **2** Power; influence; CLOUT: *DiBona will have a lot of muscle when it comes to Penn’s Landing* (1931 +) **See** FLEX one’s MUSCLES, LOVE-MUSCLE

muscle car *n phr* A powerful car, esp one admired by teenagers: *Chrysler’s hot-selling Viper muscle car is \$50,000/the Sacramento Valley is “car country,” where blue-collar kids drive “muscle cars” (old Pontiacs, newish Corvettes if they’re making money) and are slurred as “the Camaro crowd”/The undercover cops had a sporty muscle car. It was mean. It was fast. It was cool* (1980s +)

musclehead *n* **1** A stupid person; KLUTZ **2** A strong-arm man; MUSCLE: *I saw three or four muscleheads gleefully beat up on a kid* (1950s +)

muscle in v phr To force one's way in, esp into someone's criminal operation: *attempt to muscle in on some graft out of his own domain/afraid you're muscling in on his scam (1929+ Underworld)*

muscle man n phr A muscular male, esp from lifting weights (1929+)

muscle out v phr To force out: *If she persists, she'll be muscled out of the movement (1950s+)*

museum piece n phr Something old-fashioned: *His hat's a museum piece (1950s+)*

mush¹ n 1 Empty and exaggerated talk; BALONEY: *Don't hand me that mush, pal (1841+)* **2** Sentimentality; saccharinity; CORN, SCHMALTZ: *They were all weeping over the Dickensian mush (1908+)* [perhaps an alteration of *mash*, "something soft and pulpy"]

mush² or moosh (often M^{oo}SH) **n** The face, esp the mouth and jaws: *He pulled his mush away from the plate and sighed [1859+; origin unknown; perhaps fr Romany, "man"]*

mush-head n A stupid person (1888+)

mush-headed or mushy-headed adj Stupid: *some really mushy-headed, or at least questionable, rationalizations (1890+)*

mushmouth n A person who talks indistinctly and slurringly: *Say it again so I can hear it, mushmouth (1950s+)*

mushroom n 1 A person who is deliberately kept ignorant and misinformed **2:** *The growing contempt for accidental victims is even indicated by the name killers give them: "mushrooms" who "pop up" in*

the line of fire (late 1980s +)

mushy *adj* Sentimental: *The kid got mushy with the broad/If you expected Al Unser Sr to get all mushy-gushy and misty-eyed, you don't know Al Unser Sr (1839 +)*

music *See* BUBBLEGUM MUSIC, CHIN MUSIC, ELEVATOR MUSIC, FACE THE MUSIC, RAP SONG, SOUL

musical *modifier* Changing rapidly from one to another possessor: *At night in Port-au-Prince a massive game of musical houses is going on/The revolving cast of Love Letters has become something of a game of musical celebrities/Neither partner will relinquish the coop; this is black comedy, a wickedly funny tale of musical apartments and malfunctioning appliances [1924 + ; the date refers to the first occurrence of musical chairs, the game in which players circle a set of chairs and sit in any one available when the music stops]*

musical beds *n phr* Sexual promiscuity; SLEEPING AROUND: *The soaps were conspicuous for their preoccupation with musical beds* *See* MUSICAL

muso (MYOO zoh) *n* A musician: *a superb band, no musos to be fooled with (1967 + Australian)*

muss or **muss up** *v* or *v phr* To disarrange; dishevel: *He mussed his hair all up [1899 + ; fr mess]*

mussy *adj* Disarranged; rumpled: *rumpled now, and mussy (1899 +)*

must, a *adv* Necessarily; imperatively: *Solaris is definitely a must-have game/I don't think the element of fantasy ruins the movie, which in my book is a must-see* *n phr* Something that must be seen, experienced, done, etc: *Having two cars is a must these days (1892 +)*

mustang *n* A commissioned officer who has been promoted from the enlisted ranks: *A mustang who had worked his way up from the ranks in 13 years* [1847 + Armed forces; fr *mustang*, “wild, sturdy horse of the Western US,” fr Mexican Spanish *mestengo*, “stray animal”]

mutah *See* MOOTER

mutant *n* A weird and disgusting person; SHPOS: *Marvin is a mutant; he’s constantly licking his nose in public* (1980s + Student)

mutt *n* **1** A dog, esp a hybrid; mongrel (1906 +) **2** A stupid person; KLUTZ, MUTTONHEAD: *A mutt? Yeah, he’s that all right. Not too much brains* (1901 +) **3** A criminal; suspect; MOPE, PERP (1980s + Police)

Mutt and Jeff *n phr* A mismatched pair of people [1917 + ; fr the names of two characters, one tall and the other short, in a popular cartoon series by H C Fisher, American cartoonist]

muttonhead or **mutton-top** *n* A stupid person (1803 +)

muttonheaded *adj* Stupid (1833 +)

muzak or **Muzak** *n* Sweet and bland background music; uninteresting taped music; ELEVATOR MUSIC: *the theatre of media-buzz where ideas normally melt down into verbal muzak/a nice guy with all the charisma of Muzak in a minor key* [1954 + ; fr the trademark of a company that provides prerecorded music to be heard in offices, elevators, etc]

muzzed *adj* Drunk; intoxicated (1836 +)

muzzler *n* A police officer [1930s + ; probably fr *muzzle*, “get, take,” attested from the mid-19th century]

◁**my ass**▷ **interj** An exclamation of strong denial, disbelief, defiance, etc; IN A PIG'S ASS: "Looks like you had a pretty good hunch, Mr Light"
Pretty good hunch, my ass [1796 + ; a dysphemism for *my eye*]

my bad interj: *My bad: My fault or my mistake. A term of apology (1990s + Teenagers)*

my boy See THAT'S MY BOY

my eye or my foot interj IN A PIG'S ASS, MY ASS: *She's the greatest my eye/You'll do that my foot* [first form 1842 + ; in the early and obsolete meaning "nonsense," perhaps fr a Joe Miller joke in which a Latin nonsense phrase *O mihi, beate Martine* ("O, to me, blessed Martin") is pronounced as *all my eye and Betty Martin*]

my foot interj I do not believe that; like hell, that's true: *She's better than me? My foot*

my man n phr One's particular friend; BUDDY, HOMIE, PAL: "Serve it up, my man," said Tump. *Tump never even saw it (1930 + Black jazz musicians)*

mystery n Hash (1885 +)

mystery meat n phr Meat not readily identifiable, esp as served in a student dining hall, fraternity house, etc: *Parents must follow the rules: They are forbidden to smoke or leave the building, must show up at homeroom and eat mystery meat at lunch like the rest of their classmates* [1970s + Students; meat loaf was called mystery loaf by the 1940s]

N

nab *n* (also **nabs**) A police officer or detective (1950s + *Street gang*) **v**
To catch; seize; arrest; COLLAR: *The officers nabbed him around the corner* (1686 +) [fr dialect *nap* as in *kidnap*, perhaps related to Swedish *nappa*, “catch,” or Danish *nappe*, “pull”; probably related to *nip*; the noun sense is recorded in British criminal slang by 1813]

nabe *n* **1** A neighborhood; HOOD: *The nabe is a honey, architecturally* (1937 +) **2** A neighborhood movie theater: *The current films eventually make their way to the nabes* (1935 +)

nada *n* Nothing: *it's free, zip, zero, nada*

◁**nads** or ‘**nads**▷ *n* The male gonads; testicles; BALLS, FAMILY JEWELS:
Apparently I was no longer rousing his ‘nads/When we found him his nads were gone [1980s +; *nard*, “testicle,” is found in 1960s student slang and is probably also a shortening of *gonad*]

naff *adj* Not very good; lacking taste or style (1966 +)

naff (**off**) *interj* Get away **v phr** (also **about**) To goof off, fool around [1959 +; British euphemism for *fuck off*]

nag *n* A horse, esp an old and worn-out racehorse: *to make dough on the nags* [1400 +; origin unknown]

nail *n* A hypodermic needle (1960s + *Narcotics*) **v 1** To catch; seize;
NAB: the feared and famous Batman and Robin who'd nailed him
(1766 +) <2> To do the sex act to someone; *FUCK: the publishing*
cupcake in the Florsheims who nailed you on the couch and then fired
you 3 *NAIL something DOWN: We've got it nailed See HARD AS NAILS*

nail-biter *n* Something very worrying and suspenseful: *If Lucas*
looked this nervous as the Spurs were blowing out the Clippers, how
would he react during a nail-biter?/The gain in compliance cases
brought by the SEC has been a nail-biter for brokerage executives
(1990s +)

nail-down *n* an advertised price to lure one into the store that is
attached to exactly one item (1980s +)

nail something down **v phr** To make something securely final; *CINCH:*
They nailed down the arrangement and had a drink (1880 +)

nailed *adj 1* Identified correctly **2** Arrested; apprehended: *nailed for*
speeding

nail in the coffin *n phr* Something that hastens defeat or death: *The*
Houston convention was one very big nail in Bush's re-election
coffin/Whittle's proposal is the first nail in the coffin of public
education (1824 +)

nail someone or something to the cross (or the wall) **v phr** To
punish severely and publicly; make an example of; crucify: *We are*
going to nail them to the cross/We would not nail an airline to the wall
if it made its best effort/I wonder why nobody tried to nail his hide to
the wall for the Irish jokes he told over the years (1990s +)

naked *See* BUCK NAKED

naked as a jaybird *adj phr* Entirely unclothed; BARE-ASS (1930s +)

Nam or 'Nam *n* Vietnam: *not like the gooks back in 'Nam who always got their goddam hands out/I was in Nam and Nam made me like that (Vietnam War armed forces)*

name modifier Being well known or prestigious: *a name band/name brand (1938 +)* *n* A very important person, esp in entertainment; HEADLINER: *I saw three or four names there/He's a name in the carpet business (1611 +)* *See* BIG NAME, WHAT'S-HIS-NAME, YOU NAME IT

name-calling *n* The assigning of malicious designations in politics, debate, etc; character assassination; vilification: *They soon sank to simple name-calling (1853 +)*

name-drop *v* To mention the names of important persons as if they were friends and associates [1955 +; back formation fr *name-dropper*]

name-dropper *n* A person who ostentatiously mentions the names of important people as if they were friends and associates: *Well, she may know Barbra Streisand, or she may just be a name-dropper (1947 +)*

name-dropping *n* The practice of a "name-dropper" (1949 +)

name is mud, someone's *sentence* One is in trouble; one is doomed: *If they catch him, his name is mud [1823 +; fr earlier British dialect mud, "fool"]*

name (or number) is on something, one's *interj* One has been

singled out as being responsible or to blame for something
[1925 + ; used with reference to a bullet, shell, etc, with the
implication that one is doomed to be killed by it]

name names v phr To make accusations, esp against one's former
associates: *A genuinely guilty collaborator in Czechoslovakia can now,
it seems, easily save his or her own hide by "naming names" and
implicating independent-minded dissidents (1950s +)*

name of the game, the n phr 1 What matters most; the essence: *In
business, the name of the game is the bottom line/Good gun dogs are
the name of the game 2* The inevitable; the way things are: *Telling
lies in politics? Hell, that's just the name of the game (1966 +)*

names See KICK ASS AND TAKE NAMES

name your poison sentence Say what you would like to drink: *Sally,
name your poison*

nance or nancy or Miss Nancy modifier: *with his talk of nancy poets,
his anti-intellectualism n 1* A male homosexual who takes the passive
role (1904 +) **2** An effeminate man; LILY: *Where you need desperately
a man of iron, you often get a nance (1883 +)* [said to be fr the
nickname of Miss Anna Oldfield, an actress who died in 1730 and
was noted for her extreme vanity, fashionable dress, etc]

nanny See GET someone's GOAT

nanny tax n phr The legal requirement, enacted in 1951, that full-
time domestic child-minders be treated like other employees under
the Social Security law: *The Social Security "nanny tax," made
famous last year in confirmation hearings will be eased under*

legislation Congress passed Thursday [1980s + ; fr British nanny, “childrens’ nurse,” a nickname for Ann, and found by 1795]

-naper or -napper *See* DOGNAPER

-napping combining word The stealing of the indicated animal: *The judge was told of the monkeys’ disappearance; the monkey-napping had its serious side [1939 + ; based on kidnapping; the dated example is dognapping]*

nappy adj Dirty; messy: *Kelly’s panties are nappy. No doubt, she’s been wearing them for a week (1980s + Students)*

narc or narco modifier: *down to the narco police on the beat n A narcotics agent or police officer; GAZER: another drug-scare hoax promulgated by the “narcs”/the ritual of dodging the “narcos” (1960s + Narcotics)*

narcodollars n Money made by selling narcotics: *Narcodollars circulate through Panama’s financial system; how do they expect them not to circulate through ours? (1980s +)*

nark n 1 A police informer; *STOOL PIGEON (1860 +) 2 KIBITZER, BUTTINSKY (1950s +) 3* A decoy; *SHILL: information about known gamblers, little bookmakers, and their narks (1960s + Gambling) v (also narc): He will nark on him if the first guy doesn’t keep playing games/felt the Fraynes and their youngsters had narced on them [fr Romany nak, “nose”]*

narrowcast v To plan a TV program for a special audience rather than the masses: *This “narrowcasting” approach may win NBC an unusual distinction (1970s +)*

nash *See* NOSH

nasty *adj* Good; stylish; admirable (1834+) **n** 1 Something unpleasant, repulsive, etc: *pathos, poverty, and other real-life nasties* (1971+) 2 The sex act: *We caught them doing the nasty in his bedroom* 3 A vicious person; villain: *takes her family on a river trip, where they are taken prisoner by nasties/a few of the nasties are scenery-chomping, world-class scum* (1930s+)

natch *adv* Naturally; certainly: *will be in riding clothes (habits of the rich, natch)/The two men, natch, are soul buddies* **affirmation** Of course; right: *Do I like it? Natch, what else?* (1945+)

native *See* GO NATIVE

natives are restless, the *sentence* One can expect some opposition; discontent appears to be afoot: *Meanwhile, the natives are restless: Polls indicate rising feeling that the President is paying too much attention to foreign matters* [1930s+; fr a trite line in many old jungle movies as native drums throb]

natty *adj* Neat; spruce; stylish: *The fitted shirt gave him a natty appearance/A natty convertible* (1806+)

natural **n** 1 A first throw of the dice that yields seven or eleven (1897+ fr *crapshooting*) 2 Something or someone that is obviously and perfectly fitting; just the thing: *A novel which looks like a natural for Lassie* (1925+ fr *prizefighting*) 3 A jail sentence of seven years (1940s+ *Prison*) 4 AFRO (1960s+ *Black*)

natural-born *adj* Total; absolute; innate: *The man's a natural-born spaz/a natural-born artist* (1930s+ *Black*)

nature of the beast, the *n phr* The innate characteristics of someone or something: *The shared experience is the value of network television; it's the nature of the beast* [1678 +; the earliest occurrence is in a collection of English proverbs]

nature's call *See* CALL OF NATURE

naughty bits *n* The genitals [1960 +; euphemism fr *Monty Python's Flying Circus* skits]

Navajo Cadillac *See* COWBOY CADILLAC

navigate *v* To walk, esp when drunk (1843 +)

near thing *n phr* Something that barely succeeds or nearly ends in failure or disaster: *It was a near thing, but I kept my job (British)*

neat *adj* **1** Excellent; wonderful (1920s + *Teenagers*) **2** Without water or another mixer; undiluted; STRAIGHT, STRAIGHT UP • Used to describe spirits: *I'll take my Scotch neat, please* (1579 +)

neatnik *n* A neat or tidy person, as distinct from a "beatnik" (1959 +) *See* -NIK

neato *adj* NEAT: *with nothing to his name but a variety of neat-o consumer electronics* (1968 + *Teenagers*)

nebbie *See* NIMBY

nebbish or **neb** *n* A person without charm, interesting qualities, talent, etc; WIMP: "*Nebbish*" is simply the one in the crowd that you always forget to introduce/Don't be a nebbish/poor little nebs like *Julian* [1941 +; fr Yiddish fr Czech *neboky*]

nebbishy *adj* Having the character of a nebbish: *plays a nebbishy student who acquires telekinetic powers/Paul Reiser stars as a nebbishy playwright*

necessary, the **See** the NEEDFUL

neck *v* To kiss, embrace, and caress; dally amorously; MAKE OUT, SMOOCH:
At least you'd want to neck me/You "spooned," then you "petted,"
after that you "necked" (1825 +) See DEAD FROM THE NECK UP, DIRTY-NECK, GET
OFF someone's BACK, GIVE someone A PAIN, LEATHERNECK, NO-NECK, a PAIN IN THE ASS,
REDNECK, ROUGHNECK, RUBBERNECK, STICK one's **NECK OUT, TO SAVE ONE'S**
NECK

necked **See** REDNECKED

necking *n* The pleasures and procedures of those who engage in kissing, embracing, and caressing: *pupils resort to necking/It was the closest we ever got to necking (1825 +) See* HEAVY PETTING

neck of the woods *n phr* An area, neighborhood, etc: *Hey, you live right in my own neck of the woods (1839 +)*

necktie *n* The noose used in a hanging: *They'll put a necktie on you (1871 +)*

necktie party (or **social** or **sociable**) *n phr* A hanging or lynching (1871 +)

needful (or **necessary**), the *n phr* Money (1774 +)

needle *n* **1** Criticism or goad: *a really nasty needle* **2** A hypodermic injection; SHOT (1943 +) *v* **1** To nag at someone; criticize regularly and smartingly; HASSLE: *He keeps needling the guy about his looks*

(1940+) **2** To age or strengthen an alcoholic beverage artificially, esp by using an electric current passed through a needlelike rod
(1920s+)

needle, the *n phr* **1** Injurious and provocative remarks; nagging criticism: *He's always ready with the needle* (1940+) **2** Narcotics injections; the narcotics habit: *The needle finally killed him* (1940s+ Narcotics) **See** GIVE someone THE NEEDLE, OFF THE NEEDLE, ON THE NEEDLE

needle beer *n phr* Beer reinforced with alcohol or ether (1928+)

needle candy *n phr* A narcotic taken by injection, esp cocaine: *Holmes has need of greater stimulants than needle candy* (1950s+ Narcotics)

needle park *n phr* A public place where addicts regularly gather to deal in drugs and to take injections; SHOOTING GALLERY: *Drug addicts have turned the Platzspitz in Zurich, once elegant, into a needle park* (1966+)

needles **See** RAIN CATS AND DOGS

need someone or something **like a hole in the head** *v phr* To have emphatically no need whatsoever for someone or something [1951+; fr Yiddish *loch in kop*, "hole in head"]

neg *v* To reject; turn down: *I was negged from Princeton but accepted at Yale* (1980s+ Teenagers)

negative *n* A negative element in judgment; a minus: *"drove up Dukakis' negatives" in voter surveys* (1947+)

negatory *negation* No; NIX, NOPE: *Mrs. Shrub sternly took Shrub's arm.*

“Were you really going to ruin his daughter’s wedding?” *The Shrub* said, “Negatory” [1950s+ Air Force; an adjective sense, fr French *négatoire*, is found by 1580; the modern sense was popularized by the citizens band phenomenon of the 1970s]

nellie or **nelly** **adj** 1 Homosexual; effeminate; GAY, SWISH: *Well, his backstroke is a little Nellie/what in the past would have been described as a Nelly queen* 2 Overfastidious; finicky; schoolmarmish: “As follow” is *Nellie usage and probably incorrect (1960s+)* **See** NERVOUS NELLIE

nemmie or **nemish** **See** NIMBY

neocon **adj** Neoconservative: *the neo-con idol, George Orwell (1970s+)*

nerd modifier: *Norton represents a new type of American rich person: the nerd tycoon/a mix between journalism and nerd heaven, with its sophisticated desktop equipment and absence of paper* **n 1** (also **nerdboy** or **nurd**) A tedious, contemptible person; DORK, DWEEB, JERK: *In Detroit, someone who once would be called a drip or a square is now, regrettably a nerd, or in a less severe case, a scurve/What about a total dweeb? Yup. Geek? Yup. Nerdboy? Yup. (1951+ Teenagers)* **2** An over-studious person, esp a computer devotee, usu pictured with horn-rimmed spectacles and often buck teeth: *She’s definitely a word nerd* • In some uses nearly synonymous with “hacker” (1980s+ *Students*) [probably fr the 1950 children’s book *If I Ran the Zoo*, by “Dr. Seuss,” where a *nerd* is one of the desired animals]

nerdacious or **nerdly** **adj** Nerdlike; NERDY: *and nerdacious mutterings full of buried Hobbit references (1990s+)*

nerdling *n* An inexperienced and naive computer “hacker” (1980s +)

nerd pack *n* A plastic shield worn to keep ink off shirt pockets
(1980s + Teenagers)

nerdy *adj* Characteristic of a nerd: *Above all, stay away from anything nerdy/When the trendy become mainstream, the hip go nerdy* (1970s + Teenagers)

nerf *v* To bump a car out of one’s way [1950s + Hot rodders; origin unknown]

nerfs or **nerfz** *See* NUTS

nerfy *See* NUTTY

nerve *n* **1** Courage; GUTS (1809 +) **2** Audacity; CHUTZPAH (1887 +) *See*
GET ON someone’S NERVES, HAVE A NERVE

nervous *adj* **1** COOL, FAR OUT **2** JAZZY (1950s + *Beat & cool talk*)

nervous Nellie *n phr* A timid or cautious person; a worrier: *a nervous Nellie a bit like Jeanne Dixon* [late 1930s + ; perhaps fr *Nervous Nellie*, the nickname of Frank B Kellogg, secretary of state 1925-29, who negotiated the Kellogg-Briand differences]

nervy *adj* **1** Nervous; JUMPY (1891 +) **2** Impudent; bold (1896 +)

nest *See* FEATHER one’S NEST, LOVE NEST

nest egg *n phr* Saved money, esp for use in retirement or an enterprise, emergency, etc (1700 +)

nester *See* EMPTY-NESTER

net (or **Net**), the *n* The Internet: *Like many newcomers to the “net,”*

which is what people call the global web that connects more than thirty thousand on-line networks (1990s + Computers)

net down v phr To be equivalent to; amount to: *Hostile takeovers net down to a power grab (1980s +)*

netiquette n The etiquette of the Internet; polite online behavior: *the “netiquette” that prevailed in its early days is breaking down/This clash isn’t even about the future of “netiquette” (1990s +)*

net result n phr The final result after everything has been added and subtracted, after everything has occurred: *net result of your efforts*

net sex or cybersex n Sexual expression and interchange on the Internet: *I think I’ll head back to the house for a little cybersex and a nap (1990s +)*

netter n A tennis player: *The Jefferson High School netter took second in the Southern Lakes Conference tournament last year (1932 +)*

network v To solicit opinion and aid from associates with common interests: *I’m networking this question, but nobody has a certain answer (1980s +)* **See** OLD BOY NETWORK

networking n The forming of an association of mutual interest: *Building friends and contacts is what everybody is referring to as networking these days/And More Jewish Networking (1980s +)*

never follow a dog act sentence Be very careful about whom you are to be immediately compared with • Often a rueful comment after one has been outshone (1960s + *Show business*)

never mind v phr Forget it. It does not matter anymore: *Need you to*

get me a towel. Oh, never mind **See** MAKE NO NEVER MIND

never-was *n* A person who never succeeded or captured notice; LOSER
[1950s + ; based on *has-been*]

new **See** WHAT ELSE IS NEW

new ball game **See** a WHOLE NEW BALL GAME

newbie (also **noob**) *n* A person new to computers and computer networks; computer neophyte: *You'd copy it because you didn't want to seem like a newbie (read: clueless computer rookie)/Newbies sometimes get flamed just because they are new (1990s + Computer)*

new boy *n phr* A novice; beginner :*Not a bad start for a new boy*
[1970s + ; fr the British term for a beginning school student, found by 1847]

new fish *n phr*: *For first-time prisoners ("new fish," in prison parlance), once bail is revoked the darkness descends quickly (1940s + Prison)*

new kid on the block *n phr* Any newcomer or recent arrival: *The newest kid on that ostentatious block is O'Neal, who, after signing with Orlando, was snatched up by Reebok*

new look, the *n phr* A new fashion; new practice, fad, etc: *Here's the new look in computer software, folks* [1947 + ; fr a fashion sensation notable chiefly for the long skirts of Christian Dior dresses]

new one on someone, a *n phr* Something not heard or experienced before: *Isn't this a new one on you, Messrs. Police? (1887 +)*

news **See** BAD NEWS, NOSE FOR NEWS

newshawk or **newshound** *n* A newspaper reporter (*first form 1929 +, second 1936 +*)

newsie or **newsey** *n* A newspaper seller: *Beno, a hophead newsie (1875 +)*

newsy *adj* Containing or offering a lot of news: *her newsy Christmas cards*

newt *n* An uninteresting person; also, a stupid person: *Be practical, you newt*

new wrinkle *n phr* A novel idea or technique; expedient; trick: *Hey, that little gismo is a new wrinkle (1899 +)*

newy or **newey** or **newie** *n* Something new; a novelty: *You'll like this one, it's a newy and a goody (1940s +)*

New York kiss-off *See* KISS-OFF

New York minute *n phr* A very short time; a JIFFY: *In the computer world, nouns like modem and fax become verbs in a nanosecond, almost as short as a New York minute/I would sign a woman in a New York minute (1990s +)*

next *See* GET NEXT TO someone

next off *adv phr* Next; at that point: *Next off, Hutch give a yell (1920s +)*

next to nothing *n phr* Almost nothing; a very little bit: *It's been very useful and cost me next to nothing (1656 +)*

next week *See* KNOCK someone INTO THE MIDDLE OF NEXT WEEK

NG or **ng** (pronounced as separate letters) **adj** No good: *She is NG/This gadget's ng, so give me another one (1839+)*

nibbled to death by ducks **adj phr** Subject to constant petty annoyances: *Writing in such an editor-dominated environment was like being nibbled to death by ducks/is being nicked-and-dimed, nibbled to death by ducks (1950s+)*

nibs **See** TOUGH SHIT

nice **See** MAKE NICE

nice as pie, as **adj phr** As pleasant and harmless as could be: *It didn't make any difference to her. You know? She was as nice as pie (1922+)*

nice cop tough cop **See** GOOD COP BAD COP

nice guys finish last **sentence** It is foolish to be fair and decent; look out only for yourself [late 1940s+; attributed to the baseball manager Leo Durocher]

nice Nelly **adj**: *I've got to use "heck" because practically all my editors are being more rabidly nice Nelly than usual* **n phr** An overfastidious person; BLUENOSE (1930s+) [fr a stock character in Franklin Pierce Adams's column "The Conning Tower"]

nice work if you can get it **sentence** That would be a very pleasant thing to do; wouldn't that be fun? • An admiring comment made when one sees something easy, pleasant, attractive, etc, used esp with sexual overtones: *They're paid salaries totaling millions, they get the best tables in restaurants, the valets never keep them waiting for*

their Mercedes, they glide from one studio job to another. Nice work if you can get it [1930s + ; this was the title of a George and Ira Gershwin song of 1937]

nicey-nice (also **nice-nice** or **nicey-nicey** or **nicety-nice**) **adj** **1**

Affectedly amiable and wholesome: *This little kid here with all her nicey-nice talk/You flip the book over and you see all nicey, nicey things/Renegades who questioned this nicety-nice world were locked in deep freeze* **2** Effeminate; overly fastidious

nic-fit **v** To crave nicotine; suffer from withdrawal: *It's so incredibly bad to nic-fit, it's not even funny* (1990s +)

nick **n** NICKEL BAG (1990s + Narcotics) **v** **1** To rob or steal: *The bank is gonna be nicked* (1869 +) **2** To charge; overcharge; exact: *I think you can nick her for one fifty if you get tough* (1921 +)

nickel **n** **1** A five-year prison sentence (1960s + *Underworld*) **2** NICKEL BAG (1960s + Narcotics) **See** BIG NICKEL, DON'T TAKE ANY WOODEN NICKELS, DOUBLE NICKEL, PLUGGED NICKEL

nickel and dime **modifier** Inconsequential; trivial; TWO-BIT: *You realize you've smashed a grape with a hammer, whacking some nickel-and-dime guy* (1970 +) **v phr** **1** To drain in small increments; nibble away at: *The mack started nickel-and-diming him into the poor-house/He said the grizzly habitat was being nickeled-and-dimed out of existence* (1970s +) **2** To quibble; niggle; bring up all sorts of trivia: *is being nickeled-and-dimed, nibbled to death by ducks* (1970s +)

nickelback **n phr** The fifth backfield player in the "nickel defense": *When peace was restored, the officiating crew ejected end Tom Briggs*

and nickel back Leroy Axem (1980s + Football)

nickel bag *n phr* A five-dollar packet of narcotics (1960s + Narcotics)

nickel defense *n phr* A defensive formation in which a fifth defensive back is added to cover an almost certain pass receiver (1980s + Football)

nickels and dimes *n phr* Very small amounts of money; PEANUTS: *We can get the improved roads for nickels and dimes (1893 +)*

nifty *adj* Smart; stylish; NEAT, SLICK: *a great many niftier and hotter words/a nifty way to upstage the president (1868 +)* *adv*: *You did that real nifty* **n 1**: *his six blonde nifties/Another nifty is the circularization of telephone subscribers* **2** A fifty-dollar bill [origin unknown; called by Bret Harte, in the 1868 example, "Short for *magnificat*"]

◀**nig**▶ *n* A black person (1932 +)

◀**nigga**▶ (NIGG uh) *n* A black person • Not a taboo word as used by one black person to or about another, esp by rap singers: *For several years, it has become common for young blacks to greet each other as "nigga" (1925 +)*

◀**nigger**▶ *modifier*: *a nice nigger lady* *n* A black person • Not a taboo word as used by one black person to or about another (1786 +)

niggle *v* **1** To complain **2** To spend time on inconsequential things; trifle • With *niggling* as the adjective form: *niggle over the details (1886 +)*

night *See* AMATEUR NIGHT, GOOD NIGHT, SATURDAY NIGHT SPECIAL

nightcap *n* **1** A drink taken just before going to bed or the last drink

of the evening, esp an alcoholic drink: *Let's stop at Joe's for a nightcap* (1818+) 2 The second game of a doubleheader (1917+ Baseball)

nightery *See* NITERY

nightie or **nighty** *n* A nightgown: *Aphrodite in her nightie, Oh my God what a sightie* (1894+)

night-night or **nightie-night** *interj* An amiable parting salutation at night (1896+)

nightowl or **nighthawk** *n* NIGHT PERSON (*first form* 1846+, *second* 1868+)

night people (or **fighters**) *n phr* People who work at night or prefer to be up late at night: *I happen to be "night people" and I'm always up late/Night people, the professor and his wife used to retire about 2:30 to 3 AM* (1950S+)

night person *n phr* One of the night people: *She's a night person, never gets up before the afternoon* (1950s+)

nightspot *n phr* A nightclub; cabaret; Boite, NITERY (1936+)

-nik suffix used to form nouns A person involved in, described by, or doing what is indicated: *beatnik/computernik/peacenik/no-goodnik* [1940s+; fr Yiddish fr Russian and other Slavic languages]

nimby *n* (also **nimbie** or **nebbie** or **nemmie** or **nemish**) Nembutal™ or any barbiturate (1950+ Narcotics)

NIMBY (also **Nimby** or **nimby**) *modifier* Exclusivist; fiercely protective: *The local perspective is a recipe for disaster: ignorance,*

Nimby selfishness, isolationism, tribal and racial strife **n** not in my back yard: *Institutions that no organized community wants in its backyard, prisons, sanitation works and other NIMBYs, have followed (1980 +) [fr “not in my backyard”]*

nimrod n: *Of course, there’s always the middle ground, reserved for friends who commit a blunder. For these, we have “nimrod,” “klutz,” and “geek” [1980s+ Teenagers; fr the name of Nimrod, the “mighty hunter before the Lord” in Genesis]*

nincompoop (also **ninny** or **ninnyhammer**) **n** A fool or stupid person (1676 +)

nine n A nine-millimeter semiautomatic pistol: *There was a fight. I saw a man running with a nine/People seeking guns for personal combat want reliable stopping power, revolvers or semiautomatic pistols known as “nines” (1990s +) v: Motherfucker tried to stiff me on a buy and I nined him right there*

nine-days’ wonder n phr A marvel of rather short duration; FLASH IN THE PAN [1594 + ; the notion of a wonder lasting nine nights appears in Chaucer’s *Troilus and Criseyde* of 1374]

nine-hundred-pound gorilla See SIX-HUNDRED-POUND GORILLA

nines, the See DRESSED TO THE TEETH

nineteenth hole, the n phr A drink or a spell of drinking after finishing a golf game (1901 + *Golf*)

nine-to-five adj Occupying the time period of a regular, salaried, probably dull office job: *a nine-to-five drag of a job (1950s +) v* To

be regularly employed, esp in an office job: *even when he was nine-to-fiving* (1962+)

nine-to-fiver *n* **1** A person who is steadily employed: *As early as the 1920s they were called white-collar slaves and by the 1950s nine-to-fivers* **2** A regular job, esp a salaried office job (1959+)

ninety-day wonder *n phr* **1** An Army or Navy officer commissioned after a three-month course at an officer candidate school **2** Any very youthful officer **3** A reserve officer put on active status after three months of training **4** Any person doing a job with minimal training • Usual use: *They sent us another ninety-day wonder to run the department* [WWI armed forces; based on *nine-days' wonder*]

nine yards *See* the WHOLE NINE YARDS

◁**ninnies**▷ *n* A woman's breasts; JUGS, HOOTERS: *Or-dell saw what looked like a swimsuit bra covering her ninnies* (1990s+)

nip *n* A small quantity, a taste, of a drink: *Well, give me just a nip, then* [1796+; apparently fr *nipperkin*, "small measure of drink," found by 1694]

nip and tuck *adj phr* **1** Equally likely to win or lose; even; neck and neck: *Near the finish they're nip and tuck* **2** Of equal probability; equally likely: *It's nip and tuck whether I'll get there in time or not* [1857+; earlier versions included *rip and tuck*, *nip and chuck*, and *nip and tack*, making the original semantics somewhat difficult to assess; the term might be from sailing or from sewing and tailoring]

nipper *n* A small boy; lad • In British dialect, the youngest child of a family: *warning that America's nippers are turning into microchip golem* [1859 + ; perhaps because he *nips*, “moves quickly”]

nippers *n* Handcuffs: *A newly appointed policeman has to buy a pair of nippers* (1821 +)

◁**nips**▷ *n* The nipples: *Barb's nips are not big and dark* (1970s +)

nit *n* Nothing; ZILCH: *If you're wondering about their homosexual records, it's nit* [fr Yiddish or perhaps German dialect]

nitery or **nightery** or **nighterie** *n* A nightclub; Boite (1934 +)

nitpick *v* To quibble over trivia; NIGGLE: *so all that remains is for them to sit and lie there and nitpick over trivialities or talk about what's on TV*

nitpicking *adj*: *a highly nitpicking attitude* *n* The act and pleasure of one who quibbles over trivia [from the very slow and attentive work of a person or a simian picking tiny *nits*, “insect eggs,” out of hair or fur]

nitro (NĪ troh) *n* **1** Nitroglycerin; SOUP (1935 +) **2** Nitromethane, a fuel additive for cars (1960s + *Hot rodders*)

nitty-gritty, the, or the **nitty** *adj phr*: *a lot of nitty-gritty campaigning as well* *n phr* **1** The most basic elements, esp when unwelcome or unpleasant; harsh realities: *from what they call the nitty gritty and the grass roots/the awesome and awful nitty gritty of today's urban condition/and shifting from ideology to the nitty* (1960s + *Black*) **2** Practical details [fr the repellent association of *nits*, “the eggs of hair lice, young hair lice,” and *grit*, “abrasive granules”]

nitwit *n* A stupid person; fool; BOOB [1922 +; perhaps fr *nit*, fr German dialect, “no,” found by 1909, plus *wit*]

nix *n* 1 Nothing: *wasn't taking her out here in the park for nix* (1789 +)

2 A refusal; veto: *if the Petrillo nix stands* (1951 +) **negation** No: *I asked her for one and she said nix* (1909 +) **v** To veto; reject: *had been considering marriage but have apparently nixed the idea/and he was afraid that might nix his CBS deal* (1903 +) [fr German *nichts*, “nothing”]

nixie *n* A piece of mail that cannot be delivered because of damage, illegibility, etc (1885 + *Post office*)

nix on **v phr** To forbid • Used only as an imperative: *Nix on the hurry talk/Nix on swiping anything* (1902 +)

nix sign *n phr*: *A local cafe sells a T-shirt showing a howling coyote in a circle with a slash through it—the international nix sign* (1990s +)

no-account or **no-count** *adj* Worthless; untrustworthy; incorrigible: *I'm a lazy no-account bum* (1845 +) **n**: *A no-count that never did a right thing in his life*

nob *n* A rich and important person; SWELL [1755 +; origin unknown]

no bargain *n phr* A person or thing that is not especially desirable or good; NO PRIZE PACKAGE: *Well, he's OK, but no bargain* [1940s +; fr Yiddish *nit ka metsie*]

nobbler *n* A person who drugs a racehorse or racing dog or otherwise tries to fix the outcome of a race • Chiefly British: *the nobblers who drugged dogs* [1854 +; origin unknown; perhaps fr

hobble, “make lame,” by the same interesting variation that gives *Hob* and *Nob* as nicknames for **Robert**]

nobby *adj* Stylish; fashionable; smart: *Polo shirts, nobby ties*/In 1903 *Larkin picked up a nobby one-cylinder Winton* [1788+; fr nob]

no better than one ought to be *adj phr* Sexually promiscuous; loose (1815+)

no big deal *n phr* Nothing important; no problem: *I kept telling him that it wasn't any big deal*

no biggie *n phr* NO BIG DEAL (1970s+ Teenagers)

nobody, a *n* A person lacking fame, status, importance, etc; an uninteresting person; NEBBISH (1581+)

nobody home *modifier*: *Forrest Gump wears an expression of nobody's-home innocuousness throughout the picture* *sentence* This person is crazy, stupid, or feeble-minded; OUT TO LUNCH (1919+)

nobody likes a smartass (or **wise-ass**) *sentence* What you just said is very offensive; you are too smart and acid for your own good: *Nobody likes a minority smartass/“And you will notice that I am not sweating.” “No one loves a smartass”* (1980s+)

no bones *See* MAKE NO BONES ABOUT

no-brain *adj* Stupid; vapid: *The show was a loser right up to its no-brain ending* (1980s+)

no-brainer *modifier*: *Alden Essex is currently the undisputed king of no-brainer novels/Lansing, with the help of no-brainer sequels such as Wayne's World 2 and Addams Family Values, has the studio back on*

track n Something very simple, requiring no intelligence: *The question of which CAD program to buy is a no-brainer; Autodesk's AutoCAD dominates the market/Passing it seemed like a no-brainer, but it failed (mid-1980s +)*

no can do *sentence* I am unable or unwilling to do that: *On that schedule? No can do* [1923 +; a phrase in pidgin English probably adopted and disseminated by seamen; popularized in the 1940s by a song having the phrase as a title]

no-count *See* NO-ACCOUNT

nod *v* To be intoxicated with narcotics to a very drowsy or stuporous state: *with slews of rich kids nodding in the Scarsdale woods* [1960s + Narcotics; the underlying sense, "let the head fall forward when drowsy," is found by 1562]

nod, a *n phr* A stuporous state following an injection of narcotics: *He goes on a "nod," his head drooping, eyelids heavy/Here was Pimp in a nod* (1960s + Narcotics)

nod, the *n phr* The affirmative decision; the signal of choosing or preference; THUMBS UP: *Bold Ruler gets the nod over Gallant Man in today's renewal of the Carter Handicap* (1920 + Sports) *See* GET THE NOD

noddle *See* NOODLE

no dice *adj* Worthless; CRUMMY: *a little no-dice paper called the Rome American negation No; absolutely not; NO SALE, NO SOAP, NO WAY: A Nuevo Laredo judge said no dice/Nice, but no dice* (1931 +) [fr the call of a crapshooter that the roll just made is not valid]

nod off v phr To fall asleep (1845 +)

no earthly reason n phr No conceivable reason: *There's no earthly reason to keep this crap*

no end of (or to) n phr An never-ending resource; something that goes on and on: *no end to her nagging*

no flies on someone or something n phr Nothing impeding one's energy, awareness, soundness, up-to-dateness, etc: *There's no flies on Jersey. It's got more and better bookmakers* [1888 +; fr the image of an active cow, horse, etc, on which *flies* cannot settle; the similar term *no flies about* is found in Australia by 1848]

no-frills adj Restricted to the essentials; without frivolous ornamentation or flourishes: *Imagine a no-frills warehouse crossed with an abattoir* (1960 +)

noggin n The head: *the psychiatrist after diagnosing his noggin* [1866 +; fr *noggin*, "mug," itself used for "face"] **See** MUG

no glove no love modifier Forbidding sex without a condom: *Female rappers have become front-line teachers of the "no glove, no love" school* (1990s +)

no-go adj Not ready to proceed; inauspicious; blocked: *This looks like a no-go situation* [1960s +; probably stimulated recently by astronauts' use] **See** GO NO-GO

no go n phr An unlikely success; a sure failure; an impossibility: *We tried to save him, but it was no go* (1825 +)

no-good or no-gooder adj: *His father was a no-good drunk n* An

unreliable or deplorable person; BUM, NO-ACCOUNT, NO-GOODNIK: *A high-living no-good in a derby hat (first form 1924 +, second 1950s +) [no-good-boy is found by 1908]*

no-goodnik *n* NO-GOOD (1924 +) *See* -NIK

no great shakes *adj phr* Mediocre; not outstanding; rather ineffective; NOTHING TO WRITE HOME ABOUT: *I'm no great shakes at serve-and-volley* [1819 +; origin unknown]

no-hitter *n* A game in which at least one side gets no base hits (1948 + *Baseball*)

no holds barred *adj phr*: *The commission was to produce a "no-holds-barred" study* *adv phr* Free and uninhibited; with no limits or reservations: *They went at it no holds barred (1940s +)* [fr the rules of a wrestling match]

no-hoper *n* A person who has no hope of success: *Standins are the film industry's no-hopers, the ones who never made it* [1957 +; found in Australian racing slang by 1943 as "a horse with no hope of winning"]

nohow *adv* In no way; under no circumstances: *We tried, but couldn't manage to score nohow (1775 +)*

noise *n* **1** Empty talk; meaningless verbiage; bluster: *That press release is plain noise (1940s +)* **2** Heroin (1920s + *Narcotics*) *See* BIG NOISE, MAKE NOISES

no joke *n phr* A serious matter (1920 +)

no kidding or **no joke** *adv phr* Really; factually • Often a question

asked when one hears something astonishing or doubtful [first form 1914 +, second 1880 +; the earlier form *no kid* is found by 1873]

no-knock *adj* Providing for or including the police right of entry without a search warrant: *The cops demanded a no-knock statute so that they could catch criminals in the lair (1970s +)*

no more Mister Nice Guy *n phr* No longer a decent, fair, trustworthy, amiable, etc, person: *If I get the nomination, it'll be no more Mr. Nice Guy/No More Mr. Nice Guy. Shevardnadze declares war on Georgia's rebels (1970s +)*

nonbook *n* A printed effort lacking literary value and normal publishing validity, usu one blatantly ghostwritten and/or put out for reasons of sensation, meretricious chic, or brazen and high-pitched publicity (1960 +)

noncom (NAHN kahm) *n* A noncommissioned officer (1747 +)

non compos *modifier* Not in control of the mind • Short for Latin *non compos mentis* (1628 +)

no-neck *modifier*: *Andrew Giuliani, the executive moppet, strolled uninvited to the lectern, as uninhibited as one of Tennessee Williams's no-neck monsters* *n* A stupid, bigoted person; a brute; REDNECK: *the moral and intellectual sleaziness of the media and its no-necks in residence (1970s +)* [fr the thick, neckless aspect of very muscular men, gorillas, etc]

nonevent *n* **1** An apparent event staged or produced for or by the media **2** Something invalid; something that in effect did not

happen: *“As a practical matter” the new rules are “a nonevent”*
(1962 +)

no never mind *See* MAKE NO NEVER MIND

no-no, a *n phr* Something forbidden; something very inadvisable: *The company says mustaches are a no-no/allowing members to enjoy such former no-nos as corn on the cob* (1940s +)

non-sked *n* An airline that has no fixed schedule of flights (1946 +)

nonstarter *n* A failure; ALSO-RAN, LOSER: *The proposed travel book now seemed to be a nonstarter/Compromises should be considered “nonstarters”* (1909 +)

non-techie *n* A person who is unversed and uninterested in technical matters, esp in computers and electronics: *This network is aimed at non-techies, so I begged Amanda to try it* (1980s +)

noodge *See* NUDGE

noodle¹ *n* The head; the mind: *Most of the fellows running television today are sick in the noodle* (1914 +) **v** **1** To play idly at an instrument; improvise lazily: *I noodled a bit on it and instantly realized I could express me/Members of an avian orchestra are already softly noodling* (1937 + *Musicians*) **2** (also **noodle around**) To think, esp in a free and discursive way; indulge in mental play: *as many drafts and as much noodling as I wanted to/still noodling around with our calculators and the latest census data* (1970s +) **3** To play; toy: *noodling nervously with a glass of water* (1970s +) [origin unknown; the “play around” senses perhaps influenced by *doodle*; *noddle* in the noun sense is found by 1579] *See* OFF one’s NUT

noodle² n A stupid person; fool; simpleton • Still predominantly British: *Something that noodle at Interior might reflect on* [1753+; origin unknown; perhaps fr *noodle* the food, fr German *nudel*, because of its limp and wormlike connotations]

noodlehead n A stupid person; NOODLE² SP (1950s+)

noodlework n Mental work or effort; thinking; studying: *This job's going to need plenty of noodlework* (1940s+)

noogie (NŃŃ gee, NŃŃ-) **n** A painful rubbing of the scalp with the knuckles; DUTCH RUB: *Tomashek was probably the first challenger in heavyweight history whose most effective tactic was a noogie* (1960s+ Teenagers) **See** TOUGH SHIT

◁**nookie or nookey or nooky**▷ (NŃŃK ee) **n 1** Sexual activity; the sex act; ASS, COOZ: *a young kid tryin' to get his first nookey/if you can't give her a little nooky* **2** A woman regarded as a sex partner; ASS, CUNT [1928+; origin unknown; perhaps fr Dutch *neuken*, "to fuck"]

no one loves a smartass See NOBODY LIKES A SMARTASS

nooner n A sex act done at midday: *putting a tax on anyone who checks into a motel for what is crudely called a "nooner"/so she invited this boy here for a nooner* (1980s+)

nope negation No [1888+; fr *no* plus an intrusive stop resulting from the closure of the lips, rather than the glottis as is normal]

no picnic n phr A difficult or trying experience; a hard time or task: *While the ground crew didn't exactly have to carry me onto the plane kicking and screaming, it was no picnic/It's no picnic, teaching people*

to play (1888 +)

noplaceville *adj* Dull and tedious; DEADSVILLE **n** A small, unimportant town; JERK TOWN (1950s + *Students*)

no prize package or **no prize** *n phr* A person or thing of little worth, interest, charm; NO BARGAIN: *He's well qualified on paper, but no prize package (1940s +)*

no problem or **no prob** *interj* An assurance that everything is under control, that no difficulties are at hand in spite of appearances; NO SWEAT: *You'd like a red one? No problem (1963 +)*

north *adv* In the direction of increase; upward: *A few months ago the cost of a 4-megabit memory chip was \$11 on the spot market. Last week, it was \$20 and heading north (1864 +)*

north of *adj phr* More than; above: *Credit Lyonnais will probably pay Ovitz north of \$30 million/a good guess would be somewhere north of \$5 million (1990s +)*

northpaw *n* A right-handed person, esp a baseball pitcher [1922 + Baseball; based on *southpaw*]

no sale *negation* No; absolutely not; NO DICE, NO SOAP, NO WAY: *Sorry, Still No Sale; Assad still denied that terrorism had been discussed with the White House [1934 +; fr the sign that rose into the glass indexing window of a cash register when the No Sale key was punched]*

nose *n* A police informer; STOOL PIGEON (1830 + *Underworld*) *See* BLUENOSE, BY A NOSE, DOG'S-NOSE, HARD-NOSED, HAVE A BUG UP **one's** ASS, KEEP **one's** NOSE CLEAN, LOOK DOWN **one's** NOSE, NO SKIN OFF MY ASS, ON THE NOSE, PAY THROUGH THE NOSE, POKE **one's**

NOSE INTO something, **POWDER** one's NOSE, **PUT** someone's NOSE OUT OF JOINT

nose around *v phr* To show strong inquisitiveness; investigate, esp closely and slyly; pry: *Why are you nosing around in my life in the first place? (1879+)*

nosebag, the *See* **PUT ON THE FEEDBAG**

nosebleed *modifier*: *Sitting next to Bob Ueker up there in Nosebleed Heaven/I passed the evening of January 1 in the nosebleed section of the Louisiana Superdome watching Alabama claim the championship/were forced to watch the show standing behind nosebleed seats in the balcony* *n* Putative nasal bleeding caused by high altitudes: *\$50. This is the dreaded 400 section of Madison Square Garden. Short of flying on the Concorde, a seat here offers one of the most glamorous nosebleeds available anywhere (mid-1980s+ Sports)*

nose candy *n phr* A narcotic, esp cocaine, taken by sniffing: *a deck of nose candy for sale (1930s+ Narcotics)*

nosed *See* **HARD-NOSED**

nose dive *n phr* A sudden and large decrease: *The price of gold took a nose dive (1920+)* *v*: *Our morale nose-dived yesterday [fr the precipitate descent of an airplane, found by 1912]*

no see *See* **LONG TIME NO SEE**

no-see-um *n* Any tiny biting insect; midge; gnat [1847+; fr a presumed Indian term]

nose for news *n phr* Special ability and eagerness for learning news:

A good reporter has, first of all, a keen nose for news (1893 +)

nose job *n phr* Plastic surgery to beautify a nose; rhinoplasty (1963 +)

nose someone out *v phr* To defeat by a small margin; barely win over; win by a nose: *He nosed out the leading candidate in Iowa (1940s +)*

nose out of joint *See* PUT SOMEONE'S NOSE OUT OF JOINT

nose tackle or nose guard *n phr* A lineman whose position is just opposite the center: *"I don't want to celebrate yet," said nose tackle Jeff Wright/Charlie Krueger, a former nose tackle, retired from the San Francisco 49ers in 1973 (1970s + Football)*

nosh or nash (NAHSH) *n*: *He always liked a little nosh between meals v* To have a snack; nibble: *noshing on more fruits and veggies [1957 + ; fr Yiddish]*

noshery *n* A restaurant or delicatessen, esp for snacking (1963 +)

no shinola *interj* No shit. No kidding: *no shinola, gas prices are high*

◁**no shit**▷ *interj* Is that right; you wouldn't "shit" me, would you; NO KIDDING: *"No-o," said Gold with extravagant amazement, "shit"/Uh, now, you mean? No shit (1940s +)* **modifier** Genuine; real; HONEST-TO-GOD: *the man from Santo Domingo, a no-shit revolutionary full of zeal*

◁**no shit, Sherlock**▷ *interj* No kidding. That is obvious

no-show *adj* Designating a nonexistent worker or job, usu on the public payroll: *a no-show job Sonny got him n* Someone or something that fails to keep an appointment, use a reserved seat,

etc: *Snowstorm a no-show/The airline figures about 20 percent no-shows (1941 +)*

no siree or **no siree bob** *negation* No; absolutely no: *Nope, never, no way. No siree bob (first form 1848 +, second 1890 +)*

◁**no skin off my ass**▷ *adj phr* (Variations: **butt** or **ear** or **nose** may replace **ass**) Of no concern, esp damaging concern, to me; immaterial: *And if you fall on your face, no skin off my nose (entry form 1920 +, nose 1909 +)*

no slouch *adj phr* Very able or competent; skilled • Often followed by at something: *She's no slouch at finding good restaurants/When it comes to golf he is definitely no slouch [1796 +; fr British dialect slouch, "awkward, lazy person," found by 1515]*

no soap *negation* No; absolutely not; NO DICE, NO SALE, NO WAY: *"No soap," said the assistant warden/tried to talk her out of it, but no soap [1924 +; origin unknown; perhaps fr the question how are you off for soap?, found by 1834, but of no obvious relevance]*

no spring chicken *modifier* No longer young • Often said of a woman: *She looks great, but she's no spring chicken (1910 +)*

no strings attached *adj phr* Free of conditions, limitations, etc: *He's giving us the house with no strings attached [1940s +; fr string, "a restriction," found by 1888; the similar form "no strings to something" is found by 1909]*

no sweat *n phr* No problem or difficulty; an easy thing: *No sweat, though!/It was no sweat for me (1950s +)*

nosy or nose *adj* Inquisitive, esp overly so; prying: *Everyone on the staff must be super nosy/We shall not be nose* (1882 +)

nosy parker or **nose parker** *n phr* A nosy, overly inquisitive person • Sometimes capitalized [1907; picture postcard caption referring to a peeping Tom in Hyde Park]

not negation What has just been stated is emphatically not true: *Millions of animals in experimental labs die annually. Shock value? NOT!/Hooray for Pat Buchanan, not!/Dan Quayle has already filmed a commercial declaring Murphy Brown his favorite show... “not”* (1990s +)

not a (or snowball’s) chance (in hell) *interj* No

not a dime’s worth of difference *n phr* Hardly any difference: *There’s not a dime’s worth of difference between the candidates on health care* (1990s +)

not all beer and skittles *adj phr* (also **not all skittles and beer**)
Not entirely pleasant or easy; not a picnic, cinch, piece of cake, etc [1857 +; fr *skittles*, a bowling game played in taverns and pubs; Dickens used the form *all porter and skittles* in 1837]

not all there *adj phr* **1** Stupid; feeble-minded: *The poor creature who’s not quite all there* **2** Crazy; eccentric; NUTS, OUT TO LUNCH (1864 +)

not a one-way street *n phr* A situation, arrangement, etc, where reciprocal fairness is desired or required; IT TAKES TWO TO TANGO: *Remember, this negotiation is not a one-way street* (1950s +)

not bat an eye *v phr* To not show surprise, reluctance, etc: “I’m

leaving," she said. He didn't bat an eye (1904 +)

not be caught dead v phr To be defiantly set against; be extremely reluctantly found or seen: *I wouldn't be caught dead in that dress (1940s +)*

not (or barely) break a sweat v phr To do something very easily; be entirely nonchalant; NOT TURN A HAIR: *The touring Soviet squad barely broke a sweat in the 6--2 victory over the Badgers (1970s + Prizefighting)*

not buttoned up too tightly adj phr Feeble-minded; eccentric; NOT ALL THERE, NOT WRAPPED TIGHT: *a nice old gentleman, but not buttoned-up too tightly, as you've noticed (1980s +)*

not by a long shot adv phr Not at all; emphatically not: *It's not my best work, not by a long shot (1861 +)*

not carved (or etched) in stone adj phr (also **not cast in concrete**) Not having ultimate and permanent authority; able to be altered: *It's a good policy, but it's neither carved in stone nor set in concrete [1970s +; fr the carved stone tablets of the Decalogue]*

notch v 1 To score; achieve: *a pacy serve that's notched a few aces in its time (1623 +)* **<2>** To do the sex act • Use attributed to volleyball players: *Guys don't fuck, they notch (1970s +)* [first sense fr use of the term in cricket, and influenced by the cowboy tradition of filing a *notch* in the handle of one's **pistol for each man killed**] **See** NOTCHERY, TOP-NOTCH

notch baby n phr A person born between 1917 and 1921, and who is said to receive less of Social Security benefits thereby (*mid-*

1980s +)

notchery or **notch-house** *n* A brothel [1931 + ; fr earlier *notch*]

not count for spit *v phr* To be very insignificant; be trivial: *An aptitude for speaking amusingly doesn't count for spit* [1980s + ; *spit* is a euphemism for *shit*; *count*, "to be of importance," is found by 1857]

not cricket *adv phr* Improper; dubious; unethical; unfair: *Something not quite cricket happened* [1900 + British; fr inadmissible actions in the game of *cricket*]

not dry behind the ears *adj phr* (also **wet behind the ears** and **still wet behind the ears**) Not mature; inexperienced; callow: *He's not dry behind the ears yet, but he's learning* [entry form 1939 + , *wet* 1931 + ; perhaps an allusion to the wet condition of newborns]

note *See* BLUE NOTE, C-NOTE, DIME-NOTE, FIVE-CASE NOTE, A HELL OF A NOTE, MASH NOTE, SWAP NOTES

no-tell motel *n phr* A discreet motel for sexual rendezvous: *He goes to a no-tell motel at least twice a week/The last six Presidents combined do not conjure up enough erotic energy to fill a single room at the No-Tell Motel* (1980s +)

not enough Indians *See* TOO MANY CHIEFS AND NOT ENOUGH INDIANS

not even *interj* An exclamation of disagreement or disapproval: *You think I will give him money? Not even*

◁**not get one's balls** (or **bowels**) **in an uproar**▷ *v phr* To avoid becoming excited or upset; stay calm; COOL IT • Often an attempt to

soothe someone: *Come on! Don't get your feminist balls in an uproar*
(1930s +)

not get one's knickers in a twist v phr To avoid becoming tense and upset (1971 + *British*)

not get one's shorts in a knot v phr To avoid becoming upset or stressed: *Don't get your shorts in a knot, it's only a suggestion*
(1990s +)

◁**not get one's testicles in a twist**▷ **v phr** To avoid becoming tense and upset; NOT GET one's **KNICKERS IN A TWIST**: *I'm coming, Mr. McAllister! Don't get your testicles in a twist!* (1990s +)

not give a damn v phr (Variations: **dang** or **darn** or **dern** or **durn** or **diddly-damn** or **diddly-shit** or ◁**flying fuck**▷ or ◁**fuck**▷ or **hill of beans** or **hoot** or **piss** or ◁**rat's ass**▷ or **rat's behind** or **rat's rump** or **rip** or ◁**shit**▷ or **spit** or **squat** or **two hoots in hell** may replace **damn**) To be indifferent to or contemptuous of; not care one whit: *I don't give a damn what they do to me/Nobody gave a flying fuck who their influences were/When do celebrities give a hoot about people who interview them?/We all busted up because George didn't give a rat's ass/The average American child does not give a rip about O J Simpson/Me, I don't give a shit, high road, low road, I go either way/Anyway, who gives a fuck, actually?* (entry form 1895 +, *fuck* 1929 +, *hill of beans* 1863 +, *hoot* 1878 +, *rip* 1940s +)

not give someone the time of day v phr Not do the slightest favor for; not greet or speak to; have contempt for: *Like him? I wouldn't give that bastard the time of day* [1593 +; the dated instance, from

Shakespeare, is not in the negative]

not have a clue v phr To be uninformed or ignorant about something; be “clueless”: *“You know who I was?” “Haven’t got a clue” (WWII British armed forces)*

not have a leg to stand on v phr To lack support for one’s position. arguments, etc: *My lawyer told me I didn’t have a leg to stand on, so I shouldn’t sue the company (1594+)*

not have all one’s switches on v phr To be retarded or demented; be mentally subnormal • Used as a jocular insult rather than a clinical judgment: *Reasonable people come to the movies to watch the movie, the movietalker doesn’t have all his switches on (1970s+)*

◁**not have a pot (or without a pot) to piss in**▷ **v phr** To be very poor and deprived; be penniless: *entering their middle years without a pot to piss in (1930s+)*

not have a prayer See HAVE A PRAYER

not have brain one v phr To be very stupid (1960s+)

not have brains enough to walk and chew gum at the same time v phr To be lacking the most elementary intelligence (1960s+)

not have nickel one v phr To be without money: *You ain’t got nickel one (1942+ Black)*

not have one dollar to rub against another v phr To lack money: *When we came from West Virginia we didn’t have one dollar to rub against another (1930s+)*

not have the foggiest notion (or the foggiest) v phr To be entirely

ignorant and uncertain: *I didn't have the foggiest notion what "the right thing" was (1917+ British)*

not having any v phr To refuse to accept; reject; ignore: *Home buyers weren't having any and more than a few developers went belly-up (1903+)*

nothing adj Inane; lacking charm, talent, interest, etc; worthless:

That was a real nothing experience (1950s+) **See** DANCE ON AIR, DO SOMEONE NOTHING, KNOW FROM NOTHING

nothing, a n phr Someone or something that lacks all talent, charm, qualities, etc; NEBBISH: *This show's a total nothing (1950s+)*

nothing doing n phr A lack of activity; stasis: *Nothing doing on the job front (1827+)* **negation** No; absolutely not; NIX, NO WAY: *Buy that piece of crap? Nothing doing (1910+)*

nothing flat See IN NOTHING FLAT

nothing to it interj That is easy

nothing to sneeze at (or about) n Something of consequence, like an amount of money: *her raise, nothing to sneeze about*

nothing to write home about n phr A very ordinary or mediocre person or thing; nothing special; NO GREAT SHAKES: *His pitch was nothing to write home about (1914+)*

not in my backyard or **NIMBY interj** It is not ok with me that something is here where I live or exist

not in my book adv phr Not in my opinion; not according to my beliefs: *type of behavior is not ok in my book*

not just another pretty face *n phr* Not someone or something of no particular distinction; not a specious person or thing: *He had a time convincing them he was a genuine expert, not just another pretty face* [1970s +; fr the plight of a young woman, esp in popular fiction or film, who has intelligence, talent, etc, but fears she is being treated by males as only an ordinary sex object]

not just whistling Dixie *v phr* To be saying something important or useful: *When they warned us about this they weren't just whistling Dixie* *See* WHISTLE DIXIE

◁**not know one's ass from one's elbow**▷ *v phr* (Variations: **a hole in the ground** or **third base** may replace one's **elbow**) To be very ignorant; be hopelessly ill informed; be stupid; KNOW FROM NOTHING: *Well, he obviously didn't know his ass from a hole in the ground/He doesn't know his ass from third base (1930 +)*

not know beans *v phr* (Variations: **diddly** or **diddley** or **diddly-damn** or **diddly-poo** or **diddly-poop** or **diddly-shit** or **diddly-squat** or **diddly-squirt** or **diddly-whoop** or **shit** or **squat** or **zilch** or **zip** may replace **beans**) To be very ignorant; not know even the fundamentals • In each case the positive and negative idiom have the same meaning: *You don't know beans, do you?/may have been England's greatest mathematical puzzle inventor, but he knew beans about spiders and flies* [1833 +; entry form fr an old joke question, found by 1830, "How many blue beans make five white?"]

not know enough to come in out of the rain *v phr* To be quite stupid, esp in practical matters: *Ross thought that people with talent didn't in general know enough to come in out of the rain* [1884 +; the

positive form is found by 1599]

not know someone from Adam v phr (also **Adam's off ox** or **from Adam's house cat**) To be entirely unacquainted with or uncognizant of: *We're bigger than 90 percent of the companies on the Big Board, but nobody knows us from Adam/I didn't know from Adam's house cat who Nolan Ryan was* (entry form 1843+, ox 1890+, cat 1908+)

not know from nothing *See* KNOW FROM NOTHING

not know something if it bit someone v phr To be quite ignorant and unperceptive: *Kuttner wouldn't know a strategic trade policy if it bit him on the leg* (1990s+)

◁**not know shit from Shinola**▷ **v phr** NOT KNOW one's ASS FROM one's ELBOW • Often euphemized: *a tightfisted banker who doesn't know what from Shinola/In high school I didn't know shoot from Shinola* [1930+; *fr Shinola*TM, a brand of shoe polish; used partly for a suggestion of brown color, mainly for alliteration]

not lay a glove (or finger or hand) on someone v phr To leave unscathed; fail to hurt: To this point, they haven't laid a glove on him (1940s+ Prizefighting)

not make deals v phr To refuse to operate by or tolerate clandestine or unethical arrangements: *I don't make deals, especially not with crooks* (1960s+)

not (so) much interj No: Did you like the movie? ... *Not so much*

not much to look at adj phr Unattractive (1861+)

no tomorrow *See* LIKE IT'S GOING OUT OF STYLE

not on your life *negation* No; absolutely not; NOTHING DOING, NO WAY:

Drink that? Not on your life (1896 +)

not play for someone *v phr* To be unappealing or unconvincing for one: *I like the idea, but it may not play for you (1990s +)*

not put it past someone *v phr* To believe someone capable of an indicated act, opinion, etc: *I wouldn't put it past you to believe such hogwash (1870 +)*

not say boo *v phr* To keep silent; not respond: *He didn't say boo when I called him a thief [1940s + ; perhaps fr earlier not say boo to a goose, "to be afraid or too timid to speak"]*

not so hot *adj phr* Not very good; mediocre; poor: *I didn't flunk, but my record isn't so hot [1926 + Teenagers; the form not so warm is found by 1900]*

not to be sneezed at *adj phr* Not to be underrated; of considerable value: *It's not a big salary, but still not to be sneezed at (1813 +)*

not too shabby *adj phr* Quite good; highly acceptable: *The Angels train in Palm Springs, California, which isn't too shabby (1980s +)*

not touch someone or something **with a ten-foot pole** *v phr* To be loath to have anything to do with; be suspicious or apprehensive; reject: *If I were you I wouldn't touch that proposition with a ten-foot pole [1909 + ; semantically akin to the proverb advising us to use a long spoon when we eat with the devil; an earlier and once more common version spoke of a forty-foot pole]*

not to worry *sentence* There is nothing to worry about: *Not to worry, I bought plenty of food for everybody (1958 +)*

not turn a hair *v phr* To remain unruffled; stay cool; NOT BREAK A SWEAT:
Surprisingly, he did not turn a hair when I told him about the threat
[1897 +; fr the same phrase applied to a horse's unruffled hair, found by 1798]

not what it or something is cracked up to be *adj phr* Of low quality; inferior or unsatisfactory (1836 +)

not worth a bucket (or pitcher) of warm spit *adj phr* (Variations: **spit in the wind** or **dry spit on a hot day** may replace a bucket of warm spit) Of very little value; worthless: *The new telephones are not worth a bucket of warm spit/a cable TV contract for the Bronx, Brooklyn, Queens, and Staten Island that's worth about as much as a bucket of warm spit/Some is good. Really worthwhile. But a lot of it ain't worth spit in the wind/In the great scheme of things, woodchucks are not worth dry spit on a hot day (1970s +)*

not worth a damn (or a shit) *adj phr*: *Those promises aren't worth a damn* *adv phr* Not well at all: *This guy doesn't sing worth a damn/She doesn't like me worth a shit (first form 1817 +, second 1920s +)*

not worth a hill of beans *adj phr* Worthless; useless (1863 +)

not worth a plugged nickel *adj phr* Valueless: *His word isn't worth a plugged nickel* [1940s +; a *plugged* coin was counterfeit or had an insertion of inferior metal]

no two ways about it *adv phr* Clearly; definitely; sure as shit: *No two ways about it, this guy is nuts (1818 +)*

not wrapped tight *adj phr* Crazy; eccentric; NOT ALL THERE, NOT BUTTONED UP TOO TIGHTLY: Your father was not wrapped real tight. His loaf was missing several slices/Some MEs, who weren't wrapped too tightly to begin with [1968 + ; fr the image of something *wrapped* neatly without loose ends, spillage, etc]

nougat *n* A stupid or crazy person; BOOB, NUT, SAP: *I told her not to be a nougat* [because nuts are the principal ingredient of nougat, the candy]

nouveau punk *n phr* Newer aspects of the "punk" style (1993 +)

Nova *n* Nova Scotia smoked salmon; lox (1970s +)

now *adj* Up-to-date; very much au courant; thoroughly modern: tripping out on now words/the Right On, Now Generation (1967 +)

no way or no way, Jose or no way in hell *adv phr* Never; under no circumstances: *No way will I resign. You'll have to fire me negation* No; absolutely not; NO DICE: *No good. No go. No way, Jose/You absolutely no way in hell can use my name* (1960s +) **See** THERE'S NO WAY

no way to run a railroad **See** a HELL OF A WAY TO RUN A RAILROAD

now generation *n* People who want instant gratification becoming more prevalent in late 20th century and 21st century: *Baby Boomers as the first Now Generation*

nowhere or **nowheresville** *adj* Inferior; tedious; drab: *If you're not with it, you're nowhere/rows of folding chairs, nowheresville decor* (1940 +) **See** the MIDDLE OF NOWHERE

no-win *adj* Impossible to win; hopeless: *This tax business is a no-win situation/Furious Volley in a No-Win Match*

nozzle *n* The nose; SCHNOZZ (1871 + *Prizefighting*)

nubbies *n* Bumps; lumps; scattered protrusions: *Instead of a green plastic pad with little plastic nubbies (1935 +)*

nudge (NŏŏJ, NŏŏD jə) (also **noodge** or **nudjh** or **nudgy** or **nudzh**)
n A chronic nagger, kibitzer, or complainer: *He's not a writer, he's a nudge/not as an assassin, but as a nudge and a nerd (1960s +)* *v*:
Usually he comes up to nudgy me while I'm writing/and oh nudjh, could he nudjh! [fr Yiddish fr Slavic "fret, dully ache"; perhaps influenced by English *nudge*]

nudge elbows *See* RUB ELBOWS

nudging *See* MOTHERFUCKING

nudie modifier: *I bought a couple of nudie magazines* **n** 1 A movie, play, etc, in which players appear naked 2 A nude or nearly nude female performer: *some of the worried little nudies* 3 A magazine, book, etc, featuring pictures of nudes; SKIN MAGAZINE (1935 +)

nudnik (NŏŏD nihk) *n* An annoying person; pest; nuisance; NUDGE: *the story of a gang of nudniks trying to defeat the establishment/remains an unreconstructed nudnik throughout* [fr Yiddish *nudne*, "boring"]
See - NIK

nuff said *sentence* Enough has been said; that closes the topic: *I will not go, never. Nuff said (1841 +)*

nuggets *n* The testicles

nuke *n* A nuclear device or facility; nuclear weapon; nuclear power plant (1959+) **v** **1** To destroy with a nuclear weapon or weapons: *The global village has been nuked* (1969+) **2** To destroy; eliminate; KILL: *Jesus Christ, I can nuke this guy/Nuke this whole paragraph* (1986+) **3** To cook or heat in a microwave oven (1987+)

nuke oneself **v phr** To go to a tanning salon (1980s+ *Students*)

nuker *n* A microwave oven: *popcorn in the nuker*

numb *adj* Stupid; unresponsive (1950s+)

numb-brained *adj* Stupid; dull-witted: *recruits from the numb-brained hanger-on* (1930+)

number *n* **1** A person, esp one considered to be clever and resourceful or attractive; ARTICLE, HOT NUMBER • Always preceded by an adjective or by the locution “quite a”: *some dizzy broad that must have been a snappy number/bored-looking number* (1919+) **2** A piece of merchandise, esp of clothing; ARTICLE: *I found a number I liked pretty well* (1894+) **3** A theatrical act or routine, esp a song; SHTICK: *He does that number with the tablecloth* (1885+ *Show business*) **4** A tactic or trick; ACT: *When he’s pulling one of his numbers, he knows what he’s doing* (1970s+) **5** A casual homosexual partner; TRICK (*Homosexuals*) **6** A marijuana cigarette: *smoked a couple of numbers in the room* (1960s+ *Narcotics*) [merchandise sense fr the model *number* that most retail items have] **See** BACK NUMBER, BY THE NUMBERS, DO A NUMBER ON, DO one’S NUMBER, HAVE someone’S NUMBER, HOT NUMBER

number, a **n phr** Something noted, esp a sexual relationship; an ITEM: *Hey, we’re a number. We have a non-casual relationship now*

(1980s +)

number cruncher *adj* Requiring mathematics, statistics, etc: *number-cruncher course* **n** *phr* **1** A computer or mechanical calculator (1966 +) **2** (also **numbers cruncher**) One who regularly processes or works with figures, statistics, records, etc, esp with a computer: *As a veteran numbers cruncher, I find that good research often raises more questions than it answers/promote clerks rather than bring in fancy number-crunchers from outside* (1971 +)

number-crunching *n* Doing serious and difficult mathematics by computer: *played chartered accountant for a few sessions of number crunching* (1980s + *Computer*)

number is up, someone's *sentence* One is dead or about to die: *I'm glad we never know when our number is up until it's up* (1899 +)

Number One or **number one** *n* *phr* **1** One's own self, esp as competitive with others; NUMERO UNO: *Always look out for Number One, he says* (1704 +) **2** Urination (1902 +) *v*: *The little kid had to number one real bad*

number-one boy *n* *phr* **1** The chief; BOSS, HONCHO **2** The chief lieutenant or assistant of a leader or ruler: *He's the president's number-one boy* (1950s +)

numbers *n* A player's averages, statistics, etc; STATS: *I've always thought numbers were a hill of beans. The only numbers that matter are wins and losses* (*Sports*) **See** BY THE NUMBERS

numbers, the *n* *phr* An illegal gambling game in which players bet that a certain number will appear somewhere; the policy racket:

Poor people lose a lot playing the numbers (1897 +)

number two *n phr* Defecation (1902 +) *v phr*: *He ran off into the woods, having to number two*

numbhead or **numbie** *n* A stupid person (*first form 1876 +*)

numbheaded *adj* Stupid; NUMB-BRAINED (1847 +)

◁**numbnuts**▷ *modifier*: *not the numbnuts chatter cornballs like Bob*

Hope or Yellowman peddle n A despicable person; JERK, LIMP-DICK: *You gotta get a better job, numbnuts (1960s +)*

Numero Uno or **numero uno** *n phr* **1** One's own self, esp as the object of one's best efforts; NUMBER ONE **2** The chief; leader; BOSS, HONCHO: *a clear understanding between the brothers about who is Numero Uno* **3** The most distinguished person in a field or endeavor: *now an also-ran, but for many years Numero Uno [1883 + ; fr Italian or Spanish]*

nurd *See* NERD

nurse *v* **1** To consume one's drink slowly: *He ordered a highball and nursed it all evening (1942 +)* **2** To handle or drive slowly and carefully: *I nursed it away from the curb and went out Main Street (1980s +)*

nut *n* **1** The head (1846 +) **2** A crazy or eccentric person; maniac; FLAKE, SCREWBALL: *It is forbidden to call any character a nut; you have to call him a screwball (1903 +)* **3** A very devoted enthusiast; BUG, FREAK: *He's a nut about double crostics (1934 +)* **4** The investment needed for a business; capital and fixed expenses: producing a daily income that barely met the nut/Our nut is high, but our variable

expenses are practically nothing (1912+) 5 Any illegal payoff to a police officer: *what they called “the nut,” payoffs to the police (1960s+ Underworld)* 6 A share in the graft collected by police officers (1960s+ Underworld) ◁7▷ A testicle; BALL: *He said it griped his left nut (1899+)* [insanity sense probably fr late 1800s *off one’s nut*, that is, head; senses 4, 5, and 6 fr the custom of taking the retaining nut from the wheel of a circus wagon, to be returned when all bills were paid] **See** GRIPE one’s ASS, OFF one’s NUT, TOUGH NUT, a TOUGH NUT TO CRACK

-nut combining word A devotee or energetic practitioner of what is indicated; BUFF, FREAK: *when one football nut writes a book/But he’s not just a word nut (1930s+)*

nutball (Variations: **bar** or **cake** or **case** may replace **ball**) **adj**: *murdered by nutball moneybags Harry K Thaw/Use the nutbar examples we’ve provided here/not such a nutcake question n* A crazy or eccentric person; NUT: *A lot of nutballs accost you at that corner/The Protestants in Ireland also have their share of nutcakes/I’m not a nut case (entry form, bar, and cake 1970s+, case 1950+)*

nutburger modifier Crazy; very eccentric: *Here are the nutburger remedies, my fellow sufferers/It was a complete nutburger case [1980s+; “a sort of hamburger made with nuts” found by 1934]*

nut-crunching n The sapping or destruction of masculinity; figurative castration; BALL-BUSTING: *Adrienne Barbeau, playing a government investigator whose best defense is nut-crunching (1970s+)*

nuthouse n (Variations: **box** or **college** or **factory** or **foundry** or **hatch** may replace **house**) A mental hospital; insane asylum: *He*

has been recalled by the nut college/goes away to the nut house/exceptional privacy and independence even in a nut hatch/a general air of having been redecorated by a parolee from a nut hatch (entry form 1920s +, box 1960s +, college 1934 +, factory 1915 +, foundry 1932 +, hatch 1940s +)

nuts or **nerts** or **nertz** or **nurts** or **nutz** **adj** Crazy; very eccentric;

BUGHOUSE, MESHUGA: *Are you nuts to turn your back on a deal that could mean life or death?/Heir Rejected 400G, Is He Nuts? (first form*

1914 +, second 1932 +) **interj** An exclamation of disbelief,

defiance, contempt, dismay, etc: *General McAuliffe replied “Nuts!” to the Germans at Bastogne (1931 +)* **n** <1> The testicles; BALLS, FAMILY

JEWELS: *They want to get their nuts out of the sand (1899 +)* **2**

Nonsense **See** BUST one’s ASS, the CAT’S MEOW, GET one’s NUTS, HOT ROCKS, NUMBNUTS

nuts, the, or the **nerts** or the **nertz** **n phr** The very best; the GREATEST: *eulogizing anything as “the nuts” [first form 1932 +, second 1934 +; probably a shortening of the cat’s nuts] See the CAT’S MEOW*

nuts about (or **over** or **on**) **adj phr** (Variations: **nutty** may replace **nuts**) Very enthusiastic about; devoted to; CRAZY ABOUT: *I think I’m nuts about you/I’d be simply nutty about the quadrangles at Oxford [1918 +; fr British slang nutty, “piquant, fascinating,” fr earlier sense “rich, tasty, desirable, like the kernel of a delicious nut,” altered in slang to nuts and originally in the phrase nuts upon, found by 1785; the US form nuts about may be based on all this or on the notion crazy about, and probably on both]*

nuts and bolts modifier: *Berger’s nuts-and-bolts discussion of film-TV*

music n phr The fundamentals; the practical basics: *the nuts and bolts of wildland preservation/men who are dealing with the nuts and bolts of negotiations* (1960+)

nutshell v To condense; sum up: *If I'm forced to nutshell it, the show is about community, it's about the workplace and the town* [1883+; fr the idiom *put something in a nutshell*]

nutso or nutsy adj Crazy; NUTTY: *I have to keep up with 29 (mostly nutso) ballot initiatives/drove each other nutsy with crashing self-confidence* (first form 1975+, second 1923+)

nutsville adj crazy: *This city is nutsville* (1980s+)

nutter n A crazy person; NUT, NUTBALL: *the Zodiac killer or some nutter on the loose/Mick Jagger says there will always be the nutters* [1958+; a British coinage and still chiefly British; perhaps influenced by *Nutter*, trademark name of a butter made from nuts, found by 1906]

nuttiness n Craziest; insanity; GOOFINESS: *Booth's capacity for nuttiness became a legend* (1916+)

nutty adj Crazy; very eccentric; NUTS: *I was just about nutty, I was so lonely* (1898+) **See** SLUG-NUTTY

nutty as a fruitcake adj phr Crazy as can be; extremely eccentric: *"That's me," Calazo said. "Nutty as a fruitcake"* (1935+)

nut up v phr To go crazy; GO APE: *He'll just about nut up when you tell him that* (1970s+ College students)

nympho n A nymphomaniac: *no boozing broad, no nympho, no psycho,*

no bitch (1935 +)

O

-o suffix used to form adjectives 1 Having the indicated characteristics: *berserko/luxo/neato/sicko/wrongo* **suffix used to form nouns 2:** *foldo/freako/klutzo/muso* • This fanciful formation is increasingly current [1960s + ; fr a humorous imitation of Spanish or Italian words, more probably Spanish because of the similar *el -o* pattern of coinage] **See** DOUBLE-O, FIVE-O, FOUR-O, SINGLE-O

oak **See** OK

Oakley **See** ANNIE OAKLEY

oar **See** ROW WITH ONE OAR

oat-burner **See** HAY BURNER

oater or **oateater** or **oat opera** **n** or **n phr** A cowboy movie; western; HORSE OPERA: *horse operas, also known as sagebrushers or oaters/the deputy marshall in the oateater (1951 + Movie studio)*

OBE (pronounced as separate letters) **adj** Overcome by events (1970s + Army)

Obie¹ **n** An award given to a meritorious off-Broadway production [1956 + ; fr *off Broadway*]

Obie² **n** A narcotic combining four amphetamines: *The brother makes*

tea, and they talk about Obies [1960s+ Narcotics; fr Obetrol™, probably a portmanteau form of obesity control]

obit (OH bit) **modifier**: *This is not the obit page* **n** An obituary, esp in a newspaper: *getting left out of the pious obits in The Times (1874+)*

OD¹ (pronounced as separate letters) **n** Olive drab; olive drab cloth (1921+ Army)

OD² (pronounced as separate letters) **n** An overdose of narcotics: *I guess he'd taken a light OD* **v** **1**: *met Jesus one day when I was ODing on speed in my room* **2** To overindulge in or on anything: *Viewers may have OD'd on athletics and turned to reruns (1960s+ Narcotics & medical)*

oddball **adj** **1** Strange; weird: *sensible drug users and the oddball drug users* **2** Nonconformist: *He had some pretty oddball ideas* **n** **1** An eccentric person; a strange one; WEIRDO: *This little guy, opinionated, emotional, sensitive, was definitely an oddball/This weird guy, this oddball with his long neck and his funny talk* **2** A nonconformist; outsider; odd man out: *We were generally considered to be a family of hopeless oddballs (1940s+)*

odd bod **n** **1** An eccentric, strange person (1955+) **2** A person with an odd body; also, a strange body: *tough to find jeans for my odd bod*

odd couple **n phr** Two people who seem unlikely as partners, mates, etc: *The odd couple, Gen. Humberto Ortega and President Violeta Barrios de Chamorro of Nicaragua, have arrived at a working relationship* [1965+; fr the title of a 1965 Neil Simon play]

odd man out **n phr** Someone who is not included in a game,

arrangement, business deal, etc: *United Artists seemed the odd man out in Transamerica's financial services game (1889+)*

odds and ends *n phr* A miscellany of leftovers, out-sizes, scraps, unmatched bits, etc (*mid-1700s+*)

odds-on *adj* Favorable; sure to win: *This one's so successful the odds-on betting was it'd never burn down (1898+ Gambling)*

of (uhv) *v* Have • In verb constructions, used for humorous or dialect effect: *I must of gone crazy or something (1844+)*

◁**ofay**▷ *modifier*: *ofay business men and planters n* A white person; FAY, Gray: *Let the ofays have Wall Street to themselves/a white boy, an ofay (1917+ Black)* [probably fr pig Latin for foe]

off *adj* **1** Not performing well;: *Perot had an off-night (1846+)* **2** Spoiled; not fresh: *the milk's a bit off (1896+)* **3** Eccentric; abnormal; WEIRD: *That girl is off (1866+)* **4** Canceled; not going to happen: *Let's call the whole thing off/The deal's off (1882+)* **5** Not working; not engaged: *The cook is off today (1861+)* *prep* Not using; no longer addicted to: *She's off H now/I've been off the sauce for four years (1930s+ Narcotics)* *v* **1** To kill or destroy; WASTE: *ordered him to mess up a couple of guys, but instead he offed them/We'll off any pig who attacks us (1930+)* ◁**2**▷ To do the sex act with or to; SCREW: *When I off a nigger bitch, I close my eyes and concentrate real hard (1950s+ Black)*

off and running *adj phr* Started and making good headway: *by hitting one of his rare home runs, and I thought we were off and running [1960s+ Horse racing; they're off! to signal the start of a*

race is found by 1833]

off one's ass *adv phr* Extremely; TO THE MAX: *My roommate was wasted off his ass by the time the party was over, and I had to carry him to bed (1980s + Students)*

off at the knees *See* CUT oneself OFF AT THE KNEES

off base *adj phr* **1** By surprise; unawares: *The lawyer tried to catch him off base with some unexpected questions (1936 + fr baseball)* **2** Not appropriate; uncalled for: *Some of his questions were way off base* **3** Presumptuous; impudent; OUT OF LINE: *When I asked for her number she said I was off base (1950s +)* **4** Incorrect; inaccurate: *These stats are a mile off base (1947 +)*

off one's base *adj phr* Seriously out of touch with reality: *Professor McClintock is quite off his base in knocking the use of slang (1891 +)*

off one's bean *adj phr* Crazy; demented; OFF one's CHUMP: *and a turkey-necked freak who was at least half off his bean (1940s +)*

offbeat *adj* Unusual; unconventional; strange: the offbeat death in an off-Broadway hotel/its offbeat ad seeking 10 Renaissance-type men [1935 +; fr the interruption of a regular rhythm in music]

off one's block (or nut) *adv phr* **1** Crazy: *off your nut to go mountain biking* **2** Intoxicated by alcohol

off someone's case *See* GET OFF someone's CASE

off color *adj phr* Somewhat salacious; risqué; BLUE: *a couple of off-color jokes/Some of his observations were a bit off color (1875 +)*

offer *See* MAKE AN OFFER one CAN'T REFUSE, PUTTER-OFFER

off one's feed *adj phr* Not feeling or looking well; indisposed
[1862+; used of animals by 1816]

off one's head (or chump or conk or nut) *adj phr* Crazy; demented;
NUTS (*entry form 1889+*, *chump 1877+*, *conk 1870+*, *nut 1873+*)

office *n* The cockpit of an airplane (1917+ *Aviators*) *See* FRONT OFFICE

off one's noodle (or gourd or onion or rocker) *adj phr* Crazy;
deluded; MESHUGA, NUTS: *I've been as near off my noodle as a sane man
can get/I suppose he was off his rocker (entry form 1945+, onion
1890+, rocker 1897+)*

off one's plate *adv phr* No longer a matter of one's responsibility and
concern: *Congress would like to get the abortion issue off its plate
(1980s+)*

off-putting *adj* Distressing; unsettling; discomfiting: *Nor do I find
pubic hair ugly or off-putting/an off-putting chip on the shoulder
(1828+)*

off-road modifier: *This baby is an off-road, all-terrain vehicle* **v** To
drive in deserts, mountains, forests, beaches, etc, away from roads:
*People with a little too much enthusiasm for nocturnal off-roading were
a problem for the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy (1990s+)*

off the bat *See* RIGHT OFF THE BAT

off the beam *adv phr* Distant from truth or accuracy; in error: *That
idea is way off the beam* [1940s+; fr the radio *beam* that guides
aircraft to an airport or runway]

off the charts *adj phr* Too great to be measured; off the scale: *His*

popularity, high before, is now way off the charts [1980s + ; fr the published charts that show the best-selling musical records and albums]

off the cob *adj phr* Conventional and unexciting; CORNY: *The music was strictly off the cob* (1940s + *Teenagers*)

off the cuff *adj*: a good off-the-cuff talker *adv phr* Extemporaneously; without rehearsal: *I don't speak well off the cuff* (1938 +) [fr the notion of speaking from notes made on one's shirt *cuff*]

off the deep end *See* GO OFF THE DEEP END, JUMP OFF THE DEEP END

off the grid *adv phr* Not using or requiring utilities such as electricity, water, etc: *living off the grid in Maine* (1991 +)

off the ground *adj phr* Started; in operation; OFF AND RUNNING: *We have to decide how to get the project off the ground* [1970s + ; fr the putative conversation of airline pilots at takeoff: "Let's see if we can get this thing *off the ground*"]

off the habit *adj phr* Cured of drug addiction; CLEAN (1960s + *Narcotics*)

off the hog *See* EAT HIGH ON THE HOG

off the hook *adj phr* Free of responsibility, blame, punishment, etc; CLEAR: *Shagan gets Harry off the hook/In brief, parents are off the hook* (1954 +) ***See*** LET someone OFF THE HOOK, RING OFF THE HOOK

off the needle *adj phr* No longer injecting or using narcotics; CLEAN (1960s + *Narcotics*)

off the pace *adv phr* Behind the leader or leaders: *The red car is*

about two laps off the pace (1951 +)

off-the-rack *adj* Mass-produced or ready-made; not tailored or specially designed: *Buying an off-the-rack reno is expensive and not very adventurous (1963 +)*

off the record *adv phr* Confidential; not for publication or attribution: *The mayor would only speak off the record, and very cryptically at that (1933 +)*

off-the-shelf *modifier* Readily available from retail sources; not customized: *a drastically scaled-down program that involves purchasing off-the-shelf computer software (1936 +)*

off the top *adv phr* Before any deductions are made; UP FRONT: *He demanded his percentage right off the top (1970s +)*

off the top of one's head *adv phr* Without thought or calculation; impromptu: *I can't give you the figure off the top of my head, but it's around, say, 500 (1939 +)*

off the wagon (or water wagon) *adj phr* Drinking liquor after a period of abstinence: *Like the bartenders, they fall off the wagon (1904 +)* **See** FALL OFF THE WAGON

off the wall *adj phr* **1** Unusual; outrageous; ODDBALL, OFFBEAT: *his off-the-wall sense of humor/the totally off-the-wall absurdity of existence (1968 +)* **2** Crazy; very eccentric; OFF one's NOODLE: *Mrs Morea was "very, very distraught, really incoherent, off the wall"/They're describing him as "off the wall" [probably fr the medical term *bounce off the walls*, referring to the behavior of a psychotic patient]* **See** BOUNCE OFF THE WALLS

off one's trolley *adj phr* Crazy; demented; NUTS: *You're off your trolley* [1896 +; fr the helpless condition of a streetcar of which the *trolley*, a spring-loaded shaft with a wheel at the top to engage the electric wires, has come *off* the wires]

oh-dark-thirty or **zero-dark-thirty** *n* An early morning hour (1970s + *Army*)

oh-so- *adv* Very; extremely; WAY: *Patriotism provides an oh-so-convenient way to confuse the higher ideals it announces with the narrow interests it claims to transcend/The administration's bank regulators are moving oh-so-slowly in seizing insolvent banks*

oh yeah *interj* An exclamation of defiance or disbelief; IZZATSO: *I told her I'd make her a star, and she said, "Oh yeah?"* (1930 +)

-oid suffix used to form adjectives Resembling or imitating what is indicated: *blitzoid/cheesoid/technoid/zomboid* **suffix used to form nouns** Something resembling or imitating what is indicated: *flakoid/fusionoid/Grouchoid/klutzoid* • This suffix is increasingly current, probably because of the popularity of fantasy and science fiction, esp among teenagers [fr the scientific suffix *-oid*, fr Greek *-oeides*, ultimately fr *eidos*, "image, form"; dictionaries list over 1,800 *-oid* compounds, most of which date from the 1700s and 1800s]

oil *n* 1 Flattering and unctuous talk; BALONEY, BUNK: *Stop the oil, will you?/marinated in good old Hollywood oil* (1917 +) 2 Money, esp money paid for bribery and acquired by graft (1903 +) *v:* *We'll have to oil the mayor to get that permit* **See** BANANA OIL, BOIL someone IN OIL, PALM OIL, STRIKE OIL

oiled *adj* Drunk: *Choose your companions, and get properly oiled as well*
(1737+) **See** WELL OILED

oil someone's **palm** **See** GREASE someone'S PALM

oily *adj* Cunning and ingratiating; sly and unctuous: *his perfect-pitch portrayal of Artie, the oily producer of The Larry Sanders Show*
(1879+)

oink <*n*> (also **oinker**) A police officer; PIG (1960s+) *v* To sound and behave like a pig: *and sends masculine outrage oinking into overdrive* [verb sense related to *male chauvinist pig*]

oinker scale *n phr*: *On an oinker scale of 1 to 10, 10 being that mythical guy who willingly cleans the house and does the laundry I'd give my husband a solid 7* [1990s+; related to *male chauvinist pig*]

oinking porker *n phr* A male chauvinist pig: *And the men who ran the AVP were even worse oinking porkers determined to annihilate the WPVA, marginalize the women's game, and monopolize pro beach volleyball* (1990s+)

oink out *v phr* To overeat; pig out: *oinking out on Peeps*

OJ or **oj** (pronounced as separate letters) *n* Orange juice: *trying to persuade the public to refer to orange juice as "OJ"* (1940s+ *Lunch counter*)

OK (also **ok** or **okay** or **oka** or **okeh** or **okey** or **oak** or **oke**) *adj* **1** Agreeable; COPACETIC: *He made an OK decision* **2** Acceptable but not excellent; satisfactory: *The play's okay, but I still prefer the book* **3** Good; excellent: *He had worked with Sergeant Boone before and knew*

he was an okay guy **adv** Right; that's understood, let's get on: *So I told you about that, okay, so the next thing was he jumped the fence*
affirmation Yes; I agree; I accept that; I will do that **affirmation** or **question** Is that all right? is that understood? COPPISH: *I'm going now, okay?* [1839 + ; origin uncertain and the subject of essay after essay; Allen Walker Read is the great authority and has shown that the locution began as a bumpkin-imitating game among New York and Boston writers in the early 1800s, who used *OK* for "oll korrekt"]

okey-doke **affirmation** or **question** (also **hokey-dokey** or **okie-doke** or **okey-dokey** or **okie-dokie** or **okle-dokle**) Yes, satisfactory, alright, etc; OK: *Suppose I pick you up at seven? Okie doke* (1932 + *Students*)

◁**Okie**¹▷ **n** 1 A migratory worker, esp one in the 1930s who had to leave home because of dust storms; arky 2 A native or resident of Oklahoma; SOONER (1935 +)

◁**Okie**²▷ **n** A native or resident of Okinawa (WWII *armed forces*)

-ola or **-olo** **suffix used to form nouns** An emphatic instance or humorous version of what is indicated:
buckoala/crapola/schnozzola [1940s + ; probably modeled on Pianola™ and Victrola™, both found by 1905; *-ola* compounds proliferated after the Charles Van Doren *payola* scandal of 1959; *-ola* compounds, numbering about 40, offer no real semantic core]

old **adj** Good; dear; well-liked: *What's old Donald up to now?* (1598 +) **See** ANY OLD

old army game, the *See* the ARMY GAME

old bag or old bat *n phr* An old woman, esp a repulsive, gossipy old shrew [first form 1920s +, second 1940s +; both bag and bat earlier meant “prostitute”]

old biddy *n phr* An old woman, esp an unpleasant one: *Talk to the old biddy for me. She likes you* [1940s +; ultimately fr biddy, “chicken, hen,” found by 1601]

old bird *n phr* An old man; GAFFER, GEEZER (1853 +)

old boy *n phr* A graduate; alumnus: *Thousands of Princeton old boys flexed their wrists and learned to Frisbee* (1868 + *British schools*) *See* GOOD OLD BOY

old boy network or old boys’ system *n phr* A reciprocally supportive, exclusive, and influential group of men, esp those who were friends at some prestigious school or college; IN-GROUP: *an “old-girl” network to rival the much-ballyhooed “old-boy” network/It’s an old boys’ system. Once you have a few commissions under your belt, one architect recommends you to another* (1959 + *British*)

old cocker *n phr* ALTER KOCKER: *I said good morning to the two Old Cockers who ambled along every day kidding themselves they were exercising/a lot of old cockers out there who wanted to hear a ball game* (1980s +)

old college try, the *n phr* One’s utmost effort; GIVE something one’s BEST SHOT: *It’s not going to be the end of the world. You give it the old college try* [1927 +; fr the early and innocent legends of college football]

◁**old crack**▷ *n phr* An old person, esp a man, who is broken down

and physically debilitated: *That old crock still plays tennis?* [1880 + ; *crock* is found in several Germanic languages as “a broken-down horse”; noted in 1969 as medical slang for a neurotic complainer]

older than God (or **baseball** or **dirt**) *adj phr* Very, very old: *Robert Penn Warren is older than God/Dick James, who remembers the Philadelphia Athletics, older than dirt*

◁**old fart**▷ *n phr* An old man; a superannuated man; ALTER KOCKER, POOP: *I feel like an old fart. My back's stiff, my knees hurt, my teeth hurt* (1968 +)

old flame *n phr* An ex-sweetheart or lover: saw my old flame at the reunion

old foggy (or **fuddy-duddy**) *n phr* An old person, esp a man who clings to old-fashioned ways [first form 1790 + , second 1899 + ; of fuddy-duddy, origin unknown] See FOGY

old geezer or **goat** *n phr* An old man, esp an unpleasant one: *Get that old geezer out of here* (1897 +) See GEEZER

old girl *n phr* An old woman; also, a wife (1791 +)

old hand *n phr* An experienced person; a seasoned veteran: *She's an old hand at these diplomatic remedies* (1785 +)

old hat *adj phr* Out of style; old-fashioned: *Tubular stuff is now old hat* (1911 + *British*)

old heave-ho, the See the HEAVE-HO

oldie or **oldy** *n* An old thing or person, esp an old song, movie, or story: *Our pet oldie concerns the India rubber skin man/as good as a*

W C Fields oldie [1930s + ; the late pianist Eubie Blake dated this phrase from about 1900] **See** GOLDEN OLDIE

oldie but goodie **See** GOLDEN OLDIE

old Joe *n phr* Any venereal disease; syphilis; gonorrhea: *Twice I got old Joe, you know, a dose (1960s +)*

old lady *n phr* **1** One's wife; a wife: *Losin' his old lady is what crazied him (1836 +)* **2** A girlfriend, mistress, woman living companion, etc: *He introduced this chick as his old lady (1950s +)* **3** One's mother; a mother: *The little kid went to ask his old lady if he could come along (1836 +)*

old man *n phr* **1** One's husband; a husband: *She can't bear to see her old man lose his money (1895 +)* **2** A boyfriend or lover: *Her old man was a bass guitar player in a rock group (1950s +)* **3** One's father; a father: *My old man wasn't mean (1768 +)* **4** A man who supports a mistress; JOHN, SUGAR DADDY: *"Old Man," the name we used to have for a common-law husband/She has an "old man" who "keeps" her (1935 +)* **5** A pimp (*Prostitutes*) **6** Old friend (1870 +) **See** DIRTY OLD MAN, SO'S YOUR OLD MAN

old man, the *n phr* The chief or boss, esp the captain of a ship, aircraft, or military unit; HONCHO (1830 +)

old money *n phr* Inherited wealth, as distinct from that of the nouveaux riches: *Bush attended two fundraisers in Highland Park, the center of what passes in Dallas for old money, rooted in real estate, cotton, and oil in the early years (1963 +)*

old one-two, the **See** ONE TWO

old pro *See* PRO

old school *modifier* From an early time, favoring traditional ways; retro or vintage: *old school fraternity hazings/strictly old school*

old-shoe *adj* Comfortable and familiar: *a relationship that has evolved from open hostility to the old-shoe club-biness of rivals drawn by shared personalities (1825 +)*

oldster *n* An older person, as opposed to a youngster: *We oldsters can beat you (1848 +)*

old timer *n phr* A seasoned veteran, esp a man • Often used in direct address, generally affectionately: *Although younger agents find them exciting, old-timers resist them (1860 +)*

old-time religion *n phr* The tried-and-true way of doing things; hallowed wisdom: *that horse-trading, your bill for mine, was part of the old-time religion/If Cuomo does run, he will have money, eloquence, labor unions and the power of old-time Democratic religion behind him [1930s +; fr the hymn tune “Give me that old-time religion“]*

old-timey *adj* Old-fashioned, esp in a pleasant and nostalgic way: *dripping with old-timey decorations (1850 +)*

old woman *n phr* OLD LADY

olive *See* SWALLOW THE APPLE

-olo *See* -OLA

omelet *See* YOU CANT MAKE AN OMELET WITHOUT BREAKING EGGS

on adj **1** Aware; informed; alerted: *I saw he was on, and quit talking* (1885 +) **2** Not canceled; scheduled to happen: *The deal's still on/It's on for tomorrow night* (1908 +) **3** Accepted and confirmed as a partner, competitive bettor, etc: *He said he bet he could do it, and I told him he was on/You want to go up there with us? You're on* (1812 +) **4** Performing; presenting a talk, appeal, etc, as if one were on stage: *She's never relaxed, she's always on/Better review your points, since you're on next* (1793 +) **prep** **1** Paid for by; with the compliments of: *This was to be on him* (1871 +) **2** Taking; using; addicted to: *He had her on penicillin/He was on acid and barbiturates at the time* (1936 + *Narcotics*)

on a cloud adj phr Very happy; euphoric; in a blissful transport: *Oh, world, I'm on a cloud today!* (1950s +)

on a dime See STOP ON A DIME, TURN ON A DIME

on a plate adv In an easy situation; easily acquired: *a win on a plate* (1935 +)

on a roll adj phr **1** Having great success; enjoying a winning impetus: *The tax cut's a smash. You're on a roll, Mr President/But Brad was on a roll now* (1976 +) **2** (also on a kick) Doing something enthusiastically and constantly: *She was on a philosophy roll* (1970s +) [fr a crapshooting term meaning "very, very lucky; unbeatable with the dice"]

on a shingle See SHIT ON A SHINGLE

on a shoestring adv For very little money; on a tight budget: *put the party together on a shoestring*

◁**on one's ass**▷ (or **ear**) **adv phr** In or into a sad and helpless condition; supine; DOWN FOR THE COUNT: *He lost three jobs, and now he's on his ass/His hat store went kerflooie, and he's on his ear now (entry form 1950s +, variant 1940s +)* **See** FALL ON one'S ASS, FLAT ON one'S ASS, SIT ON one'S ASS

on someone's ass **adj phr** Annoying or harassing one: *The paparazzi have been on my ass all day (1980s +)*

on a tear (TAIR) **adj phr** Very angry, esp punitively so; PISSED OFF: *Ronald Reagan is on a tear over leaks [1880s +; the dated example is in a tear]*

on someone's back **adv phr** Persistently annoying or harassing someone; ON someone'S CASE: *The cops were on my back after that (1776 +)*

on board **adv phr** Serving as a member of a team, government, or other group: *The President said he was glad to have the new Secretary on board (1980s +)*

on one's brakes **See** STAND ON one'S BRAKES

on someone's case **adv phr** Paying close and esp meddling or punitive attention to someone: *Maybe the world isn't on my case. Maybe the problem is me/These people got on my case heavy the first day the ol' man was dead [1970s + Black; fr the black expression sit on someone's case, "discuss and judge someone's problems, behavior, etc," based on a judicial analogy]*

once in a blue moon **adv phr** Very rarely: *Herb? I only see him once in a blue moon (1864 +)*

once-over or once-over lightly, a *n phr* A hasty cursory performance or preparation; a LICK AND A PROMISE: *a razor for a hasty once-over (1940s +)*

once-over, the *n phr* A look or glance of inspection; scrutiny; the DOUBLE-O: *The first thing we went to buy after giving all the pavilions the once-over was tomatoes (1915 +)* See GIVE someone or something THE ONCEOVER

on cloud nine (or cloud seven) *adj phr* At the very pinnacle of bliss; euphoric; ON A CLOUD: *She came back home and he's on cloud nine (1950s +)*

on someone's coattails *adv phr* Profiting from someone else's success, esp in a decisive election: *when all these rube politicians come riding in on Reagan's coattails [1909 + ; Abraham Lincoln used under that coattail in the same sense in 1848, referring to the winning influence of Andrew Jackson]*

on deck *adj phr* **1:** *the on-deck hitter* **2** Present and ready; on hand and prepared: *If you need anybody else, I'm on deck (1889 +)* *adv phr* Waiting to be the next batter, usu in a special circle marked for the purpose (1867+ *Baseball*)

on someone's dime (or nickel) *adv phr* At someone's expense other than the speaker's: *On the dime of Universal/Hicks and Sims went home, on their own nickel, to their own miseries [fr the dime or nickel formerly needed to activate a pay telephone]*

one See DEAD ONE, FAST ONE, FOUR-AND-ONE, FRESH ONE, HANG ONE ON, HOT ONE, NUMBER-ONE BOY, SQUARE ONE, THIN ONE

One See MURDER ONE, NUMBER ONE

one and only *n phr* One's beloved, fiancé, sweetheart, etc: *My one and only, what am I going to do if you turn me down when I'm so crazy over you (1906 +)*

on one's ear See ON ONE'S ASS

one-arm (or one-armed) bandit *n phr* A slot machine (1938 +)

on easy street *adv phr* In a condition of solvency, ease, and tranquility (1901 +)

one-bagger *n* A one-base hit; single (1880s + *Baseball*)

one better See GO SOMETHING OR SOMEONE ONE BETTER

on edge See EDGY

one dollar to rub against another See NOT HAVE ONE DOLLAR TO RUB AGAINST ANOTHER

187 (pronounced as separate numbers) ***n phr***: *In the lines you quote, "1-8-7" is Los Angeles police slang for homicide, so it means that the narrator is boasting about shooting an undercover cop to death (1990s + Los Angeles police)*

one-eyed demon (or snake) *n phr* The penis: *Safe sex education blew it. The emphasis should be on the psychology that goes into wrestling with that one-eyed demon [1990s + ; fr regarding the meatus as an eye]*

one-finger salute *n phr* A lewd insulting gesture made by holding up the middle finger with the others folded down, and meaning "fuck you" or "up yours"; the FINGER *Then he put his arm out the window and*

raised his hand in the one-finger salute (1980s +)

one foot in the grave *See* HAVE ONE FOOT IN THE GRAVE

one for the book (or books) *n phr* Something remarkable; an amazing thing, case, etc: *That storm was really one for the book (1922 +)*

one for the road *n phr* A last drink of the evening, party, carouse, etc; stirrup cup (1943 +)

one hell of a *See* a HELL OF A

one-horse *adj* Insignificant; inferior: *It's a one-horse operation he's got there (1853 +)*

one-horse town *n phr* A small town; JERKWATER TOWN (1855 +)

one-liner *n* A quick joke or quip; a funny observation; WISECRACK: *a new neighbor who exchanges one-liners with Lianna in the laundry room (1964 +)*

one-man show (or band) *n phr* An enterprise, business, etc, controlled by one person: *The company had previously been run as a "one-man show" (entry form 1921 +, variant 1938 +)*

one-night stand *n phr* **1** A performing engagement for one evening only: *Not a bad gig, but just a one-night stand (1880 +)* **2** A casual sex act; a brief sexual encounter: *He never enjoyed one-night stands (1963 +)* **3** A person who has a casual sexual encounter: *emerges as less the femme fatale than a one-night stand gone wrong*

one oar *See* ROW WITH ONE OAR

one-off *n* Something unique; something not repeated: *encouraged band member Jim Warchol to think of 5th and National as more than a one-off (1934 +)*

one of the boys (or the guys) *n phr* An ordinary, amiable man; a man without side or lofty dignity; ordinary Joe: *His Eminence was trying hard to be one of the boys (1893 +)*

one of those things *See* JUST ONE OF THOSE THINGS

101, something *n phr* The introductory course in something: *You should be teaching police-amatic Bullshit 101 at John Jay/College Slang 101/Is Pistol-Packing 101 the 80s equivalent of Drivers' Ed? (1980s +)*

one on one *adv phr* In immediate confrontation; person to person; EYEBALL TO EYEBALL, MANO A MANO: *I go on the basketball court and have a 15-year-old guy beat me one on one/John Rhodes was very effective, one-on-one (1967 +)* *n phr:* *have a one-on-one with him*

one piece *See* ALL IN ONE PIECE

oner *n* A remarkable person or thing: *I've heard some bullshitters, but this guy's a oner (1840 +)*

one red cent *See* a RED CENT

one-shot *modifier:* *He put her in a one-shot whodunit/Maybe it was a one-shot shakedown* **n 1** A story or article that appears once, with no sequel (1942 +) **2** Any transaction, event, etc, that occurs only once; ONE-OFF: *He was doing poetry readings, one-shots (1937 +)* **3** A woman who accedes to the sex act once, then refuses repetitions

(1950+)

one size fits all *adj phr* Of broad or universal application: *Social Security is a one-size-fits-all program, run entirely out of Washington/A one-size-fits-all approach in public education is unfair to youngsters with disabilities* [1990s+; fr the labels on caps, gloves, and other products that accommodate all wearer sizes]

one smart apple *See* SMART APPLE

one-stoplight town *n phr* ONE-HORSE TOWN: *No one seemed interested in how many “steppenwolfs” were playing one-stoplight towns (1980s+)*

one-stop shopping *n phr* Getting whatever one needs at a single place: *The days of diplomatic one-stop shopping are over; Washington will now have to take into account not only the Kremlin, but the Ukraine, Byelorussia or Kazakhstan/The BCCI ran a one-stop shopping center for criminals, corrupt leaders and official intelligence agencies around the world* [1980s+; *One-stop* was used of service stations by 1934]

one swell foop, in *adv phr* All at once: *How many times have you wanted to copy all your files to another directory and then delete the old files in one swell foop?* [anytime after 1605; Shakespeare's reference in *Macbeth* to the fatal swoop of a raptor]

one thin dime *See* a THIN DIME

one too many *n phr* Enough liquor to make one drunk, and possibly more: *Its driver had obviously had one too many (1937+)*

one-track mind *n phr* A mind limited to or obsessed with a single

idea, theme, etc (1927+)

one-trick pony *n phr* A person having a single accomplishment: *As he proved during exquisite ballads and mid-tempo tunes, he's no one-trick pony/For years, Twentieth Century Fund has been known to investors as a one-trick pony (1990s+)*

one-two modifier: *good potent one-two punches n* (also **the old one-two or one-two punch or one-two blow**) A combination of two blows with the fists, a short left jab plus a hard right cross, usu to the chin: *zipping "one-twos" to the jaw (1811+)*

one-up *adv phr* **1** In a superior position; at an advantage: *I always try to be one-up (1919+)* **2** Ahead by one: *The Pinks were one-up on the Puces, 109 to 108 v* To get the advantage over: *I wasn't trying to one-up Arthur Schwartz*

one-upmanship *n* The technique and practice of having the advantage over one's opponent, esp keeping a psychological advantage by low cunning and subtle brilliance: *a wide-open but good-humored game of political one-upmanship [1952+; coined by the late British humorist Stephen Potter as a book title]*

one-way street *See* NOT A ONE-WAY STREET

on one's game *adj phr* Performing very well; HOT: *When I was out in the water and on my game, nothing existed but the wave (1920+)*

on one's head *See* STAND ON ONE'S HEAD

on one's high horse *adj phr* Behaving arrogantly and pompously [1805+; the form *ride the great horse* is found by 1716]

on hold *adv phr* In postponement or abeyance; suspended; IN COLD STORAGE: *Our plans are on hold for a while* [fr the button on a telephone marked *hold*, used to switch temporarily from the conversation]

on ice *adj phr* **1** Certain of being won or of turning out well; IN THE BAG: *The deal's on ice* (1890+) **2** (also **on tap**) In reserve; ready to play a role; IN COLD STORAGE: *If this one fails, I've got another on ice/Who arranged Dubie to be on tap* (1894+) *adv phr* In prison, esp in solitary confinement (1931+) **See** PISS ON ICE

onion *n* The head (1890+) **See** KNOW ONE'S ONIONS, OFF ONE'S NOODLE

on line *adj phr* Available; ready for use; installed: *The Navy's announced plans for a new destroyer class are on line* (1980s+)

only **See** EYES ONLY, ONE AND ONLY

only game, the *n phr* (also the **only ball game**) The only choice available: *For export industries "development bank" projects are the only game in town/They are the only ball game for maintenance* [a shortening of the expression *I know it's crooked, but it's the only game in town*]

only way to go *n phr* The best way to do something; the optimal choice: *Taking the free vacation is the only way to go*

on one's own hook *adv phr* By one's own efforts; on one's own account: *You'll have to do it on your own hook* [1812+; origin unknown and much speculated upon; perhaps fr *fishhook*]

on paper *adv phr* Only by abstract report or reputation;

theoretically: *It works on paper, but I've never actually tried it*
(1795 +)

on sked *adv phr* On schedule: *Aside from minor setbacks "Street Trash" has been proceeding smoothly and on sked* (1940s +)

on spec *adv phr* As a venture or gamble; hoping to profit: *They said they would take the case on spec* (1832 +)

on tap *See* ON ICE

on task *adv* Concentrating or focusing on what is to be done: *like them to stay on task in the classroom*

on the back burner *adv phr* Not being actively considered; in reserve; ON HOLD: *I have some good projects on the back burner right now* (1960 +)

on the ball *adj phr* Skillful, alert, and effective; WITH IT: *FBI agents were very much on the ball in the Bremer snatch* [1912 + ; fr the advisability of keeping one's eyes *on the ball* when playing a ball game] ***See*** GET ON THE BALL, KEEP one's EYE ON THE BALL, SOMETHING ON THE BALL

on the bandwagon *adv phr* Agreeing with the majority; following popular opinion: *so many on the bandwagon with wearing flip-flops in the winter*

on the beach *See* PEBBLE ON THE BEACH

on the beam *adv phr* On the proper track or course; performing correctly: *It took a while, but he's on the beam now* [1941 + ; fr the radio *beam* used to guide aircraft]

on the bleeding edge *adv phr* Having or using advanced technology

• More advanced than *cutting edge: the bleeding edge of electronic manuscripts*

on the blink *adj phr* (Variations: **bum** or **fritz** or **Fritz** may replace **blink**) Not functioning properly; in poor condition: *His pacemaker just went on the fritz* [entry form 1904 +, fritz 1903 +, bum 1896 +; origin unknown; perhaps fr the notion that defective eyes or lights blink]

on the brain *See* HAVE something ON THE BRAIN

on the bubble *adv phr* In a precarious position: *That could place guard Conner Henry on the bubble* [1980s +; because the bubble might burst]

on the button *adj phr* Perfectly placed; absolutely correct; ON THE MONEY, ON THE NOSE, SPOT-ON: *Your estimate was right on the button *adv phr** Precisely; exactly; ON THE DOT, ON THE NOSE: *The meter says 35 on the button (1937 +)*

on the carpet (or mat) *adv phr* In the situation of being reprimanded: *Next time they caught him asleep he was on the carpet* [1899 +; probably fr *walk the carpet or carpet*, “reprimand, rebuke,” found by 1823]

on the cheap *adj phr*: *Prices still delight the on-the-cheap set *adv phr** cheaply: *selling just about anything on the cheap (1859 +)*

on the cuff *adj phr* Free: *On-the-cuff drinks are delicious *adv phr** **1** On credit: *The mutt puts me on the cuff for the drinks* **2** Free of charge: *He promised me lodging on the cuff* [mid-1920s +; fr the practice of noting debts on the cuff of the shirt, esp on a detachable cuff]

on the dot *adv phr* At the exact moment; punctually: *I got there on the dot* (1909+)

on (or at) the double *adv phr* **1** At twice the rate of ordinary marching **2** Quickly; rapidly: *When I holler, come on the double* (1892+)

on the draw *See* SLOW ON THE DRAW

on the edge *See* LIVE ON THE EDGE

on the fence *adv phr* Not taking a stand or making up one's mind; straddling (1828+)

on the fire *adj phr* **1** Pending; in preparation; IN THE PIPELINE: *We've got a great new model on the fire for next year* **2** Being cooked; in preparation (*Lunch counter*)

on the fly (or the **gallop**) *adj phr*: *an on-the-fly decision* *adv phr*
Hastily in passing; without preparation or forethought: *We had to make up our minds on the fly/He objected to disposing of the case "on the gallop"* (entry form 1851+, variant 1693+)

on the fritz *See* ON THE BLINK

on the front burner *adj phr* Getting immediate attention (1970+)

on the go *adj phr* **1** Active; energetic; indefatigable: *I'm on the go day and night* **2** Always moving about; restlessly in motion: *I'm on the go all the time and don't see my family* (1843+)

on the gravy train (or **boat**) *adv phr* Enjoying an effortless and prosperous life; FLUSH: *After a couple of years on the gravy train the bottom fell out of things* (1927+)

on the ground floor *See* IN ON THE GROUND FLOOR

on the head *See* HIT THE NAIL ON THE HEAD

on the hog *See* EAT HIGH ON THE HOG

on the hook *adv phr* **1** In trouble; liable to blame: *You're on the hook for this mess, junior* **2** Trapped; ensnared: *She had the old fool on the hook right soon (1940s +)*

on (or in) the hot seat *adv phr* In an uncomfortable situation; IN A JAM: *You're on the hot seat every day in that job (1960s +)* **on the house** *adj phr* Free of charge; FREE GRATIS: *Breakfasts, luncheons, and dinner. All "on the house" (1889 +)*

on the hustle *adj phr* Living by constant petty frauds and crimes; watchful for dupes: *sleeping till ten in the morning, on the hustle in the streets or the poolrooms (1970s +)*

on the inside *adv phr* Having access to the most confidential information; near the focus of power and influence (1932 +)

on the lam or **on the run** *adv phr* In hiding from the police; wanted as a fugitive: *So I went on the lam* [first form 1931 +, second 1887 +; the form *on a lam* is found by 1904] *See* TAKE IT ON THE LAM

on the legit *adj phr* or *adv phr* Lawful; legal; ON THE LEVEL: *strictly on the legit (1931 +)*

on the level *adj phr* Honest; candid; ON THE LEGIT: *to swear that I'm on the level (1875 +)* *adv phr*: *and would fight on the level*

on the line *adv phr* in a risky or vulnerable position; at risk, esp deliberately; UP FOR GRABS: *The whole season's on the line this inning*

[1968 + ; origin unknown; perhaps fr a gambling game where the bet is placed *on a line*; perhaps fr the commercial slang expression *lay (the price or payment) on the line*, “pay, pay up”; perhaps fr the sense of *line* as separating combatants or duelists] **See** LAY IT ON THE LINE, LAY something ON THE LINE, PUT one’s ASS ON THE LINE

on the make *adv phr* 1 Aspiring and ambitious, esp in a ruthless and exploitive way; careeristic; HUNGRY: *The rookies are very much on the make (1869 +)* 2 Offering and seeking sexual pleasure and conquest; openly amorous: *whether they are on the make, and they all are (1929 +)* **See** ON THE TAKE

on the map *adj phr* Excellent; COOL, way rad: *That movie was on the map (1990s + Teenagers)*

on the mat **See** ON THE CARPET

on the mend *adv phr* Recovering health (1802 +)

on the money *adj phr* Absolutely perfect; precisely as desired; accurate: *good hit, right on the money (1971 +)*

on the needle *adj phr* using narcotics, esp as an addict (1940s + *Narcotics*)

on the nose *adj phr* Perfectly placed; exactly as desired; ON THE MONEY: *Your guess was right on the nose* *adv phr* Precisely; exactly; ON THE DOT: *It’s six on the nose (1937 +)*

on the one hand *interj* Something to consider is: *on the one hand, there’s college*

on the outs *adj phr* Estranged; alienated: *The young couple are on the*

outs now (1887+)

on the pad *adv phr* Taking bribes and graft; ON THE TAKE [1970 + Police; fr the *pad*, a notebook listing the names of corrupt police officers]

on the pipe *adj phr*: *The common slang term we re hearing now when we talk to arrested people is that they re “on the pipe That means they re smoking crack* [1980s+ Narcotics; the same phrase, found by 1926, meant “smoking opium”]

on the prowl *adj phr* Actively seeking; abroad and searching, esp for prey (1836 +) *adv phr* Seeking sexual pleasure and conquest; ON THE MAKE (1940 +)

on the QT *adj phr*: *Remember, what I said is on the QT* *adv phr* Secretly; quietly: *We did it on the QT* (1884 +) [fr the first and last letters of *quiet*]

◁**on the rag**▷ *adj phr* 1 Menstruating: *Maybe I’m on the rag* (1940s +) 2 Irritable; in a bad mood (1960s + *Students*) [fr *rag* used as a sanitary napkin]

on the rims *adv phr* As close as possible to insolvency [1970s + ; fr the image of a car with ruined tires running on its *rims*]

on the road *adv phr* Traveling from place to place with a show, musical program, etc (1870 + *Show business*)

on the rocks *adv phr* 1 in a ruined condition; hopelessly wrecked; KAPUT: *My little enterprise is on the rocks* (1889 +) 2 Poured over ice: *Scotch on the rocks’ll be fine* (1946 +)

on the ropes *adj phr* Defeated; bested; CLOBBERED: *His career as a promoter is on the ropes* [1924 + ; fr the plight of a boxer who must lean on the *ropes* of the ring or fall down]

on the same wavelength (or page) *adj phr* In agreement; in harmony; TUNED IN: *Her door's open, but we are not on the same wavelength/ We do now have a long-range plan. Everybody's on the same page* (1962 +)

on the sauce *adj phr* Drinking liquor, esp heavily: *on the sauce in a charming school-boy way* [1970s + ; *sauce*, "liquor," is found by 1940]

on the shake *adv phr* Practicing extortion, blackmail, etc: *You knew they was on the shake* [1940s + ; fr *shakedown*]

on the shelf *adv phr* Not in active use or consideration; deferred; ON THE BACK BURNER: *We'll have to put some of those plans on the shelf for a while* (1815 +)

on the side *adv phr* Extra; additionally: *He moonlights as a hackie on the side* (1893 +)

on the skids *adj phr* On a failing or declining course; deteriorating: *After that scandal his whole career was on the skids* [1921 + ; ultimately fr the *skids*, "long pieces of timber," on which barrels, logs, and other heavy objects were rolled or slid, sometimes on a downgrade]

on the sly *adv phr* Secretly and deceptively: *sold that equipment on the sly*

on the spot *adj phr* 1 Expected to cope, explain, react, etc, at once; under sharp pressure: *She can't make it, so I guess you're on the spot* (1928+) 2 Available and ready; keen and at hand: *When I need him he's never on the spot* (1884+) *adv phr* Immediately; at once and at the place in question: *I was able to fix it on the spot* (1687+) [the adverbial dated form is *upon the spot*] **See** JOHNNY-ON-THE-SPOT

on the square *adv phr* In an honest manner; fairly and justly: *I always treated you on the square* (1689+)

on the take (or the **make**) *adv phr* Amenable to bribery and graft; ON THE PAD: *spent 30 years fighting everything from pigeons to cops on the make* (1930+)

on the throne *adv phr* On the toilet; in the bathroom

on the town *adv phr* Enjoying the pleasures of a city, esp the night life; roistering and reveling urbanly [1712+; the dated example is *upon the town*]

on the up and up **See** UP AND UP

on the uptake **See** SLOW ON THE DRAW

on the wagon (or the **water wagon**) *adj phr* Abstaining from liquor; teetotal, at least temporarily: *Monty didn't drink, and Clifton James went on the wagon* [1904+; first attested as *on the water cart* in 1902]

on the warpath *adj phr* Truculent; looking for a fight • The original Native American sense is found by 1841 (1880+)

on to someone *adj phr* Aware of, esp of something shady or

forbidden; WISE TO: *Watch it now, I think the guard is on to you*
(1877+)

on top *See* COME OUT AHEAD

on top of *adv phr* **1** Actively coping with the problem; able to guide and control the matter; JACKED IN: *It's a nasty outlook, but I think we can get on top of it* **2** Fully informed about something: *Get on top of this latest development right away* (1970s+)

on track *See* GO ON TRACK

on one's uppers *adj phr* Penniless; destitute; DOWN AND OUT [1891+; fr the notion that one has worn out the soles of one's shoes and is walking *on the uppers* only]

on velvet *adv phr* In easy circumstances, such as those applying when one gambles only winnings: *in order to be able to work on "velvet"* (1769+)

on someone's watch *adv phr* During someone's tenure of responsibility; while someone is in charge, esp of protection: *Jerusalem and the West Bank were lost to Jordan and the Arab world on his watch* [1980s+; fr the nautical setting of *watches*, the designating of officers and crew members who run the ship for a specified period]

on wheels *adj phr* To the utmost extent; of the purest sort; IN SPADES: *We agreed she was a bitch on wheels/ He thinks he's shit on wheels* [1940s+; modeled on *hell on wheels*, found by 1843] *See* SHIT ON WHEELS

oo *v* DOUBLE-O • In written use only

-oo *See* -EROO

ooch or **oonch** *See* SCRUNCH

oodles *n* A large amount; lots; a SHITHOUSE FULL, a SHITLOAD: *They have oodles of charisma* [1869 +; perhaps fr *boodle*, *caboodle*]

oof *n* 1 Money 2 The potency of liquor [1860s +; shortening of *ooftisch*]

oofay *See* OFAY

oofus *n* A stupid person; oaf; GOOF: *oofus*, *a dope* [1950s + Black & jive talk; perhaps fr *goof*, *goofus*]

oogley *adj* Attractive; worth ogling with admiration: *It's oogley*. Also *Bong* (1930s + *Jive talk*)

ooh ah factor *n phr*: *Canham has dismissed notions that the university needs a big-name athletic director, an attribute referred to as the "ooh, ah" factor* (1980s +)

ooh and ah *vphr* To express wonder, amazement, etc: *the spectators oohed and aahed at the trapeze artist* (1953 +)

ook *n* A detestable, insipid person; NERD, WIMP: *Does even an "ook" give out with a wolf whistle?* (1940s + *Students*)

ooky *adj* Repellent; slimy; YUCKY: *The Addams family are definitely mysterious and undoubtedly ooky* (1964 +)

oomph *n* 1 Sexual attractiveness; compelling carnality; IT 2 Energy; CLOUT, PIZZAZZ: *substance, drive, authority, emotional power, and oomph*

[1937 + ; an echoic coinage suggesting the gasp of someone hit hard by a blow, a transport of desire, etc]

oops *interj* An exclamation of surprise, dismay, apology, etc, esp when one has done something awkward: *Mr Belve, oops, I mean Webb, is ecstatic (1933 +)* **n** A blunder; serious mistake; GOOF, WHOOPS: *Might have saved her life. Basic oops (1980s +)* **v** (also **oops up**) To vomit; BARF (1980s +) [echoic, fr the involuntary lip-rounding and expulsion of breath that accompany a regrettable mistake, and from an approximation of the sound of vomiting]

ooze **v** To move or walk slowly; glide or slide; saunter: *I'd ooze across the street and into the bar (1940s + Black)*

op **n** 1 A telegrapher (1931 + *Railroad*) 2 A private detective: *one of your ops (1926 +)* 3 Operations • In the plural: *special ops* [fr *operator* or *operative*]

OP or **op** (pronounced as separate letters) *adj* Other people's: *OP. Other people's money* [1901 + ; perhaps a translation of Yiddish *yenems*]

Op-Ed (or **op-ed**) **page** **n** *phr* A newspaper page, usu appearing across from the editorial page, made up of columns and short essays [1970 + ; fr *opposite editorial*]

opener *See* CAN-OPENER, EYE-OPENER

openers *See* FOR OPENERS

open season **n** *phr* The time when persons may be harmed, insulted, etc, with impunity: *If we leave, it will be open season on Americans*

globally [1914+; fr the time when game may be legally hunted, the term found by 1896]

open up v phr 1 To speak and inform candidly; SPILL one's GUTS: *You must open up and tell us all about what happened (1921+)* 2 To cause or induce someone to speak: *the DA, who opens Leo up with the threat of a perjury charge*

open up a (or that) can of worms v phr To broach a very complicated and troublesome matter; set something messy in motion: *Merit pay? Let's not open up that can of worms (1962+)* See CAN OF WORMS

open one's yap v phr To open one's mouth, esp to speak; speak up; say something: *every time you open your yap to say something (1937+)*

opera See HORSE OPERA, OATER, SOAP OPERA, SPACE OPERA

opera ain't over till the fat lady sings, the sentence Things are never finished until they are finished; IT AIN'T OVER TILL IT'S OVER [1977+; coined by Dan Cook, a San Antonio sportscaster, and modeled on the Yogi Berra dictum entered here as a synonym]

operator n 1 A person who busily deals and manipulates, often self-importantly; DEALER, WHEELER-DEALER (1875+) 2 LADIES' MAN (1950s+)

opry See HORSE OPERA

oral diarrhea See VERBAL DIARRHEA

-orama See -RAMA

orange crush n phr A special squad of police or prison guards, clad

in orange jumpsuits, used to deal with prison riots and other such disturbances [1980s +; fr a punning reference to the soft drink *Orange Crush*TM]

Orange Sunshine *n phr* A kind of LSD: “*Orange Sunshine*” began to appear in acid-starved New York City and in New England communes (1970s + *Narcotics*)

orbit *See* GO INTO ORBIT, IN ORBIT

orc or **orch** *See* ORK

orchard *See* BONE-ORCHARD, MARBLE ORCHARD

order *See* APPLE-PIE ORDER

orders *See* CUT someone’S PAPERS

or else *prep phr* otherwise; or this unhappy thing will follow • Used at the end of a command or warning to encourage compliance: *Get that damn thing out of here or else* (1833 +)

◁**Oreo**▷ *n* A black person whose values, behavior, etc, are those of the white society; AFRO-SAXON: *I’ve been called a “zebra” and an “Oreo”* [1960s + Black; fr the trademark of a brand of sandwich cookies that have a white cream between round chocolate biscuits]

org *n* An organization: *The Joe Breen (Hays org) influence on pix* (1936 +)

orie-eyed or **orry-eyed** *See* HOARY-EYED

-orino *See* -ERINO

-orium *See* -ATORIUM

ork or **orc** or **orch** *n* An orchestra (1936 +)

ornery *adj* Mean and irascible; ill-tempered: *He was confident and ornery on the mound* [1816 +; fr a dialect pronunciation of *ordinary*]

orphan *n* A model of a car, boat, computer, etc, which is no longer being manufactured, and for which spare parts are hard to find (1940s +)

orphan drug *n phr* A pharmaceutical drug that may not be commercially feasible, though it may be very useful or necessary to a relatively small number of people: *Program to Spur "Orphan" Drugs Proves a Success* (1980s +)

or what *question* Or is it not? what else can it be?: *Was that exciting, or what?/ Is this the old trickle-down theory or what?* (1990s +)

Oscar *n* 1 Any of a set of annual awards, and the statuette signifying it, from the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences (1931 +)

2 Any award [said to have been coined by a woman named Margaret Herrick, who said that the figure reminded her of her Uncle *Oscar* Pierce, a farmer]

O sign *n phr* A sign of death: the patient's mouth is wide open (1980s + *Medical*)

ossifer *n* An officer, esp a police or Army officer [1831 +; an ignorant or drunken spoonerism]

ossified *adj* Drunk; STONED (1901 +)

other fish to fry **See** BIGGER FISH TO FRY

other half, the *n phr* One large sector of population, usu the rich as distinct from the poor or the poor as distinct from the rich • Nearly always in the expression “see how *the other half* lives”: *Young people from West Berlin now spend their weekends “over there,” trying to find out how the other half lives* [1532 +; the dated example is from Rabelais]

other side of one’s face *See* LAUGH ON THE OTHER SIDE OF **one’s** FACE

ouch *n* An injury; a hurt: *A very serious injury is a “big ouch* [1873 +; fr the pained interjection *ouch* fr German, probably Pennsylvania German, *autsch*, found by 1838]

ought to have one’s head examined, one *sentence* one has done something very stupid or strange: *He paid full price? He ought to have his head examined* (1940s +)

ounce *See* VIG OUNCE

ounce man *n phr* **1** A narcotics dealer who cuts or adulterates heroin
2 A narcotics seller who buys from a wholesale drug seller;
CONNECTION, DEALER (1960s + *Narcotics*)

out *adj* **1** Attractive; au courant; HIP, WAY OUT: *Man, that Modigliani is really out* (1942 + *Beat & cool talk*) **2** Not modern, popular, or in accord with current taste: *Those neckties are out this year* (1966 +) **3** Openly avowing homosexuality; OUT OF THE CLOSET (1970s + *Homosexuals*) **4** (also **out cold**) Unconscious or intoxicated: *The folks who use it are usually too luded out or preoccupied* (1936 +) **5** Rejected; not to be considered • Said to be fr the editing or cutting room in a movie studio: *Ask him again? No,*

that's out (1923+) **adv** To the point of surfeit or exhaustion: *I'm coffeed out for the time being/ I don't want them to think I'm losered out* (1990s+) **n** A way of escape; a plausible alibi or evasive course; LETOUT: *You have an out, though. You can talk* (1919+) **v**: *Some gay activists have undertaken a campaign of outing, exposing well-known people who are believed to be gay* (late 1980s+) **See** ALL GET OUT, FAR OUT, GET OUT, WAY OUT

outa or **outta** **adv phr** Out of • Eye dialect: *We're outta here*

out-and-out **adj** Thorough; complete: *an out-and-out idiot* [1813+; as an adverb, found by 1325]

outasight **See** OUT OF SIGHT

out cold **adv phr** Unconscious; knocked out: *out cold after drinking Yagermeister*

outed **modifier** **1** Revealed as being a homosexual; having one's sexual preference revealed: *outed by his mother* **2** (also **offed**) Killed: *outed by the mob*

outercourse **n** Noninvasive sex: *Thousands of American women have told Ann Landers, in their sex lives they would like more talking, more hugging, more outercourse* (1990s+)

outer garden **n phr** The outfield (1907+ Baseball)

outfit **n** **1** A company or group working together: *that outfit I used to work for* **2** A set of clothing; also, a set of items or things for a task or job: *outfit looks good on you/ the outfit you need for the dig*

outfox **v** To outwit; outsmart; FOX (1962+)

out from under *See* GET OUT FROM UNDER

out-front *adj* Honest; candid; unevasive; UP FRONT: *intelligent, very open, out-front people (1960s +)*

outie *modifier*: *I suspect that the Cardinal arts editor has an outie belly button, and I have an innie belly button* *n* A convex navel (1980s +)
[probably a children's term]

outing *n* **1** A particular game or performance: *Eldred rebounds from his lone poor outing (1980s + Sports)* **2** (also **outage**) The exposure of someone as homosexual (*late 1980s +*)

out in left field *adj phr* **1** Very unorthodox and wrong; weirdly unconventional; crazy (1959 +) **2** Disoriented; confused (1960 + *Medical*)

out like a light *adj phr* Unconscious; fast asleep (1934 +)

out loud *See* FOR CRYING OUT LOUD

out of commish *adj phr* Not in order or repair; out of commission (1939 +)

out of one's ears *See* HAVE something COMING OUT OF one's EARS

out of gas *adj phr* Exhausted; BEAT, POOPED: *So I started the second game, damn near out of gas (1975 +)*

out of one's head (or skull or gourd) *adj phr* **1** Insane; crazy; NUTS: *You're out of your head if you think I'll do that* **2** Dazed; delirious; OFF one's NOODLE: *He took one sniff and went right out of his gourd (entry form 1825 +, variants 1950s +)*

out of hell *See* TAKE OFF LIKE A BIGASS BIRD

out of it *adj phr* **1** Unable to win or succeed: *The Hawks are out of it this season (1940s +)* **2** Not a part of the trend or scene; uninitiated: *Everyone was out of it in the Fifties (1960 +)* **3** Unattending because of drugs, disease, etc: *We could accept him as being out of it (1963 +)*

out of joint *See* PUT SOMEONE'S NOSE OUT OF JOINT

out of kilter *adj phr* Not in order or repair; OUT OF WHACK [1628 +; fr British dialect *kilter* or *kelter*, "condition, state, frame," of obscure origin]

out of one's league (or **ballpark**) *adj phr* **1** Not comparable or equal in talent, importance, remuneration, etc: *I'd love to have Reba McEntire, but she's completely out of our ballpark* **2** Not in one's proper province: *The matter's fortunately out of my league (1966 +)*

out of left field *adv phr* Unexpectedly; suddenly and surprisingly: *When they needed a new idea, this guy appeared out of left field (1953 +)*

out of line *adj phr* **1** Not in accordance with what is appropriate or expected: *You was considered out of line if your coat and pants matched* **2** Behaving improperly, esp presumptuously: *Maybe I'm out of line. I just feel I must say something (1940 +)*

out of luck *adj phr* Having no chance of success; already too late for what one wants: *Those looking for New Jersey organic turkeys are out of luck* *See* SHIT OUT OF LUCK

out of pocket (or **the pocket**) *adj phr* Absent or otherwise unavailable: *I'm out of the pocket for a bit, but I'll get back at ya* (1974 +)

out of shape *adj phr* Very upset; angry; hysterical (1970s +) **See** BENT
OUT OF SHAPE

out of sight *adj phr* **1** (also **outasight**) Excellent; superior; WAY OUT (1891 +) **2** Very high-priced; exorbitantly priced: *That hat's out of sight* (1940s +)

out of style **See** LIKE IT'S GOING OUT OF STYLE

out of sync *adj phr* Not coinciding or compatible; arrhythmic, esp in relation to something else, a context, etc: *his presence just self-consciously regular enough to be out of sync* [1961 +; fr the lack of *synchronism* sometimes noted between a movie or TV image and its sound track]

out of the bag *adj phr* In plainclothes; not in uniform (1990s + *Police*)

out of the box *adj phr* Out of contention; ruined; FINISHED, KAPUT (1970s +) *adv phr* (also **outside the box**) In an original and creative manner: *Thinking out of the box. Creating new processes, not just tinkering with old formulas* (1990s +) [first sense fr the condition of a baseball pitcher who has been *knocked out of the box* and hence has probably lost the game; second fr the notion that conventional thinkers are *in a box*]

out of the closet *adj phr* **1** Openly avowing homosexuality **2** No longer secret: *The last American taboo, that of talking about*

indebtedness, may be out of the closet at last (1970s +) See COME OUT OF THE CLOSET

out of the fire *See* PULL something OUT OF THE FIRE

out of the gate *adv phr* Immediately: *The booing began in the first inning, when Cal Eldred spotted the Detroit Tigers three runs right out of the gate* [1990s + ; fr the start of a horse race]

out of the loop *adj phr* Not one of the inner and influential group; not in the network: *George Bush was out of the loop an ineffective second in command* [late 1980s + ; probably fr the military notion of radio *nets*, conceptually like *loops*, connecting various commanders]

out of the picture *adv phr* Not relevant; no longer around or needed: *with her back, his other girlfriend is out of the picture/ with Erin out of the picture, I'm queen*

out of the water *See* BLOW SOMEONE OUT OF THE WATER

out of the woods *adj phr* Out of danger; safe: *This does not get us out of the woods in terms of the growth curve of prison costs* [1792 + ; the dated example reads *out of the wood*]

out of the woodwork *See* CRAWL OUT OF THE WOODWORK

out of this world *adj phr* Excellent; wonderful; superior; the GREATEST, WAY OUT: *She had a figure that was out of this world (1938 +)*

out of one's tree *adj phr* Insane; crazy; APE: *I think she's got to be out of her tree (1966 +)*

out of turn *adj phr* Behaving improperly: *You're strictly out of turn.*

Get in line (1930+ Underworld) **See** TALK OUT OF TURN

out of one's way **See** GO OUT OF one's WAY

out of whack **adj phr** **1** Not operating; out of order; ON THE BLINK, OUT OF KILTER: *My car's out of whack, so I'll take yours* **2** Not in adjustment, harmonious synchronism, etc; not in proper order: *Our priorities are out of whack* **3** Strange; inexplicable; not right: *It seems out of whack to me, then, that Jakobek was the only aldermanic candidate who had a great deal of support from the young* [1885 +; probably fr *whack*, "share, a just proportion," so called perhaps fr the blow that divides something or, like the auctioneer's hammer-rap, signals a fair share or deal]

out on a limb **adv phr** In a very vulnerable position; exposed; in peril: *The announcement put the Mayor out on a limb (1841 +)* **See** GO OUT ON A LIMB

◁**out on one's ass**▷ **adj phr** (also **out on one's ear**) Discharged; rejected; superseded; FINISHED: *She's the First Lady now, and I'm out on my ass (1940s +)*

outside **See** GET OUTSIDE OF

outside chance **n phr** A remote possibility; a slim likelihood: *He may have an outside chance to pass (1909 +)*

outtake **n** An excerpt; an extracted passage: *Is this an outtake from the \$1.98 Beauty Show?* [1977 +; originally, by 1960, a rejected part of a film]

out (or up) the wazoo **adv phr** **1** UP THE ASS: *You can be full of warts, have a scarred-up body, have disadvantages out the wazoo (1990s +)*

2 In excess: *She has work up the wazoo*

out the window *adj phr* Wrecked and futile; go down the tube, KAPUT:
All our plans are out the window now, so forget it (1939+)

out to lunch *adj phr* Insane; crazy; eccentric: *On critical issues of fact and analysis he is out to lunch (1955+ Students)*

out to pasture *See* PUT someone or something OUT TO PASTURE

out-year *n phr* One of the six or so years affected by a budget or an action in question; the year beyond a current fiscal year: *will rise even more sharply in the near future, or what the Pentagon calls the "out years" (1970s+)*

over *See* the ONCEOVER

over a barrel *adv phr* In a helpless situation: *I knew enough about him that I had him over a barrel [1939 +; perhaps fr the tying over a barrel of a person about to be flogged]*

overamp *v* To intensify unduly; overblow; PUMP UP: *the uncomfortable sense that things are being artificially overamped (1990s+)*

overamped *adj* Unduly stimulated; too expectant; PSYCHED UP, PUMPED UP:
Couples who fall in love and marry instantaneously often find themselves "overamped" (1990s+) *See* AMPED

overboard *See* GO OVERBOARD

overcoat *n* A parachute (*WWII Air Forces*) *See* CHICAGO OVERCOAT, PINE OVERCOAT

over easy *adj phr* Of eggs, fried on both sides, lightly on one
(1940s+)

over someone's eyes *See* PULL THE WOOL OVER someone's EYES

over one's head *adj phr* Too difficult for one mentally;

incomprehensible: *The concept's way over my head* (1622 +) *adv*

phr Better than one's usual standard; in an inspired way: *The team played over its head, and by God they won* (1970s +) *See* IN OVER one's HEAD

overhung *adj* Suffering from having drunk too much alcohol (1964 +)

overjolt *n* An overdose of drugs • Can also be in verb form: *overjolt of heroin*

overkill *n* An excess, esp of needed action: *Going twice would be overkill, don't you think?* [1958 +; fr the use of the term in connection with the *killing* potential of nuclear arms and arsenals]

over my dead body *interj* An expression of refusal, denial, or rejection; not happening: *Over my dead body will she live with us* (1936 +)

overserved *adj* Drunk, having been given too much alcohol • Euphemistic: *overserved again*

overshot *adj* Drunk (1605 +)

over the coals *See* HAUL someone OVER THE COALS

over the hill *adj phr* **1** Middle-aged or past middle age: *a film for, and about, the over-the-hill gang* (1940s +) **2** No longer effective; worn out; AUSGESPIELT (1940s +) **3** Most of the way to success or completion: *I think that you can say that we're over the hill* (1970s

+) 4 Absent without leave; AWOL (1940s + Army) [first three senses fr the notion that one is no longer going upward toward the summit, but is descending the far side of the imagined *hill*] **See** DRIVE someone OVER THE HILL

over the hump *adj phr* Most of the way to success or completion; OVER THE HILL [1925 + ; a 1914 source defines *hump* as “the half-way point in a prison sentence”]

over the long haul **See** FOR THE LONG HAUL

over the moon *modifier* Very happy; delighted (1936 +)

over the top *adj phr* Beyond reason; outlandish: *Makes no sense at all. Simply hilarious and over the top/ It would be over the top! It would be redundant! It would be ridiculous* (1968 +)

own someone *v* To dominate, rule over; to kick (someone’s) ass: *chief resident owns the newbies*

ownage *n* The stuff that one owns; also, the acquisition of stuff: *mother-in-law into ownage*

own hook, one’s **See** ON one’s OWN HOOK

own horn, one’s **See** TOOT one’s OWN HORN

ox **See** DUMB OX

oy *interj* An exclamation of multiple significance: *Oy may be employed to express anything from ecstasy to horror* [1892 + ; fr Hebrew]

oyster **See** MOUNTAIN OYSTERS, THE WORLD IS one’s OYSTER

oy vay *interj* (also **oy gevalt** or **oy vey iz mir**) An intensification of “oy” as an exclamation of alarm, distress, etc: *Oy Gevalt! New Yawkesse An Endangered Dialect?/ Oy Vay! Bigamy on the Lower East Side/ The Six-Day War altered my mindset for good: from Oy vey iz mir to Never again!*

ozone or **zone *n*** A psychedelic condition, usu due to drugs: *He wasn't making much sense because he was way up there in a zone* [1960s+ College students; fr the notion of being as high as the ozone layer of the atmosphere]

P

P or **p** or **pee** *n* Any of the various units of currency whose designations begin with “p,” such as the Mexican peso or the Vietnamese piastre (1966 +) **See** PEE

pace **See** OFF THE PACE

pack *v* To carry, esp a weapon (1890 +) **See** NERDPACK, RAT PACK

package *n* **1** A large sum of money; BUNDLE: *That must have cost a package (1956 +)* **2** The collective terms of a contract or agreement: *The lefthander signed for a package including 10 million in two years, three McDonald’s franchises, and the state of South Dakota (1952 +)* **3** A particular combination or set: *That rental car is part of the vacation package (1931 +)* **4** The manner and quality of presentation, the trappings and ornamentation, etc, of something: *It isn’t what you’ve got, it’s the package that impresses people (1947 +)* **5** Someone who has an array of good qualities, plus good looks: *She’s the total package/ package that walked in my life* *v*: *He never peddled his idea because he didn’t know how to package it (1947 +)*

See NO PRIZE PACKAGE

package deal *n phr* An agreement, arrangement, purchase, etc, that comprises various separate items: *In their package deal you get hotel and breakfast but no tours (1955 +)*

packer *n* A male homosexual: *There were a few packers at the party last night* [1980s+ Students; fr homosexual slang *pack fudge*, “do anal intercourse,” found by the 1940s]

packet sniffer *n phr*: *Packet sniffers—programs, favorite among illegal hackers, that watch packets of data going by and record user names and passwords for later illicit use* (1990s+ Computers)

pack heat *v phr* To carry a gun: *They knew all along that Elvis was packin’ heat/ If you pack heat, you got to know what you’re doing* (1940s+ Underworld)

packie *n* A package liquor store (1980s +)

pack in (or up) *v phr* To cease; give up; retire from: *I intended to pack up playing all together/ told the FBI men he is “packing in”* (1940s +)

packing or **packed** *modifier* Armed, esp with a pistol; CARRYING: *The policeman was packed before he raided the building* (packed 1980s+ Teenagers, packing 1990s+)

pack it in *v phr* To stop; desist or give up what one is doing; to order to stop doing something annoying: *I decided to pack it in and move to New York/ Who can fault them for not quite yet wanting to pack it in and quietly go home* (1940s +)

pack of lies, a *n phr* A set or series of lies; COCK-AND-BULL STORY: *That whole eyewitness account is a damn pack of lies* (1763+)

pack rat *n phr* A person who cannot discard anything acquired; a compulsive keeper and storer (1850+)

pact *n* An employment contract: *a settlement of his Metro pact* *v*: MG

Pacts Gable (1930s+)

pad n 1 A bed or place to sleep temporarily; CRASH PAD • Revived and popularized in 1960s: *The girl shares her pad with other hippies (1718+)* **2** A room, apartment, etc, where narcotics addicts and users gather to take drugs: *There were plenty of pads (1930s+ Narcotics)* **3** One's home; residence: *He and I used to live in the same pad for two years (1973+)* **4** A prostitute's working room; CRIB (1915+ Prostitutes) **5** An automobile license plate: *The job was wearing California pads (1948+)* **v** To increase the amount or length of: *He was padding his expense account (1913+)* **See** CHINCH PAD, KICK PAD, LAUNCHING PAD, ON THE PAD

pad, the n phr 1 Graft and bribe money taken and shared by police officers **2** The list of those police officers who share graft and bribe money *(1960s + Police)* **See** ON THE PAD

padding n Text added, often gratuitously and for mere bulk, to an essay, book, speech, etc *(1861+)*

paddle See UP SHIT CREEK

paddle one's own canoe v phr To deal with one's own problems, advancement, etc: *My Dad kicked me out and told me to paddle my own canoe (1828+)*

pad down v phr 1 (also **pad out**) To sleep; go to bed; SACK OUT **2** To search; FRISK (1950s +)

pad duty n phr Sleeping; reclining; SACK DUTY (WWII Navy)

◀**paddy or Paddy**▶ **modifier:** *I know I can't be tight with this paddy boy n 1* An irish person or person of Irish extraction *(1780+)* **2**

(also **patty**) A white person: *Even a drunken black shoeshine man could handle the likes of this paddy (1946 + Black)* [fr the nickname of the given name *Patrick*]

paddy wagon *n phr* A police patrol wagon or van; BLACK MARIA: *The cooperative family was being escorted into the paddy wagon* [1930 + ; fr *patrol wagon*, perhaps influenced by the fact that many policemen were of Irish extraction, hence *paddies*]

padre (PAH dray) *n* Any military chaplain [1898 + ; fr Spanish or Portuguese, “father, priest”]

paesan (piə ZAHN) *n* A fellow native of one’s country or town; compatriot; HOMIE, LANDSMAN [1930s + ; fr Italian dialect]

page *See* OP-ED PAGE, TAKE A PAGE FROM someone’s BOOK **page turner** *n phr* A book that is so absorbing that one reads it without stopping, although not necessarily for serious literary or intellectual quality: *a book that unquestionably deserves the description page turner (1976 +)*

pail *n* The stomach (1950s + *Black*)

pain *See* FEEL NO PAIN

pain, a *n phr* **1** Annoyance; irritation; HEADACHE: *Marvin is a real pain* **2** PAIN IN THE ASS, a: *It’s very much like the Internet equivalent of having your windows soaped. But it’s still a pain to clean up after (1908 +)* *See* GIVE SOMEONE A PAIN

◁**pain in the ass, a**▷ (or **butt** or **neck** or **rear**) *n phr* An annoying, obnoxious person or thing: *This proved a major pain in the ass as too*

many casual favorites fell to the wrong side (entry form 1934+, variant 1924+) **See** GIVE someone A PAIN

paint *n* (also **paint cards**) Playing cards, esp picture cards (1931+) **See** RED PAINT, WAR PAINT

paint, the *n* The foul zone; lane: *get the hell out of the paint (1990s+ Basketball)*

paint-by-numbers *modifier* Simple; obvious: *Clark's second Regan Reilly mystery has a paint-by-numbers plot with characters who collide in wildly improbable ways [1970+; fr the kits with which one paints a picture by coloring numbered patches]*

paint oneself into a corner *v phr* To put oneself into a frustrating or helpless situation: *Paul has painted himself into a corner with that unlikely explanation (1980s+)*

paint the town or **paint the town red** *v phr* To go on a wild spree; carouse: *Well, sport, let's go out and paint the town a new color (1884+)*

◁**pair**▷ *n* A woman's breasts • Regarded as offensive by many women (1922+)

paisano (pī ZAHN oh) *n* PAESAN [1844+; fr Spanish, "countryman"]

pajamas **See** the CAT'S MEOW

pal *n* A friend, esp a very close male friend; boon companion; BUDDY: *has many devoted friends, but he is nobody's "pal" (1681+)* *v* PAL AROUND (1899+) [fr Romany *phral*, *phal*, "brother, friend,"

ultimately fr Sanskrit *bhratr*, “brother”]

palace *n* A grand venue for something • Always ironically used of a fairly seedy though perhaps ornate place (1834+)

pal around *v phr* To be “pals”; consort as “pals”: *the people he palled around with* (1915+)

pale (or green) around the gills *adj phr* Looking sickly or nauseous (1959+)

paled or paled out *adj* or *adj phr* Completely exhausted, esp by drugs or liquor; WASTED (1970s + *Canadian teenagers*)

paleface *n* 1 A white homosexual (1970s+ *Black homosexuals*) 2 A circus clown (1940s+ *Circus*)

palimony *modifier: a much-heralded palimony suit* *n* Money awarded, property shared, etc, when an unmarried couple separate (1979+) [fr *pal* plus *alimony*; coined for or at least popularized by a lawsuit against the film star Lee Marvin]

pally or **pallie** *adj* very friendly; affectionate and familiar; PALSY-WALSY (1895 +) *n* PAL (1940+)

palm *v* To conceal a playing card against the palm in order to use it in a gambling hand: *It was five cards that he palmed, three aces and a pair of queens* (1673+) *See* GREASE someone’s PALM

palm something off *v phr* To bestow something inferior as if it were of good quality; foist; fob off: *He palmed the leaky old place off like it was the Ritz* (1822+)

palm oil *n phr* Money used for bribery and graft [1627+; because it

is used to *grease* one's *palm*]

palmtop *n* A very small computer: *Silicon Valley's future may hinge on winning the palmtop computer race* [1990s + Computers; modeled on *desktop, laptop*]

palooka or **paluka** or **palooker** *n* **1** A mediocre or inferior boxer: *a paluka who leads with his right* (1925 +) **2** A professional wrestler (1940 +) **3** Any large and stupid man (1940s +) [origin unknown; said to have been coined by the sports writer and humorist Jack Conway]

palsy-walsy (PAL zee WAL zee) *adj* Very friendly; CHUMMY: *breezy, palsy-walsy with Baskerville, who's not a breezy type* (1940s +) *n*: *Hey, palsy-walsy, what's going down?*

pan¹ *n* **1** The face; MUG: *too great for them to keep their pans shut* (1923 +) **2**: *an out-and-out pan* *v* To criticize severely and adversely; derogate harshly; ROAST: *The Daily Worker panned his first novel* (1909 +) [noun sense 2 and verb sense fr the fact that roasting is done in a pan] *See* DEADPAN, FLASH IN THE PAN

pan² or **pam** *modifier*: *a pan shot* *v* To move the camera across a visual field to give a panoramic effect or follow something moving [1922 + Movie studio; fr *panorama*]

panhandle *v* To beg, esp by accosting people on the street: *The boys deal drugs or panhandle, even become male prostitutes* [1903 +; fr *panhandler*]

panhandler *n* A person who begs, esp by accosting people on the street; beggar: *This panhandler came up to me and braced me*

[1897 + ; fr the stiff arm held out by the beggar]

panic *n* A very funny person; an effective comedian; a STITCH (1924 +) *v* **1** To become frightened and confused, esp suddenly; FLIP: *He panicked and dropped the ball* (1910 +) **2** To get a strong favorable reaction, esp to get loud laughter from an audience; FRACTURE: *Mr Todd knows how to panic the rubes* (1920 +)

panic button *See* HIT the PANIC BUTTON

panky or **pank** *See* HANKY-PANKY

pan out *v phr* To be productive; succeed; PAY OFF: *Ryan thought about what he'd be living with if the FBI profile panned out* [1868 + ; fr the practice of *panning* gold in river sediments]

◁**pansified**▷ (PAN zi fid) *adj* Effeminate; SISSIFIED (1941 +)

◁**pansy**▷ *adj*: *Stage and screen voices in recent years have become so pansy* *n* **1** A male homosexual; QUEEN: *if someone had bluntly said that her friends were pansies* **2** A weak or effeminate male; LILY, SISSY (1929 +)

◁**panther piss** (or **juice** or **sweat**)▷ or **panther** *n phr* or *n* Raw and inferior whiskey; ROTGUT (1929 +)

pantry *n* The stomach; BREADBASKET: *another real fine left to the pantry* (1950 + *Prizefight*)

pants *v* **1** To pull the pants, shorts, etc, down or off, esp as a prank: *We pantsed him at the swimming pool* **2** To be dealt a crushing defeat; to exact a crushing defeat: *Our soccer team was pantsed again/ We pantsed the other teams at the spelling bee* *See* ANTS, CREAM

one's JEANS, FANCY PANTS, FLY BY THE SEAT OF **one's** PANTS, FUDGE **one's** PANTS, GET THE LEAD OUT, HAVE LEAD IN **one's** PANTS, HIGH WATERS, HOT PANTS, RAGGEDYASS, SEAT-OF-THE-PANTS, SHIT **one's** PANTS, SMARTY-PANTS

pants off someone, the *adv phr* (also **someone's pants off**) To the utmost; to an extreme degree: *I'm going to sue the pants off you this time, meathead* [1933 +; the intensifier became popular in the 1930s, mostly with menacing verbs like *beat*, *bore*, and *scare*, but also with *charm* and *flatter*; the semantics are not apparent, except perhaps that one feels helpless with one's pants off]

panty raid *n phr* A male invasion of a women's dormitory, the purpose being to take underwear as trophies (1950s + *Students*)

pantywaist *n* A weak or effeminate male; PANSY: *The hurt pantywaist ran off a number of copies of his letter* [1936 +; fr a child's garment with short *pants* buttoned to the *waist* of a shirt]

pap *n* Father; PAPPY (1844 +)

papa *n* A male lover; DADDY (1785 + *esp black*); (1922 +) *See* SWEET MAN

paparazzi modifier: *one of the most paparazzi-plagued women of this American century* *n* A freelance photographer who hounds celebrities: *out of the public spotlight and away from the paparazzi* (1968 +) [plural of Italian *paparazzo*]

paper *n* **1** A forged or worthless check (1850 +) **2** A pass or free ticket; ANNIE OAKLEY (*Theater*) **3** A packet of narcotics; BAG (1960s + *Narcotics*) **4** Money: *pass him paper in exchange for goods* **v** **1** To use or pass counterfeit money or worthless checks; Lay Paper: *papered Queens and Long Island with bum checks* (1925 +) **2** To give out free

tickets in order to get a large audience: *The show was not doing well, so they papered the theater (1879+ Theater)* **3** To write traffic and parking tickets: *The captain complained that the patrolmen were not papering enough (1960s+ Police)* **See** BAD PAPER, ON PAPER, PEDDLE one's PAPERS, WALKING PAPERS

paper bag **See** CAN'T FIGHT one's WAY OUT OF A PAPER BAG

◁**paper bag case**▷ **n phr** An ugly woman (1980s + *Students*)

paper (or brown paper) bag test **n phr** A criterion for admission to certain clubs, parties, etc: *If you are darker than a standard paper bag, you are simply rejected/ Black Washingtonians remember the days when upper-crust black folks used to do the brown paper bag test to determine who could come to a particular party (1980s+ Black)*

paper chase **n phr** An intense searching and collation of files, books, documents, etc, esp for the needs of bureaucratic pomp: *Manuel's history of ideas carries the reader not on a paper chase but on a fascinating voyage [1932+ British; fr the game of hare and hounds in which the quarry would leave a trail of scraps of paper, the term found by 1856; popularized in the US as the title of a film and a TV series, where the paper was a Harvard Law School degree]*

paperhanger or **paper-pusher** **n** A person who passes counterfeit money or worthless checks: *The FBI's suspect was a master paperhanger, the last of a breed (1914+ Underworld)*

paper over v phr To conceal or gloss over; fail to deal with: *If the tiff were nothing but a clash of personalities it might be quickly papered over [1955 +; based on paper over the cracks, found by 1910 and*

based on a phrase of Bismarck's]

paper profits *n phr* Monetary gains recognizable by accounting but not realized in palpable money or goods (1940s +)

papers *See* CUT someone's PAPERS, PEDDLE one's PAPERS, PUT one's PAPERS IN, WALKING PAPERS

paper tiger *n phr* A menacing person or thing that in fact lacks force; a blusterer: *doing battle with a paper tiger when he aims his wrath at the white liberal* [1952 +; fr the Chinese expression *tsuh lao fu*, "paper tiger," given currency by Mao Zedong]

paper trail *n phr* Records, documents, etc, that lead to a conclusion: *Officials had expected to find a damning paper trail of incriminating evidence* (mid-1980s +)

pappy *n* Father; PAP: *Harry Light? His pappy*

parachute *n*: *A mixture of crack cocaine and heroin known as "parachute"* (1980s + *Narcotics*) *See* GOLDEN PARACHUTE

parade *See* RAIN ON someone's PARADE

paralyzed *adj* Very drunk (1888 +)

parboiled *adj* Drunk (1935 +)

pard *n* Friend; partner; PAL (1872 +)

pardon me all to hell *See* EXCUSE ME ALL TO HELL

pardon me for living *interj* An ironic riposte from someone who feels wrongly accused and badgered (1960s +)

pardon (or excuse) my French *interj* An exclamation of apology for

the use of profane or taboo language: *That Goddamned blankety-blank, pardon my French/ You will excuse my French. I am only quoting Mr Clemens (entry form 1895 +, variant 1940 +)*

parental unit or **unit n** Parent: *The parental units are away for the weekend (Teenagers)*

par for the course n phr What is to be expected: *He had to take a little crap from the clerk, but that's par for the course (1947 +)*

park v 1 To put or place; locate: *Park yourself anywhere, I'll be right back (1922 +)* **2** To manipulate records illegally so as to conceal true ownership of stocks: *If you're caught "parking" stock, your defense is everybody does it but I didn't know it was going on (1990s +)* **See** BALLPARK, BALLPARK FIGURE

park one v phr To hit a home run: *A cheer would go up across the street, and someone who had a transistor radio would holler, "Mantle just parked one" (1940s + Baseball)*

parlay v To build or increase something from a small initial outlay or possession: *She parlayed her dimples into movie superstardom [1942 +; fr horse racing, "place a series of increasing bets," found by 1895, fr *paralee* or *parlee*, an early 1800s faro term fr Italian *parole*, "words, promises"]*

parley-voov v To speak, esp a foreign language: *She wondered if he parley-vooved Chinese [WWI Army; fr French *parlez-vous*, "do you speak?"]*

parlor See MESSAGE PARLOR, RAP CLUB, RUB PARLOR

parlor pink n phr A mildly radical socialist; political liberal
(1935 +)

parole See BACKGATE PAROLE

part See BIT

party n 1 A person (1460 +) **2** A bout of sex play or sexual activity
(1935 +) **v** (also **partay**) To go to or give parties; be energetically
social; LIVE IT UP, MAKE WHOOPEE: *You don't party with the right people, kiss
your ass good-bye* (1922 +) **See** COLD-MEAT PARTY, GI PARTY, HAVE A PARTY, HEN
PARTY, KICK PARTY, NECKTIE PARTY, POP PARTY, POT PARTY, STAG, TAILGATE PARTY

party animal (or reptile) n phr An enthusiastic party-goer:
Apparently Salman has turned into a major party animal (1980s +)

party hat n phr 1 The array of lights on the roof of a police car or
emergency vehicle; GUMBALL (1960s +) **2** A condom: *In the heat of the
moment he realized he didn't have a party hat* (1980s + Students)

party hearty n phr PARTY ANIMAL: *He attracted a Hollywood set of
Hawaiian-shirt party hearties who sunned themselves like alligators
down in Key West* (1990s +)

party is over, the sentence The fun is finished; reality impinges
(1937 +)

party line, the n phr The accepted view; conventional wisdom: *The
party line on Matisse* [1942 +; popularized in the 1930s as "the
official dogma of the Communist Party"]

party pooper or party poop n phr A morose, pessimistic person;
KILLJOY, WET BLANKET: *No one can call Mr Bulganin and Mr Kruschchev*

party poopers/What a party poop you are today, Sally (1951 +)

pash *adj* Passionate: *That isn't as pash as some of the poems* **n** 1 Passion: *insisted that he get some "pash" into it* 2 One's current absorbing love object: *She's my pash this week (1921 +)*

pass *n phr* A sexual advance; PROPOSITION (1928 +) **v** 1 To be thought to be something one is not, esp to be thought white when one is actually black: *the oldest daughter, so fair she could pass (1940s +)* 2 To suffice or be adequate, only just barely: *It's not great pasta, but it'll pass (1565 +)* 3 To decline to do something, take something, etc: *I'll pass on the French fries, but take the onions (1869 +)* [in the first verb sense, *pass oneself off as* is found by 1809] **See** MAKE A PASS AT someone

pass go *v phr* To complete a difficult task or pass an important milestone in a project • Usu negative: *Execs go to jail, do not pass go in the scandal* [fr the game of Monopoly]

passion pit *n phr* 1 A drive-in movie theater: *taking his buxom daughter off to the local passion pit (1951 + Teenagers)* 2 A room used for seduction: *some minor-league Don Juan's passion pit (1970s +)*

passout *n* A person who has passed out, esp from drinking: *finding yourself with an 18-year-old passout on your hands (1950s +)*

pass out *v phr* 1 (also **pass out cold**) To lose consciousness; faint; go to sleep, esp from drinking too much liquor (1918 +) 2 To die: *He left us a lot of jack when he passed out (1899 +)*

pass the buck *v phr* To refer a problem or responsibility to someone

else, esp to a higher authority; decline to take action: *We chickened out and passed the buck to the dean* [1865 +; fr poker games where one would *pass the buck*, usu a pocketknife with a *buck* horn handle, on to the next person, thereby passing the deal on]

pass the hat v phr To ask for contributions of money; collect money from a group: *We passed the hat until we had her plane fare* (1762 +)

pass something up v phr To choose not to take, attend, etc; GIVE someone or something A MISS: *I guess I'll pass up the concert tonight* (1896 +)

paste v 1 To hit; strike very hard: *She grabbed the broom and pasted me* (1846 +) **2** To defeat decisively; trounce; CLOBBER: *The Jets got pasted* (1940s + Sports) [origin unknown; perhaps an alteration of earlier *baste*, “strike, trounce,” of obscure origin and preserved in *lambaste*]

pasteboard n 1 A ticket of admission; ANNIE OAKLEY, BOARD: *He studied the coveted pasteboard* (1934 +) **2** A business card or calling card (1837 +) **3** A playing card: *Okay, shuffle the pasteboards and let's commence* (1859 +) [by 1856 in the first sense, “railroad ticket”]

pasties n Adhesive patches worn over the nipples by nude dancers (1961 +)

pasting n A beating; drubbing (1851 +)

pasture n The outfield of a baseball field (1891 + Baseball) **See** OUTER GARDEN, PUT someone or something OUT TO PASTURE

patch out v phr To make a quick start in a car, so as to spin the

wheels and leave patches of rubber on the pavement (1960s +
Students)

pat-down search *n phr* A search made by patting the outer clothing:
*During a pat-down search, a female Milwaukee police officer felt
something soft in one of Guy's pockets (1974 +)*

patoot or patootie or ptoot (pə ˈtʊʊt) *n* The buttocks; fundament;
ASS: You hear with your patoot, curlylocks/ Talk about a horse's ptoot
[1960s +; origin unknown; perhaps fr dialect *tout*, “buttocks,” fr
Middle English, pronounced *toot*, and altered to conform with *sweet
patootie* by folk etymology]

patootie or sweet patootie *n* or *n phr 1* One's girlfriend or
boyfriend; sweetheart: *Tell their patooties how pretty they are 2 A*
young woman: a batch of pretty-panned patooties [1921 + ; perhaps
fr a play on *sweet potato* suggested by *sweetheart* and *potato* as used,
like *tomato*, to mean a person]

patsy *n 1* A victim; dupe; SUCKER: *a patsy, a quick push, a big softie/ But
to retain lawyers is clear proof that you're a patsy 2* A person who
takes the blame for a crime, who is put up against a superior
opponent in order to lose, etc; FALL GUY [1903 + ; apparently fr the
name of *Patsy Bolivar*, a character in a minstrel skit of the 1880s,
who was blamed for whatever went wrong]

pattern *See* IN A HOLDING PATTERN

patter of tiny feet (also **pitter-patter**) *n phr* Having young children
around; also, imminent childbirth

patty *See* PADDY

patzer or potzer (PAHT zər) *n* A mediocre but often enthusiastic chess player [1926 + ; probably fr Yiddish] **See** POTCHKIE

pavement, the **See** POUND THE PAVEMENT

pavement princess *n phr* A prostitute who solicits business over a radio band [1976 + ; Citizen's band terminology]

paw *n* A hand: *You let me get my paws on the money* (1605 +) *v* To touch and handle, esp in a crude sexual way (1701 +) **See** NORTHPAW, SOUTHPAW

pax *n* A passenger: *There were twenty pax listed for the trip* [1970s + ; apparently derived fr *passenger* as *prexy* is fr *president*]

pay **See** HELL TO PAY

payback *n* Revenge; retaliation: *Payback is the idiom of East Africa, but the rule is that innocents always get hurt* (1970 +)

pay dirt *n phr* Profit and success: *I'll try a fast-food franchise, where there's sure to be paydirt* [1873 + ; in the sense "richly yielding ore," found by 1856] **See** HIT PAY DIRT

pay one's dues *v phr* To serve and suffer such that one deserves what good comes to one; Go Through the Mill: *We elderly have paid our dues* [1943 + ; an isolated example is found in 1878]

payoff *n* **1** Payment, esp of bribery, graft, etc: *The villains were waiting for their payoff* (1930 + *Underworld*) **2** The final outcome or bit of information, esp when it is surprising or amusing: *OK, here's the payoff, she's the Albanian consul!* (1926 +)

pay off *v phr* **1** To give someone bribe money, blackmail money, or

the like: *We'll have to pay them off handsomely to keep quiet (1930 + Underworld)* **2** To bring in profit; succeed; pay: *Getting another degree will pay off someday (1951 +)*

payola *n* Graft; extortion money; bribery, esp that paid by recording companies to disc jockeys for playing their records on the radio [1938 +; coined probably fr *payoff* and the ending of *Pianola*, trademark of an automatic piano-playing device, or *Victrola*, trademark of a gramophone]

pay the freight *v phr* To pay for; compensate for; bear the expense of; PICK UP THE TAB: *We may have to "pay the freight for well-meant efforts at improvement" (1970s +)*

pay through the nose *v phr* To pay exorbitantly; give too much in recompense (1672 +)

pay up *v phr* To pay in full; settle one's account: *Pay up and be done with it (1434 +)*

PC *adj phr* (also **pc**) Exhibiting political correctness **n 1** political correctness; conformity with a set of progressive social ideals (1990s +) **2** A personal computer: *Turn on your PC and type in CHKDSK (1978 + Computer)* **3** A pilot check flight or ride, where a pilot's continued qualification to fly is periodically tested (1970s + *Airline*)

PCP *n* Phencyclidine, an animal tranquilizer smoked as a narcotic; ANGEL DUST (1960s + *Narcotics*)

p'd *See* PISSED OFF

PDA *n* Public display of affection: *It's uncomfortable to be an adult and see PDA at the mall*

PDQ *adv* Pretty damn quick (1875 +)

pea *See* SWEET PEA

pea-brain *n* An unintelligent or empty-headed person: *a pea-brain for a mom* (1959 +)

peacenik *n* A member of a peace movement; pacifist; antiwar demonstrator (1965 +) *See* -NIK

peach *n* **1** An attractive young woman: *She really was a "peach"* (1754 +) **2** Any remarkable, admirable, amiable, or attractive person: *You're a peach* (1904 +) **3** Anything superior or admirable: *The hotel was a peach* (1870 +)

peacherino *n* PEACH: *Ain't this show a peacherino?* (1900 +)

peach-fuzz *modifier* Young; inexperienced: *I asked one of Clinton's peach-fuzz counselors how they could still be learning to govern after running the country for two years* (1990s +)

peachy or **peachy-keen** *adj* Excellent; wonderful; GREAT, NEAT: *this president's political health, which Wirthlin thinks is peachy* (first form 1900 +, second 1955 +)

peanut *adj*: *a peanut operation* *n* A small or trivial person; something insignificant (1934 +)

peanut gallery *n phr* **1** The topmost rows of a theater (1888 +) **2** A group or individual whose opinion is considered inconsequential

peanuts *n* A small amount of money; a trivial sum; NICKELS AND DIMES:

They got you working for peanuts (1934 +) See THAT AIN'T HAY

pearly whites or **pearlies** *n* The teeth: *shining those pearly whites at me (1935 +)*

pea-shooter *n* **1** A firearm, esp one so called by a person who scorns its small caliber (1950s +) **2** A fighter pilot or plane (WWII Army Air Force) [fr a child's toy, a long tube through which he *shoots peas*, found by 1803]

pea soup (or **souper**) *n phr* A thick fog, esp one plaguing London (1849 +)

peat See PETE

pebble on the beach *n phr* A person, esp as reduced in significance by being of a numerous sort: *Remember, you're not the only pebble on the beach (1896 +)*

pec *n* A pectoral muscle: *All the male weight lifters love her a bushel and a pec (1966 +)*

peck *n* <1> PECKERWOOD (1940s + *Black*) **2** Food (1960s + *Teenagers*) **3** A perfunctory kiss: *She gave him a friendly peck and got back to work (1893 +)* **v** To eat (1960s + *Black*) See a PECK OF TROUBLE

<pecker> *n* The penis (1902 +)

<peckerhead> *n* A despicable person; ASSHOLE, JERK: *Do you hear me, peckerhead? (1955 +)*

<peckerwood> *n* **1** A poor Southern white, esp a farmer; CRACKER, REDNECK **2** Any white Southern man: *Any white man from the South is*

a “peckerwood” [1929+ esp black; fr rural black use of the red-headed *woodpecker*, with dialect inversion of the word elements, as a symbol for white persons in contrast with the blackbird as a symbol for themselves; the red head may be the semantic base, suggesting *redneck*]

peckings (or **pecks**) *n* Food (1950s+ Black)

peck of trouble, a *n phr* Much difficulty: *Looks like that young fellow got himself into a peck of trouble* (1535+)

pedal *See* PUT THE PEDAL TO THE METAL, SOFT-PEDAL

peddle one’s papers *v phr* To go about one’s business • Often an irritated command that one leave the speaker alone: *I told him to go peddle his papers* (1936+)

peddler *n* A narcotics seller; DEALER (1929+ Narcotics) *See* ASS PEDDLER, FLESH-PEDDLER, PILL-PUSHER

ped scramble or **Barnes dance** *n phr* A system of urban traffic control in which in a cycle all traffic lights turn red to stop cars, while pedestrians can cross in all directions [1960s+; variant named for Henry Barnes (d. 1968), traffic commissioner of New York City; ped, “pedestrian, speed walker,” is found by 1863, and among traffic engineers by 1962]

pee *n* Urine *v* To urinate; PISS, WHIZ (1880+) *See* P

peed off *See* PISSED OFF

peekaboo *adj* Made of a sheer fabric or decorated with holes; SEE-THROUGH (1895+)

peek freak n phr A voyeur; Peeping Tom (1960s +)

peel v 1 To undress; strip (1785 +) **2** PEEL OUT (1950s + Hot rodders)
3: *Many of the young people describe stealing a vehicle as “peeling it (1980s + Street talk)*

peeler n A striptease dancer; STRIPPER: *grinders, peelers, and bumpers (1940s +)* See BRONCO BUSTER

peel out v phr (also **peel rubber** or **peel wheels**) To leave quickly; SPLIT [1950s + Hot rodders; fr the notion of *peeling* off the tread of a tire]

◁**peenie**▷ See POUND one's PEENIE

peep n 1 A word; the slightest sound: *If I hear a peep out of you, you've had it (1903 +)* **2** People • Often plural

peeper n A private detective; PI, PRIVATE DICK: *And don t bother to call your house peeper (1940 +)* See HEADSHRINKER

peepers n 1 The eyes: *If anything was wrong with my peepers the army wouldn't of took me (1700s +)* **2** A pair of sunglasses; SHADES: *I'd come through the employee door with one of my peepers on (1970s +)*

peep show n phr 1 A supposedly private view, as if through a hole in the wall, of some forbidden sexual activity (1914 +) **2** Leg Show (1940s +) [found by 1851 as “an exhibition of pictures viewed through a lens in a small hole”]

peet See PETE

peeve n: *You probably have a long list of peeves (1911 +)* **v** To annoy; irritate: *That crap really peeves me (1908 +)* [by back formation fr

peev, which in turn derives by back formation fr *peevish*, fr Middle English *peivish*, “perverse, wayward, capricious,” perhaps fr Latin *perversus*] *See* PET PEEVE

peev or **peev** **off** *adj* or *adj phr* Annoyed; irritated; irked: *He got peev* (1908 +)

peewee *n* A short or small person, animal, etc: *That peewee doesn't scare me* (1877 +)

peezy *See* JEEZ

peg *n* A throw, esp a hard one: *His peg missed and the runner scored* (1862 + *Baseball*) **v** **1** To identify; classify; pick out; **BUTTON DOWN**: *I could peg a joint like that from two miles away* (1920 +) **2** To taper or bind a pair of trousers at the lower end: *Pants must be pegged to fit snugly around the ankle* (1935 +) **3**: *He pegged it sharply to first* **4** To derogate; speak unfavorably of; **BAG ON** someone, **PUT** someone or something **DOWN**, **TRASH**: *It's good he wasn't at the party, because he was really pegged* (1980s + *Students*) *See* SQUARE PEG, TAKE someone **DOWN** A PEG

peg leg *modifier*: *Watch me pass that peg-leg gimp* *n phr* A person who wears a wooden leg (1872 +)

peg out *v phr* To die: *Harrison actually pegged out in 1841* [1855 + ; fr the ending of play in cribbage by *pegging*]

pegs *n* Legs; **PINS**: *He was wobbly on his pegs* (1847 +)

pelter *n* **1** An inferior horse; **HAY BURNER** (1856 +) **2** A fast horse (1901 +)

pen *n* A prison of any sort, esp a penitentiary (1845 +) **See** BULLPEN, HEN-PEN, PIGPEN, POISON-PEN LETTER, PUSH A PEN

pencil *v* To work out details; study: *Let me pencil this idea for a while* (1990s +) **See** HAVE LEAD IN one's PENCIL

pencil someone or something *in v phr* To make a tentative arrangement: *Why don't I pencil in an appointment for next Thursday?* (1940s +)

pencil neck *n phr* 1 A weak person; *WIMP: Catch you later, you pencil-neck motherfucker* (1973 +) 2 (also **pencil geek** or **pencil-necked geek**) A studious person; *GRIND, MERV: The pencil neck answered every question correctly* (1980s + *Students*)

pencil-pusher (or **-driver** or **-shover**) *n* An office worker, esp a clerk, bookkeeper, or the like; *DESK JOCKEY: The number of pencil pushers and typists has increased* (1881 +)

penguin *n* 1 A nonflying member of an air force; *KIWI (1918 + Royal Air Force)* 2 An actor who wears a tuxedo as part of a crowd scene (1950s + *Movie studio*)

penguin suit *n phr* A tuxedo; *TUX: Yes, it is possible to do serious rock 'n' roll in a penguin suit* (1967 +)

penicillin **See** JEWISH PENICILLIN

penman *n* 1 A journalist 2 A forger (1965 + *Underworld*) 3 A student who signs his or her parents' names to made-up excuses (1950s + *Teenagers*)

pennant **See** IRISH PENNANT

Pennsy, the *n* The Pennsylvania Railroad (1940s +)

penny ante *adj*: *I despised his penny-ante ideas* *n phr* A trivial transaction; a cheap offer, arrangement, etc (1935 +) [fr the minimal *ante* required in a cheap poker game]

penny-pincher *n* A stingy person; miser; TIGHTWAD (1934 +)

penny stock *n phr*: *That minimum would exclude penny stocks, which are cheap, risky stocks that usually have prices below \$1 a share* (1932 +)

pen-pusher *n* PENCIL-PUSHER (1913 +)

pension off *v phr* To remove or dismiss because of old age or obsolescence: *pensioned off when he got senile* (1848 +)

people *n* A person: *She's great people* (1926 +) See the BEAUTIFUL PEOPLE, BOAT PEOPLE, FREE PEOPLE, JESUS FREAKS, NIGHT PEOPLE, ROAD PEOPLE, STREET PEOPLE

people, the *n phr* Narcotics dealers on a large or wholesale scale; KILO CONNECTION (1960s + *Narcotics*)

people person *n phr* A sociable and compassionate person: *And the fact that he could tolerate a query about personality flaws proved he's not all that bad a "people person"* (1990s +)

Peoria See PLAY IN PEORIA

pep modifier: *pep talk/pep pill* *n* Energy; vitality; PISS AND VINEGAR, PIZZAZZ (1912 +) [fr pepper]

pepped out *adj phr* Exhausted; sapped: *I'm tired and pepped out* (1920 +)

pepper *n* 1 Energy; vitality; PEP: *The old moral support is what gives we*

players the old pepper (1895 +) 2 A fast and hard session of pitch-and-catch; BURNOUT (1920s + *Baseball*) ◀3▶ (also **pepper belly**) A Mexican or person of Mexican extraction (1920s +) **v** To throw a baseball very hard; BURN (1920s + *Baseball*) **See** SALT AND PEPPER

pepper-upper *n* A thing, food, drink, person, etc, that imparts pep; stimulant: “Say, fellows,” said a uniformed pepper-upper to a bunch of GI assault troops (1937 +)

pep pill *n phr* Any amphetamine pill; UPPER (1930s + *Narcotics*)

peppy *adj* Energetic; vital; ZINGY (1918 +)

pep rally *n phr* A meeting where the participants are stimulated to some activity, harder effort, etc: Ceausescu’s pep rally becomes a revolution

pep talk *n phr* A hortatory speech, usu given by a team coach or other leader: I always had to give myself a pep talk before I went out to sing

pep up *v phr* To stimulate; energize; brighten; JAZZ something UP: Pep up your winter wardrobe (1925 +)

perc **See** PERK

percentage *n* Profit or advantage: I don’t See any percentage in doing it that way (1862 +)

percolate *v* 1 To run smoothly and well: The little engine was percolating nicely (1925 +) 2 To saunter; stroll; OOZE: Percolate on down the Avenue (1942 + *Black*) [all senses fr the coffeemaking device; sense of “run well,” for example, fr the steady cheery

bubbling of the coffeemaker]

percolator *n* A party where one sells drinks and food to friends in order to pay one's rent; RENT PARTY: *You could always get together and charge a few coins and have a percolator (1946 + Black)*

per each *adv phr* For each; apiece; a THROW: *Those are \$8 per each, to you [1906 +; fr a humorous insertion of Latin *per* in imitation of pretentious business use]*

perform *v* To do a sex act; function sexually: *She didn't love him, but liked the way he performed (1916 +)*

period *interj* End of story. That is final: *Don't ask me again. Period*

perk¹ or **perc** *n* Percolated coffee (1950s +) *v* To run smoothly and well; PERCOLATE: *The project's perking now (1925 +)*

perk or **perc** *n* Extra money, privileges, fringe benefits, etc, pertaining to a job or assignment: *His men were delighted to be in Afghanistan, he said, mostly because of the perks [1824 +; fr *perquisite*]*

perk (or **perc**) **along** *v phr* **1** To run smoothly and easily: *The outboard's perking along sweetly (1925 +)* **2** To move at a relaxed pace; PERCOLATE: *I'm not hurrying, just perking along (1930s + Jive talk)* [fr the persistent and even sound of a coffee *percolator*]

perk up *v phr* **1** To stimulate; invigorate: *Gotta perk up this class (1965 +)* **2** To recuperate; recover; gain energy: *He's perked up after a two-week illness (1706 +)* [origin uncertain; perhaps related to *perch*, and semantically to the notion of being placed high]

perky *adj* Energetic and jaunty; lively; CHIPPER (1855 +)

peroxide blonde *See* CHEMICAL BLONDE

perp *n* A criminal engaged in a specific crime: *The perp stood up, stepped back, took out a handgun and fired at least two shots*
[shortened form of *perpetrator*]

perp walk (or **parade**) *n phr* A public display of a criminal defendant by the police: *an extended jaunt around the block, which is known as a perp parade/ The perp walk is a ritual, a vital part of New York's criminal-justice system (1940s +)*

persnickety or **pernickety** *adj* Overfastidious; finical; fussy [first form 1905 + , second 1814 + ; fr Scots dialect]

persuader *n* A handgun; HEAT (1884 +)

per usual *See* AS PER USUAL

perv or **perve** *n* A pervert; one with unconventional sexual tastes:
perv at the convenience store (1944 +)

pesky *adj* Vexatious; annoying; pesty [1775 + ; origin unknown]

pet *n* Darling; sweetheart; DOLL: *It's you, pet! How frightfully tickety-boo!* (1755 +) *v* To kiss and caress: *torrid hugging, smooching, and petting* (1924 +) *See* HEAVY PETTING

pete *n* (also **pete-box** or **peet** or **peat**) A safe; CRIB [1911 +
Underworld; fr *peter*¹]

Pete *See* FOR THE LOVE OF PETE, PISTOL PETE, SNEAKY PETE

pete-man *n* A criminal who specializes in opening safes; BOX MAN

(1931 + Underworld)

peter¹ n A safe; strongbox; vault [1859 + Underworld; origin unknown]

◁**peter²**▷ *n* The penis [1902 + ; fr the association with *pee*, “urine”]

◁**peter-eater**▷ *n* A person who does fellatio, esp homosexually;
COCKSUCKER (1970s +)

peterman n A safecracker; PETE-MAN: *the petermen of half a century ago*
(1900 + Underworld)

peter out v phr To become exhausted; dwindle away in strength, amount, etc: *They ran well the first mile or so, then petered out* [1858 + ; origin unknown; a 1908 article says it may be fr *peterboat*, a sharp double-ended vessel, hence “grow small or thin”]

pet peeve n phr One’s particular and most cherished dislike or annoyance: *long been one of my pet peeves* (1919 +)

petrified adj Drunk; OSSIFIED, STONED (1903 +)

petting n Amorous caressing and kissing: *Petting is necking with territorial concessions* (1924 +) See HEAVY PETTING

petting party n phr A spell or session of fondling and caressing: *great American phenomenon, the “petting party”* (1920 +)

pfft See GO PFFT

pfui See PHOOEY

P-funk n: *They said users already were able to buy a synthetic form of heroin known as “P-funk”* (1980s + Narcotics)

PG (pronounced as separate letters) **adj** Pregnant; PREGGERS (1980s +) **n** Paregoric, an opium product (1960s + *Narcotics*)

phat or **PHAT** **adj** **1** Excellent; very good, pleasing, desirable: *everything is phat* **2** Musically, describing a full, deep, and bassy sound originating from hip-hop [fr black slang; first sense originally used to describe a woman as “sexy, attractive”] *See* FAT

phenagle *See* FINAGLE

phenom (FEE nahm) **n** A phenomenally skilled or impressive person; a performing wonder, esp in sports: *Veeck was a phenom, too* (1890 + *Baseball*)

Phi Bete (FĪ BAYT) **n** *phr* **1** The academic honor society Phi Beta Kappa (1924 +) **2** A member of Phi Beta Kappa

Philadelphia lawyer, a **n** *phr* One who makes things unnecessarily complicated and obfuscates matters [1834 +; fr a traditional reputation for the shrewdness of such attorneys, and the phrase *it would puzzle a Philadelphia lawyer*, found by 1788]

Philly or **Phillie** **n** Philadelphia (1891 +)

phish **v** To lure unsuspecting internet users to a fake Web site by using authentic-looking e-mail with the real organization’s logo, in an attempt to steal passwords or financial or personal information or introduce a virus attack; the creation of a Web site replica for fooling unsuspecting internet users into submitting personal or financial information or passwords (1996 +)

phiz or **phizog** (FIZ, FIZ ahwg) **n** The face; MUG [1688 +; fr *physiognomy*]

◁**phlegmwad** or **flemwad**▷ *n* A despised person; JERK, PRICK, ASSHOLE
(1990s +) See -WAD

Phoebe or **little Phoebe** (or **fever**) *n* or *n phr* Five or the point of five (1940s + *Crapshooting*)

phone See FLIP PHONE, HOLD THE PHONE

phone it in *modifier* Lackadaisical and half-hearted in playing
(1980s + *Sports*)

phone phreak *n phr* A computer hacker who illegally enters the telephone system for fun and profit: *Mitnick also became a skilled “phone phreak” who was able to manipulate the telephone system to pull pranks on friends and enemies (1972 +)*

phone tag *n phr* A repetitive cycle of telephoning, leaving messages, missing replies, etc • Referring to the pervasive round-robin of messages left and phone calls missed: *“Having computers in our volunteers’ homes has eliminated phone tag,” says Power (1990s +)*

phony or **phoney** *adj* Not real or genuine; false; fake: *You phony little fake (1900 +) n 1* A fake thing: *That window’s a phony, it don’t open (1902 +) 2* A person who affects some identity, role, nature, etc; poseur: *some phony calling himself a writer (1902 +) v: I ain’t phoneying them woids (1942 +)* [fr late 1700s British underworld slang *fawney* fr Irish *fáinne*, “ring,” referring to a swindle in which the *fawney-dropper* drops a cheap ring before the victim, then is persuaded to sell it as if it were valuable; as the sequence of spellings, *phoney* and later *phony*, indicates, the US spelling is probably based on an attested folk etymology revealing the notion

that one's feelings or even identity could be readily falsified on the *telephone*]

phony as a three-dollar bill *adj phr* Very false indeed; not remotely genuine (1940s +)

phooey *interj* (also **phoo** or **pfui** or **foeey** or **fooy** or **fuie**) An exclamation of disbelief, rejection, contempt, etc [1929 + ; fr Yiddish fr German; popularized by the newspaper columnist Walter Winchell]

photog or **fotog** (FOH tahg) *n* A photographer: *The Swedish fotogs were actually saving film* (1913 +)

photo op *n phr* A brief period during which the press is allowed to photograph a dignitary or celebrity; a photographic opportunity (1980s +)

phreaking (FREE king) *n* The imitation of telephone touch-tone signals by whistling or by using mechanical devices so that free calls may be readily made: *and "phreaking," the art of using the telephone for fun but no profit for the company, came into being* (1972 +)

physical *adj* Using the body, esp roughly or intimately: *Vanderbilt is a lot better than last year and more physical* (1970 +) See GET PHYSICAL

PI *n* (pronounced as separate letters) *n* **1** A pimp (1931 +) **2** A private detective; OP (1960 +)

piano *n* Spareribs, esp a single section of broiled spareribs: *cornbread*

with a piano on a platter (1940s + Black)

piano legs *n phr* Thick calves and ankles: *Claudia Schiffer, the Bardot look-alike with a slight case of piano legs, stumps down the runway appallingly clumsy (1960s +)*

pic *n* A picture, and later esp a movie; *FLICK: Raft's next pic (1884 +)*

◁**piccolo player**▷ *n phr* A person who likes and does fellatio [1950s +; fr a double reference to the *picklelike* shape of a penis and the fact that fellatio is referred to as “playing the skin *flute*“]

pick *See* NIT-PICK

pick and choose *v phr* To select very carefully (1577 +)

pick someone's brain *v phr* **1** To question someone closely for one's own profit; exploit someone's creativity by imitation; be an intellectual parasite **2** To inquire of someone; ask someone for information, advice, etc (1885 +)

pick 'em *See* ONE CAN REALLY PICK 'EM

pick 'em up and lay 'em down *v phr* To run fast: *When he went by he was really picking 'em up and laying em down (1940s +)*

picker *See* BRAIN-PICKER, CHERRY-PICKER, FRUIT-PICKER, PRUNE-PICKER

picker-upper *n* A person or thing that picks up: *A hitchhiker caught a ride. The picker-upper was soon arrested (1936 +)*

picking *See* COTTON-PICKING

pickings *See* SLIM PICKINGS

pickle *n* **1** (also **picklement**) A parlous situation; predicament; dilemma: *I was in a sad pickle when I lost my job (1609+)* **2** A torpedo (WWII Navy) **3** A bullet: *He fired six pickles at the knob (1940s +)* **v phr** **1** To hit the ball very hard (1908+ Baseball) **v** **2** To ruin; wreck: *This will promptly pickle her college chances (1950s+)* [first noun sense fr 1500s British slang *in a pickle* and may refer to the situation of a mouse fallen into a pickling vat; *picklement* is a handy echo of *predicament*]

pickled *adj* Drunk; SOUSED (1842+)

picklepuss *n* A frowning and pessimistic person; SOURPUSS (1940s+)

pick-me-up *n* **1** A drink or snack that invigorates; PEPPER-UPPER, PERKER-UPPER **2** A drink of liquor taken to restore tone and morale (1867+)

pick off **v phr** To shoot, esp with careful aim (1810+)

pick someone or something **to pieces** **v phr** To be exquisitely critical: *We were sitting around picking the speech to pieces (1859+)*

pickup *adj* **1** impromptu; unceremonious: *We'll have a pickup lunch in the kitchen (1859+)* **2** For one occasion; temporary; ad hoc: *a pickup band/ a pickup corps of waiters (1936+)* *n* **1** A person accosted and made a companion, esp in a bar, on the street, etc, for sexual purposes: *His next girlfriend was a pickup he made at Rod's (1926+)* **2** An arrest (1908+) **3** (also **pickup truck**) A small truck having a cab and cargo space with low sidewalls (1932+) **4** The ability of a car to accelerate rapidly, esp from a halt (1909+) **5** The act of getting or acquiring something: *He made the pickup at the*

post office (1938 +)

pick up v phr 1 To get; acquire: *He picked up a few thou hustling (1608 +)* **2** To make things clean and neat; tidy up: *You d better pick up in your room. It's a godawful mess (1874 +)* **3** To answer the telephone (1970s +)

pick someone up v phr 1 To arrest someone: *The cops picked up six muggers and hauled their asses in (1871 +)* **2** To make someone's acquaintance boldly, esp in a bar, on the street, etc, for sexual purposes: *She lets the soldiers pick her up (1698 +)*

pick something up v phr To notice; discover; learn: *Did you pick that wink up?/He picked up pitching in no time (1857 +)*

pick up on something v phr 1 To notice; become aware of: *I pick up on people's pain, Alexander (1935 +)* **2** To refer to and add to; bring back to notice, esp in order to query: *I want to pick up on what you just said about Philadelphia (1970s +)*

pick up the tab (or check) v phr To pay; assume the expense; PAY THE FREIGHT: *somebody to pick up the tab, which was important to her (1945 +)*

picky adj Very niggling; CHICKENSHIT, PERSNICKEY: *For growing a beard. A lot of little picky things like that (1917 +)*

picnic n 1 Something very easy; an easy undertaking; CINCH, PIECE OF CAKE: *That job's a picnic (1880s +)* **2** A good or enjoyable time; a BALL, BLAST: *The last week we had a picnic (1909 +)* *See* NO PICNIC

picture See DRAW A PICTURE

picture, the *n phr* The situation; present shape of things (1922 +) *See* the BIG PICTURE, GET THE PICTURE, PUT **someone** IN THE PICTURE

pictures *See* IN PICTURES

piddle *n* Urine (1901 +) **v 1** To urinate; *PEE: So you piddled on the floor. But you don't have to have your face wiped in it (1796 +)* **2** To waste; idle: *You just piddle the day away (1545 +)* [a euphemism for *piss*]

piddling or **piddly** or **<pissy-ass>** *adj* Meager; trivial; paltry: *It was an effort, though a piddling one/The case was "a piddly little misdemeanor"/ Make your pissy-ass point again (first form 1559 +, second 1940s +)*

pie *n* An easy task or job; *GRAVY: That's pie for him (1889 +)* *See* APPLE-PIE ORDER, CUTESY-POO, CUTIE-PIE, EASY AS PIE, FUR PIE, HAIR PIE, SWEETIE-PIE

piece *n 1* A share; portion; financial interest; a *PIECE OF THE ACTION, SLICE: a piece of the racket (1929 +)* **2** A gun; pistol: *They step up to the driver's side and shove a piece in his ear (1581 +)* **<3>** *PIECE OF ASS (1785 +)* **4** An ounce of heroin or other narcotic: *He buys heroin in "pieces" (1960s + Narcotics)* **5** A graffito on a subway car: *A train rumbles in and we all pause to view its pieces (1970s +)* **6** A tiny ponytail worn by males **7** Something worthless; *PIECE OF SHIT: that car is a piece* [second sense, US underworld use since about 1930] *See* ALL IN ONE PIECE, COME UP SMELLING LIKE A ROSE, KNOCK OFF A PIECE, MOUTHPIECE, MUSEUM PIECE, TEAR OFF A PIECE, THINK-PIECE

<piece of ass (or tail)> *n phr 1* The sex act; a completed sex act **2** A person regarded as a sex object, organ, or partner [first form 1930s +, variant 1917 +; the date should probably be earlier, in

view of the 1785 occurrence of *piece* in the first sense] See TEAR OFF A PIECE

piece of cake *n phr* Anything very easy; anything easily or pleasantly done; BREEZE, DUCK SOUP • Originally British: *It's a piece of cake because you don't have the fear that they are going to pitch out on you* (1936 +)

piece of calico (or goods) *n phr* A woman [first form 1880 +, variant 1751 + ; *piece* meant "woman" as long ago as the 1400s]

piece of change *n phr* (Variations: **hunk** may replace **piece**; **jack** may replace **change**) Money, esp a large amount: *which would come to quite a piece of change* (1914 +)

piece of fluff See BIT OF FLUFF

piece of meat *n phr* A person regarded as merely a physical body; unaccommodated man: *I'm just a piece of meat, but I know I'm a good piece of meat* (1940s +)

piece of one's mind, a See GIVE SOMEONE A PIECE OF one's MIND

◁**piece of shit (or junk or crap)**▷ *n phr* 1 Something or someone inferior or worthless: *a film he didn't want to make, and was a piece of shit* 2 A lie; hypocrisy; a PACK OF LIES: *Everything she said is a big piece of shit* (1950s +)

◁**piece of tail**▷ See PIECE OF ASS

piece of the action (or pie), a *n phr* A share of something, esp in profits, a business, or speculation, etc: *a piece of the "Gunsmoke" action/ Health expenditures consume an ever growing piece of the pie*

[first form 1966 + , variant 1970s + ; fr *action*, “gamble, gambling”]

piece of work *n phr* A person remarkable either for good or ill; a prodigious person: *And pow along comes a bizarro piece of work like Trudy the dietitian* [1928 + ; fr Hamlet’s paeon “What a *piece of work* is a man”; the date belongs to the first occurrence of *nasty piece of work*, but it should probably be earlier; the phrase is listed among those children like in a 1900 compilation, and seems to refer to persons]

pie-eyed *adj* 1 Drunk: *the pie-eyed brothers* (1904 +) 2 Astonished; wide-eyed: *Randall was pie-eyed. His mouth moved, but nothing came out of it* (1940 +)

pieface *n* A stupid or foolish person (1920s +)

piefaced *adj* Stupid; foolish: *a piefaced boy from Minnesota* (1923 +)

pie in the sky *modifier*: *It was a bit of a pie-in-the-sky idea* *n phr* The reward one will get for compliant behavior, later; hence wishful thinking or utopian fantasies [1911 + ; fr a Wobbly expression of contempt for those who maintained that suffering and penury on earth would be compensated by bliss and luxury in heaven; the locus classicus is a 1911 parody of the hymn “In the Sweet By and By,” by the Wobbly martyr Joe Hill]

pie wagon *n phr* PADDY WAGON (1898 +)

piffed or piffled *adj* Drunk (*first form* 1900 + , *second* 1934 +)

piffle *interj* A mild exclamation of disbelief, contradiction, rejection, etc (1914 +) *n* Nonsense; BALONEY, BUNK: *the kind of piffle actors have to*

go up against (1890 +)

pifflicated *adj* Drunk (1905 +)

◁**pig**▷ *n* **1** A police officer (1811 + *Underworld*) **2** A glutton (1890s +) **3** A promiscuous woman, esp one who is blowsy and unattractive: *spoke of a pig he had recently picked up* (1927 +) **4** A racehorse, esp an inferior one; BEETLE: *why the hell that pig didn't win* (1940s + *Horse racing*) **v** PIG OUT: *When you eat too much, you can say "I pigged"* See BLIND PIG, LIKE PIGS IN CLOVER, MALE CHAUVINIST PIG, RENT-A-PIG

pigboat *n* A submarine: *the archaic "pigboat" of the First World War (WWI Navy)*

pigeon *n* **1** An informer; STOOL PIGEON: *I don't like pigeons* (1849 + *Underworld*) **2** The victim of a swindle; dupe; MARK, SUCKER: *I'm your pigeon now and you guys are gonna rip me off* (1593 +) **3** A young woman; CHICK (1586 +) **4** A former alcoholic in the care of a helpful sponsor or guardian (1980s +) [for first sense See **stool pigeon**; the second sense probably derives fr the expression *pluck a pigeon* and may be based on a notion that *pigeons* are easy to catch; the sense "young woman" is probably fr or related to *quail* and again suggests an easy victim] See CLAY PIGEON, DEAD DUCK

pigeon drop *n phr* A swindle in which the confidence man tells the victim that he has found a large amount of money that he will share if the victim proffers money as a show of good faith (1937 + *Underworld*)

pigeonhole **v** **1** To classify; identify; BUTTON DOWN, PEG: *I pigeonhole this clown as a total bigmouth* (1870 +) **2** To put away or aside (1855 +)

[fr the separate compartments of a desk or sorting system, likened to the orifices in a *pigeoncote*]

piggyback *n* The transport of loaded containers or semitrailers on railroad flatcars (1953 +) *v* To originate or prosper with the help of something else: *Aerobic dancing piggybacked on the jogging craze* (1968 +) [fr the term for carrying someone, esp a child, on one's back, derived by folk etymology fr *pick-a-back*, of unknown origin]

piggy bank *n phr* A source of funds: *Portland GE has \$25 million in the company's piggy bank* [1941 + ; the date refers to the first notice of pig-shaped banks for children]

pighead *n* A stubborn person (1889 +)

pigheaded *adj* Stubborn; stupidly obstinate (1620 +)

pig-ignorant *adj* Crassly ignorant; very stupid due to ignorance: *pig-ignorant about the fact that we are grown people* (1972 +)

pig in a poke *See* BUY A PIG IN A POKE

pig-out *n* A gluttonous occasion: *Thanksgiving was a total pig-out* (1979 + *Teenagers*)

pig out *v phr* **1** To overeat; *PIG: we ordered a pizza and totally pigged out* **2** To overindulge in anything: *It was time to pig out on rock and roll* (1979 + *Teenagers*)

pigpen *n* (also **pigsty**) Any filthy, littered place: *His room's a pigpen* (1872 +; 1820 + *pigsty*)

◁**pig's ass (or ear or eye)**▷ *See* IN A PIG'S ASS

pigskin modifier: *the pigskin parade/ a pigskin superstar n* A football (1894 +)

pig sweat n phr 1 Beer 2 Inferior whiskey; PANTHER PISS (1950 +)

pike See COME DOWN THE PIKE

piker n 1 A mean and stingy person; miser; TIGHTWAD (1872 +) 2 A shirker; loafer (1889 +) [originally a vagrant, esp a gambler, who wandered along the *pike*; hence a poor sport, a cheapskate]

pile v To dash; run; thrust oneself: *I piled after her hell to split* (1948 +) See GRUB-PILE

pile, a n phr A large amount of money; a fortune; BUNDLE (1741 +)

◁**pile of shit**▷ **n phr** 1 CROCK OF SHIT 2 Something inferior or worthless; a shabby performance or product; PIECE OF SHIT: *The whole project's a pile of shit* (1940s +)

pile on modifier: *Contributing to the pile-on tactics, both big corporate media (including the Washington Post) and putative defenders of free expression strafed Moldea I from the start v phr* To throw oneself on a downed opponent unnecessarily: *It constitutes what is known in football as piling on, and they penalize you for it* (1980s + Football) [*pile onto*, "assail," is found by 1894]

pileup n A wreck, esp one involving a number of cars: *6-car, end-to-end pile-up on the New Jersey Turnpike* (1929 +)

pile up v phr To wreck; RACK UP, TOTAL: *after he piled up his car* (1899 +)

pile up Zs See COP ZS

pill *n* **1** A boring, disagreeable person; a PAIN IN THE ASS: *Oh, don't be a pill, Valerie (1871 +)* **2** A baseball or golf ball (1906 +) **3** An opium pellet for smoking (1887+ *Narcotics*) **4** A Nembutal™ capsule; NIMBY (1950s+ *Narcotics*) **5** A bomb, cannonball, bullet, etc: *He was drinking coffee when the big pill came down (1626 +)* See COOK UP A PILL, PEP PILL

pill, the, or the Pill *n phr* Any oral contraceptive for women: *now that the joint and the pill are with us*

pillage *v* To eat voraciously or steal food: *pillaged the office fridge when no one was looking*

pillhead or pill popper *n* A person who habitually takes tranquilizers, amphetamines, barbiturates, etc, in pill or capsule form: *Papoose and me were a bunch of pillheads (1960s+ Narcotics)*

pillow *n* **1** A boxing glove (1900+ *Prizefight*) **2** Abase; BAG, SACK (1940s+ *Baseball*)

pillow talk *n phr* Intimate talk, esp that between a couple in bed (1939+)

pill-popping *adj* Addicted to or using narcotics in pill or capsule form: *The prostitute is now a suicidal, pill-popping Newsweek reporter*
n phr The use of narcotics in pill form (1960s+ *Narcotics*)

◁**pill-pusher or pill-roller or pill-peddler**▷ *n* **1** A physician: *gynecological phenomena you pill-peddlers are always talking about* **2** A pharmacist or student of pharmacy (first form 1857+, second 1926+, third 1927+)

pilot *n* **1** The manager of a sports team **2** A jockey (1940s+) See SKY-

PILOT

pimp *n* **1** A very cool person: *Pimp, a cool guy who's popular with girls (1990s + Teenagers)* **2** An informer

pimping *n* Rapid questioning of a trainee by a superior [1980s + Medical; fr initials of *put in my place*]

pimpish *adj* Stylishly dressed (1980s + Teenagers)

pimple *n* The head (1818 +)

pimpmobile *modifier*: *The pimpmobile mantle will be donned by the 1983 Cougar* *n* **1** A fancy car used by a prostitute's procurer and manager: *There's a red Cadillac pimpmobile parked outside* **2** Any very fancy and overlavish car (1973 +)

pin *n* A leg (1530 +) **v** **1** To classify and understand someone; PEG, PIGEONHOLE: *He was pinned as a bad doctor (1960s +)* **2** To look over; survey; DIG: *just pinning the queer scene (1960s +)* **3** To declare a serious commitment to someone by giving or taking a fraternity pin (1935 + Students) See HAIRPIN, KING, PIN someone DOWN, PIN something DOWN, PIN someone'S EARS BACK, PIN ON, PINS, PIN-SHOT

pinball *v* To move about erratically: *Robin Williams' comedy routines pinball from one manic impression to another* [1980s + ; fr the game of *pinball*, found by 1911, in which a spring-propelled ball bounces about among obstacles]

pinch *n*: *make a respectable number of pinches to stay off the transfer list (1900 +)* **v** **1** To steal; SWIPE: *Who pinched the script? (1656 +)* **2** To arrest; BUST: *The stores will invite ill will if they pinch indiscriminately (1837 +)* See IN A PINCH

pinched *adj* **1** Arrested; apprehended: *pinched as he sped down the empty road* **2** Not having enough money to pay for necessities: *pinched until payday*

pincher *See* PENNY-PINCHER

pinch-gut *n* A miser; TIGHTWAD (1659+)

pinch-hit *v* **1** To bat for a player who has been removed from the lineup, usu at a critical point in the game (1927+ *Baseball*) **2** To substitute for someone else: *Silvey has been pinch-hitting as an assistant director (1927+)*

pinch hit *n phr* A hit made by a player who bats in place of another (1907+ *Baseball*)

pinchpenny *adj*: *your pinchpenny budgets* *n* A miser; PINCH-GUT, TIGHTWAD (1412 +)

pin someone down *v phr* **1** To get a definite answer, commitment, piece of information, etc, from someone: *He wouldn't say just when, I couldn't pin him down (1951+)* **2** To make someone immobile, esp to keep soldiers in place with constant or accurate fire (1940s+) **3** To identify or classify someone definitely; PEG, PIN: *I can't pin her down, but I've seen her before (1960s+)*

pin something down *v phr* To recognize, identify, or single out something definitely; make explicit: *I can't quite pin my feeling down (1951+)*

pineapple *n* A fragmentation grenade or small bomb; Chicago Pineapple, Italian Football: *Nobody tried to throw a pineapple in my*

lap [WWI Army; fr the resemblance of a fragmentation grenade, with its deeply segmented ovoid surface, to a *pineapple*]

pineapple, the *n* The dole; unemployment benefits: *too many people on the pineapple* [1937; fr the brand Dole *Pineapple*]

pin someone's ears back *v phr* To punish someone, either by words or blows; chasten: *a flip-lipped bastard who should have had his ears pinned back long ago* (1941 +)

pine (or wooden) overcoat *n phr* A coffin, esp a cheap one: *what they call in the army a pine overcoat* (entry form 1896 +, variant 1903 +)

ping *v* To get someone's attention with a sharp sound or other form of communication: *ping my accountant with April 15 getting close*

◁**pinga**▷ (PEEN gah) *n* The penis; BICHO [1960s + ; fr Cuban Spanish]

ping jockey *See* BLIP JOCKEY

ping-pong *v* **1** To refer a patient, esp a Medicaid recipient, to other doctors in order to maximize fees: *"Medicaid mills" or clinics reap enormous profits by such practices as "Ping Ponging"* **2** To go back and forth; change rapidly or regularly; shift; bounce [1972 + Medical; fr *Ping-Pong*, trademark for a manufacturer's table-tennis set and game]

ping-wing *n* A narcotics injection, esp in the arm (1950s + *Narcotics*)

pinhead *n* A stupid person (1896 +)

pinheaded *adj* Stupid (1901 +)

pink adj 1 Politically liberal; radical: *pink perspective on Palestine* (1837+) 2 Homosexual (1972+ *Homosexuals*) **n** 1 A white person; Gray (1926+ *Black*) 2 A politically liberal or mildly socialist radical; PARLOR PINK (1927+) 3 A legal certificate of car ownership (1950s+ *Hot rodders*) See IN THE PINK, TICKLED PINK

pink chord n phr A mistake in reading or improvising music (1930s+ *Musicians*)

pink collar adj phr 1 Traditionally held by women of the middle class: *Mature women tended to gravitate toward pink collar jobs as secretaries, teachers, nurses, and saleswomen* 2 working in a job traditionally held by women of the middle class: *the TV character to whom real-life blue-and pink-collar working women most relate* [1977+; modeled on *blue collar* and *white collar*]

pink elephants (or spiders) n Delirium tremens; any hallucination from heavy alcohol drinking

Pinkerton or Pink or Pinkie n An operative or agent of the Pinkerton detective agency: *how you suppose Pinkies get trainin'* (1850+)

pink ink n phr Romance novels; BODICE-RIPPERS (1970s+)

◁**pinko**▷ **adj:** How come those Niggers and those creepy pinko hippies call us names like “pigs”? (1957+) **n** A person of liberal or mildly radical socialist political opinions; PINK: *Nixon liked to call people pinkos* (1936+)

pink slip n phr 1 A discharge notice; WALKING PAPERS: *All 1,300 employees got pink slips today* (1915+) 2 A legal certificate of car ownership;

PINK: *I got the pink slip, daddy (1950s + Hot rodders)* **v:** *They had pink-slipped Hartz one brutal afternoon (1915 +)* *See* GET THE PINK SLIP, GIVE someone THE PINK SLIP

pink tea *n phr* A very exclusive party or event (1887 +)

pinky or **pinkie** *modifier:* **pinky ring** *n* The little finger: *Pardon my lifted pinky (1860 +)* [fr an earlier adjective sense, “small, tiny”] *See* PLAY STINKY-PINKY

Pinky *n* (also **Pink**) Nickname for a red-headed person (1930s +)

pinky-crooker *n* A person of affectedly refined tastes and manners: *You’ll find only the pinky-crookers at the concerts (1970s +)*

pinky-ringed *adj* Wearing a ring on the little finger, taken as an indication of raffishness or criminality: *A bespectacled, pinky-ringed chain-smoker, he used lingo straight out of Damon Runyon (1980s +)*

pinned *adj* **1** Having eye pupils contracted to a pinpoint: *He could see that her eyes were pinned from the dope (1970s + Narcotics)* **2** Seriously involved, by the act of taking or giving a fraternity pin (1935 + *Students*)

pin on *v phr* To make an accusation; inculcate; **HANG ON:** *Police indicated they had little to pin on them*

pin one on *See* HANG ONE ON

pins *n* The legs: *knocked clean off his pins (1530 +)*

pin-shot *n* A narcotics injection made with a safety pin and an eyedropper (1940s + *Narcotics*)

pin-splitter *n* An excellent golfer; also, an accurate shot made by such a golfer, to the pin (1926 +)

pint *See* HALF-PINT

pint-size or **pint-sized** *adj* small, like a child or small person [1938 + ; fr the notion of a pint being a small amount]

pin-up modifier: *pin-up collections and books* *n* **1** A picture, usu a provocative photograph, esp of a pretty young woman **2** A young woman shown in a pin-up: *Dorothy Lamour was the Army's favorite pin-up* (1941 +)

pin-up girl *See* SWEATER GIRL

pip *n* A minor skin lesion, esp of teenagers: *whiteheads, blackheads, goopheads, goobers, pips, acne trenches* (1676 +)

pip, *a*, or a **pipperoo** or a **pippin modifier:** **a pipperoo flick** *n phr* A person or thing that is remarkable, wonderful, superior, etc; BEAUT, HUMDINGER: *His wildest dreams have to be pips* (first form 1912 +, second 1942 +, third 1897 +) [fr *pippin*, a prized kind of apple; the shift was probably fr *peach* as one kind of excellent fruit to *pippin* as another]

pip, the *n phr* A severe case of being annoyed or depressed: *People gave him the pip* [1896 + ; fr a disease of birds, extended to mean various human ailments]

pipe¹ *n* Something easily done; CINCH, PIECE OF CAKE: *Getting in is a pipe* [1902 + Students; apparently fr *pipe dream*, suggesting something as easily or magically done as in a wishful dream]

pipe² *n* **1** A signal; letter or note (1940s + *Underworld*) **2** A telephone (1960s +) **3** (also **pipeline**) The tubular inner section of a breaking wave (1963 + *Surfers*) **v** **1**: *Bill Johnson pipes from Frisco that times are hard* **2** To speak up; say something; PIPE UP: *But I am not supposed to know that and do not pipe* (1784 +) **3** To look at; see; notice: *Did you pipe her hands?* (1846 +) **4** To hit someone on the head, esp with a metal pipe: *Someone was gonna pipe me* (1970s + *Underworld*) **5** To shoot or kill with a gun; NINE: *So what do you care who piped Devona?* (1990s + *Black street talk*) [all senses probably derived fr *pipe* as a conduit or a musical instrument; the sense “look at” is related to criminal slang “follow, keep under surveillance,” of obscure origin and difficult to relate to any sense of *pipe*; *pipe-gun*, “crude gun made of a pipe,” is found by 1973] See BIG PIPE, DOWN THE TUBE, HIT THE PIPE, LAY PIPE, LEAD-PIPE CINCH

pipe course *n phr* An easy course; GUT COURSE: *You are all freshmen and you may not be familiar with the term “pipe course”* (1927 + *College students*)

pipe down *v phr* To stop talking; speak more quietly: *The others got sore at him and told him to pipe down* [1900 + ; fr naval jargon, probably related to the use of the boatswain’s *pipe* for giving commands, or to its shrill noise]

pipe dream *n phr* An improbable and visionary hope, ideal, scheme, etc, such as an opium smoker might have: *He has some ambitious plans, mostly pipe dreams* (1896 +)

pipe-jockey *n* A jet fighter pilot (1950s + *Air Force*) **pipeline** *modifier* Directly communicated: *a pipeline review* **n** **1** A channel of

communication, esp a direct and special one: *You'd think he has a pipeline to Jesus (1921 +)* **2** A channel or course for routine production, processing, etc: *We'll have fewer men in what we call the "pipeline" who are moving (1955 +)* See IN THE PIPELINE, PIPE

pipe someone off v phr To blacklist someone [1940s+ Nautical; fr the nautical practice of blowing the boatswain's *pipe* to welcome someone aboard or usher someone off a ship]

pipes or set of pipes n or n phr The voice, esp the singing voice: to *bring that great set of pipes into your very own living room*

pipe up v phr To speak up; raise one's voice; SING OUT: *He piped up with a couple of smart-ass cracks [1889 + ; perhaps fr a play on the nautical pipe down; perhaps fr the playing of the pipe or pipes]*

pipsqueak n A small and insignificant person or thing [1910 + ; fr pip, high-pitched sound, and *squeak*]

pisher adj Insignificant; trivial; PIDDLING: *I'm only sad that critics take it seriously. It's just a little pisher half-hour* **n** A young, insignificant person; SQUIRT: *Roth's rise in a few short years from Hollywood pisher to Hollywood mogul was a classic movie scenario [1942 + ; fr Yiddish, "bed-wetter"]* See CALL SOMEONE FISHER

◁**piss¹**▷ **adj** Of wretched quality; PISS POOR: *Europe is a piss place for music (1970s +)* **n 1** Urine (1386 +) **2** A bad-tasting or poor-quality beer or liquor **v 1**: *He had to piss (1290 +)* **2** (also **piss and moan**) To complain; grumble; BITCH, KVETCH: *Angie's mother pissed and moaned about it for months (1940s +)* See EYES LIKE PISSHoles IN THE SNOW, FULL OF PISS AND VINEGAR, NOT HAVE A POT TO PISS IN, PANTHER PISS, TICKLE THE SHIT OUT OF

someone

◁**piss²**▷ **combining word** A term placed before an adjective to intensify its meaning: *piss-awkward/piss-elegant/ piss-poor/ piss-ugly* (1940s +)

◁**piss and vinegar**▷ **n phr** Energy; vitality; PEP, PIZZAZZ: *I was seventeen years old and 150 pounds of piss and vinegar* [1942 + ; *full of vinegar*, “interesting, entertaining,” is found in college slang by 1926] **See** FULL OF PISS AND VINEGAR

◁**piss and wind**▷ **n phr** Pretentious but feeble show; gaudy display: *They strut with the piss and wind traditional among victors in political intrigues* [1922 + ; perhaps fr the situation of a person who can urinate and flatulate, but not achieve a substantial defecation]

◁**pissant**▷ (PIHS ant) **adj** Insignificant; paltry: *this little pissant country*
n A despicable person; an insignificant wretch: *That sorry damn pissant* [1903 + ; extension of *pissant*, “ant,” which is found by 1661]

◁**piss around**▷ **v phr** To deliberately waste time or annoy somebody and waste their time: *just pissing around and will never be ready to go*

◁**piss artist**▷ **n phr** An unpleasant or despicable person, esp one who is drunk (1975 +)

◁**piss something away**▷ **v phr** To waste and dissipate something foolishly; squander: *There was a part of him that wanted to piss it away and be a loser* (1930s +)

◁**piss-cutter**▷ **n** A person or thing that is remarkable, wonderful, superior, etc; BEAUT, HUMDINGER, PIP, PISTOL: *Isn't our new colleague a piss-*

cutter? (1940s +)

◁**pissed off**▷ *adj phr* (Variations: **pissed** or **p'd** or **peed off** or **po'd**)
Angry; profoundly annoyed; indignant: *His face got all red-colored whenever he was pissed off/ He gets a little pissed like I'm making fun of him*

◁**piss-elegant**▷ *adj* (Variations: ◁**piss-ass** or **pissy** or **pissy-ass**▷)
Ostentatiously elegant; affecting great refinement; HOITY-TOITY: *a piss-elegant new wave Chinese restaurant and bar/ He was a jerk for needing to hang around with pissy queens (1972 +)*

◁**pisser**▷ *n* **1** A very difficult job or task; BALL-BUSTER, BITCH: *That climb was a pisser* **2** A person or thing that is remarkable, wonderful, superior, etc; PISS-CUTTER, PISTOL: *You're a pisser, you are* **3** A very funny person or thing: *What a pisser when he opened the wrong door by mistake* **4** A toilet: *windowless with a pisser and no benches [1940s + ; third sense fr the notion that one laughs hard enough to piss in one's pants]*

◁**pisshead**▷ *n* A despicable person; a stupid bore; ASSHOLE: *who made such a pisshead of herself (1970s +)*

◁**pissholes in the snow**▷ *See* EYES LIKE PISSHOLE IN THE SNOW

◁**piss ice water**▷ *v phr* To be very cool; exhibit sangfroid: *Patrick Stone had a reputation for pissing ice water at times like these (1980s +)*

◁**pissing contest (or match)**▷ *n phr* **1** An argument; disagreement; confrontational debate: *warned him against getting into a pissing contest with Bittman/ I'm not going to sit here and get in a pissin'*

match about petty problems like work shoes **2** A contest; an unofficial competition [1970s+; perhaps fr actual vying among boys as to who can project the urinary stream farthest]

◁**piss in(to) the wind**▷ **v phr** To waste one's time and effort: *Why do you think the smart people get out of the job? Because they realize they're pissing into the wind* [1980s+; *he who pisseth against the wind, wetteth his shirt* is found as an Italian proverb by 1642]

◁**piss-off**▷; **n** Anger; indignation: *There's a basic, well-justified piss-off all over the country (WWII armed forces)*

◁**piss off**▷ **interj** Leave me alone; get lost: *Piss off, you jerk (1958+)*
v phr To anger someone: *Don't piss off the policeman (1946+)*

◁**piss someone off**▷ **v phr** To make angry; arouse indignation (*WWII armed forces*)

◁**piss on someone or something**▷ **v phr** To dismiss or treat contemptuously; defile or violate; DAMN, FUCK, SOD • Often used as an angry and defiant dismissal: *I said thanks for the flower. He said piss on the flowers (1720+)*

◁**piss on one's foot (or in one's pocket) and call it rain**▷ **v phr** To lie and mislead cajolingly: *You're not just pissing on my foot and calling it rain, are you?/ You know the people up there. They'd piss in my pocket and tell me it's raining (1980s+)*

◁**piss on ice**▷ **v phr** To live well; EAT HIGH ON THE HOG, SHIT IN HIGH COTTON [1950+; fr the practice of putting cakes of *ice* in the urinals of expensive restaurants and clubs]

◁**piss poor**▷ **adj phr 1** (also **pea-poor**) Of wretched quality; inferior; bad: *outgrow its status as one of the many piss-poor modern dance groups playing college campuses/ I thought the tight ends were pea-poor* (1946 +) **2** Penniless; in pauperdom: *They're all born piss-poor* (1957 +)

◁**piss-ugly**▷ **adj** Very ugly; nasty and menacing: *Beer-bellied brutes peered at the world through piss-ugly eyes* (1970s +)

◁**piss up a rope**▷ *See* GO PISS UP A ROPE

◁**pissy or pissy-ass**▷ **adj** Stupid; silly; offensive: *Oh, don't be so pissy. You know I will when I'm sure* (1973 +) *See* PIDDLING, PISS-ELEGANT

pistol n 1 A person or thing that is remarkable, wonderful, superior, etc; **BEAUT, PIP, PISS-CUTTER:** *That Ruby Jean, she's a pistol* (1984 +) ◁**2**▷ A woman's breast; **BAZOOKA, JUG, TIT:** *Whoa! Look at the pistols on that new French teacher* (1990s +) **3** Hot pastrami (1950s + *Lunch counter*) [first sense probably a euphemism for *pisser*; lunch-counter sense because the eater feels as if shot in the stomach soon after eating hot pastrami] *See* HOT AS A THREE-DOLLAR PISTOL

pistol Pete n phr A zealous and effective lover; **COCKSMAN** [1940s + ; fr the usual jocular analogue between *pistol* and “penis,” “shooting” and having an orgasm, etc, reinforced by alliteration and the fact that *Peter* means “penis”]

pit v To take a racing car into the pit: *He pitted for fresh rubber and thus lost a lap* (1970s +) *See* CONVERSATION PIT, GREASE TROUGH, PASSION PIT

pit bull n phr An extremely vicious and aggressive person • *Rottweiler* is more common in British use: *Perot hired legal pit bull Roy Cohn to*

sandbag the Vietnam Memorial because he hated the design (1980s +)

pitch *n* **1** A hawker's or street vendor's place of business; High Pitch, Low Pitch (1849+) **2** The sales talk or spiel of a hawker: *He recited a part of his pitch/other gifts to prospective brides, along with a pitch to honeymoon at Holiday Inns (1876+)* **3** Asexual approach, esp a tentative one; PASS: *I never made a pitch with Herta (1930s +)* **v** **1:** *Louie pitches kitchen gadgets/He pitches household items like the Magic Towel* **2:** *I wouldn't try to pitch to that Ice Maiden* **3** To penetrate the anus in sex (1970s+ *Homosexuals*) See BUTTERFLY BALL, IN THERE PITCHING, MAKE A PITCH, THROW

pitchforks See RAIN CATS AND DOGS

pitch in *v phr* To set to work vigorously; help: *Let's all pitch in and get it done (1843+)*

pitching See IN THERE PITCHING

pitch into someone or something *v phr* To attack; assail forcibly (1829+)

pitchman *n* **1** A person who sells novelties, household items, clever toys and tricks, etc, on the streets or at a fair or carnival **2** Any advocate, promoter, persuader, spokesman, etc: *chief pitchman for Big Oil (1926+)*

pitchout *n* **1** A pitch thrown wide of the plate so that the catcher can more easily throw to one of the bases to forestall an attempted steal (1910+ *Baseball*) **2** A lateral pass from one back to another (1947+ *Football*)

pitch out v phr To make a pitchout (1910+ Baseball)

pitch (or fling) woo v phr To kiss and caress; NECK: *And she pitches some more woo with Dr Jan (1930s + Teenagers)*

pits, the n phr 1 The most loathsome place or situation imaginable: *This school is the pits 2* The armpits: *Your pits have BO (1953 +)*

pit stop n phr A stop so that people may go to the toilet: *Pit stop. Head run* [fr the *pit stops* made by racing cars for service, repair, rest, etc; possible pun on *piss stop*]

pix modifier: pix credit n 1 Movies; the movies; the FLICKS: *You ought to be in pix 2* Photographs, esp the artwork of a newspaper, magazine, book, etc; graphics (1932+)

pixilated adj 1 Crazy; eccentric; confused (1848+) **2** Drunk (1955+) [fr enchantment by *pixies*; revived and popularized by the 1936 movie *Mr. Deeds Goes to Town*]

pizzazz n Energy; power; PEP, PISS AND VINEGAR: *What's missing is overall pizzazz and pace* [1937+ ; origin unknown; perhaps echoically suggested by *piss, ass, and piss and vinegar*]

PJs or pjs n 1 Pajamas; JAMMIES, Peejays: *New arrivals like me still flapped about in pj's and robes/ as though I were running around in my PJs (1964+) 2* Housing projects: *We always lived in the PJs (1990s+ Black teenagers)*

place See NOPLACEVILLE

places See GO PLACES

plain Jane adj phr Unadorned; stark; NO-FRILLS: *"Plain Jane" is how one*

gun collector describes the look [1912 + ; the earliest examples read *plain Jane and no nonsense*]

plain vanilla *adj phr* unadorned; simple; basic: *more lushly appointed variants of plain vanilla family cars are due to arrive* [1970s + ; fr *vanilla ice cream, considered less fancy than other flavors*]

plain (or plain white) wrapper *n phr* An unmarked police car (1970s + *Citizens band*)

plane *n* A big car; BOAT: *My dad bought a plane from a used car dealer* (1980s + *Teenagers*)

◁**plank**¹▷ *v* To do the sex act with or to; SCREW: *had witless good fun with his children while his wife was out getting planked* [1970s + ; origin unknown]

plank² *See* WALK THE PLANK

plunk down (Variations: **plump down** or **clunk down** or **plank down** or **plank out** or **plank**) *v phr* **1** To put down with a thud or crash; place decisively: *an overstuffed chair some admirer had planked down next to the booth* **2** To pay money; put down or put up money; offer or bet money: *planked down a cool \$8,000,000/ plunked down \$65,000* [1839 + ; fr the hard striking of the *plank* of a table]

plant *n* **1** SHILL (1925 +) **2** A cache, esp of stolen goods (1785 +) **3** Evidence placed so as to incriminate (1912 +) **4** A spy, esp a police spy: *The new guy turned out to be a plant* (1812 +) *v* **1** To bury; hide (1610 +) **2** To place evidence secretly so that someone will be incriminated: *Someone is planting evidence* (1865 +) **3** To place a

blow: *He planted a left on my poor snoot (1920+)*

planting *n* A funeral: *I get in on a lot of these plantings (1940s +)*

plaster *n* **1** A banknote, esp a one-dollar bill: *If you need a couple of plasters until Ed gets out, tell me (1940s +)* **2** A person who surreptitiously follows another; shadow; TAIL: *He probably knew he had a plaster by this time (1940s+)* **3** A subpoena or summons; arrest warrant (1950s+) **v** To cover or apply generously: *They plastered the city with leaflets (1585+)* [money sense fr *shinplaster*, an early 19th-century term for “currency of little value or very small denomination”]

plastered *adj* Drunk (1912+)

plastic *adj* False and superficial; meretricious; HOKEDUP, SLICK, PHONY: *in California, a plastic society (1960s+ Counterculture)* *n* A credit card; monetary credit afforded by the use of credit cards (1979+) [second sense fr *plastic money*, which is found by 1974]

plate *See* HAVE one’S HANDS FULL, HOME PLATE, OFF one’S PLATE

plater *n* A racehorse, esp an inferior one; BEETLE, PIG (1920s+ *Horse racing*) *See* SELLING PLATER

platforms or **pyramids** *n* Shoes with extremely thick soles and heels [1970s+; in the sense “very thick soles,” found by 1945]

platter *n* A phonograph record (1931+)

platter, the *n* Home plate (1940s+ *Baseball*)

play *n* publicity; media coverage: *The dangers of the Free Trade Agreement are getting more play (1929+)* **v** **1** To acquiesce;

cooperate; **PLAY BALL:** *They'd come back and get her, if I didn't play with them (1937+)* **2** To go very well; succeed: *The O'Connor appointment's playing. You're on a roll, Mr President (1980s + Show business)* See **BONEHEAD PLAY, GRANDSTAND PLAY, MAKE A PLAY FOR**

play along v phr **PLAY BALL (1929+)**

play around v phr 1 To do something, esp one's job, casually or frivolously; **HORSE AROUND:** *Quit playing around and start playing hardball (1960+)* **2** To be sexually promiscuous; **SLEEP AROUND:** *She plays around (1929+)*

play around with someone v phr 1 To flirt or dally with; have a sexual involvement with (1929+) **2** To treat lightly or insultingly; challenge or provoke: *I wouldn't play around with that gorilla if I were you (1960+)*

play at something v phr To pretend to do something: *Play tennis? Well, I play at it (1840+)*

play ball v phr 1 To begin; get started: *Let's play ball now; it's time (1867+)* **2** To cooperate; collaborate; acquiesce: *I might have played ball just a little, but I scorned to (1903+)* **3** To deal honestly and fairly: *He was playing ball with Artrim (1944+)* [fr baseball; the first date refers to the first record of a baseball umpire's call *Play ball!*]

◁**play bouncy-bouncy**▷ **v phr** To do the sex act, esp in the superior position; copulate: *He keeps cool while she plays bouncy-bouncy on him (1960s+)*

playboy n A man devoted to amusement; bon vivant; **GOOD-TIME CHARLIE,**

MAN-ABOUT-TOWN (1829+)

play catch-up (or catch-up ball) v phr 1 To play a game determinedly and desperately when one is losing: *when college wishbone teams go to the air to play catch-up* 2 To work to recover from a disadvantage, defeat, etc: *For the last two years it's been a matter of playing catch-up ball with the budget* (1971+)

play checkers (or chess) v phr To move about from seat to seat in a movie theater, soliciting possible sex partners (1972+ *Homosexuals*)

play close to the chest (or the vest) v phr To be secretive and uncommunicative; keep one's counsel: *So you had to play your cards very close to your chest/Nominees have played their cards close to the vest* [1950s+; fr the practice of a careful cardplayer]

play dirty v phr To use unethical, illegal, or injurious means; be deceptive and tricky; chicanery: *When he started in politics he didn't mean to play dirty* [1940s+; the related form *play dirt* is found by 1908]

play doctor n A writer who specializes in altering and improving other writers' plays (1940s+ *Theater*)

play down v phr To treat with little emphasis; LOW-KEY: *They decided to play down the chief's faux pas* (1934+)

played out adj phr 1 Exhausted; worn out; AUSGESPIELT, FRAZZLED: *I was played out, and quit at once* 2 No longer useful, viable, fashionable, etc: *I think the alienation theme is about played out* (1862+)

player *n* 1 A bettor: *A lot of players are avoiding OTB (1483+)* 2:
some of his fellow "players" (as pimps refer to themselves) (1974+) 3
An active participant: *Man, I'm a player. I gotta be watched (mid-1980s+)* See CHALK-EATER, HORSEPLAYER, PICCOLO PLAYER

play fast and loose *v phr* To behave in a recklessly irresponsible or deceitful manner toward someone or something; to treat someone or something quite unfairly or carelessly: *playing fast and loose with the facts*

play footsie (Variations: **footsy-footsy** or **footsy-wootsy** or **footy-footy**, or all these spelled with **ie** replacing the final **y**) *n* 1
Amorous and clandestine touching and rubbing of feet between a couple; pedal dalliance: *I played footsie with her during Carmen* 2
Any especially close relationship between persons or parties:
Truman is plenty burned up over the way Chiang Kai-shek played footy-footy with the Republicans (1935+)

play someone for a fool (or sucker) *v phr* To take advantage of someone's gullibility, greed, etc: *Some blokes can never see when they are being played for suckers (1881+)*

play for keeps (or rough) *v phr* To be intent and serious to the point of callousness; PLAY HARDBALL: *We're out here man for man and playin' for keeps [1861+; fr the game of marbles and other children's games where the tokens may be either returned or kept by the winner]*

play games *v phr* To maneuver and manipulate cunningly; toy and gamble: *Don't play games with me, Linda (1970s+)*

playgirl *n* A woman devoted to amusement (1934 +)

◁**play grabass**▷ *v phr* To indulge in sexual clutching and touching; to feel and fondle; GROPE • Sometimes used metaphorically: *were currently inside a doughnut shop, playing grabass with the counter girl/His reluctance to play what he called grabass with Congress (1940s +)*

play handies *v phr* To indulge in the mutual fondling of hands: *Beneath the counter they were playing handies (1960s +)*

play hardball *v phr* To be intent and serious to the point of callousness; PLAY FOR KEEPS: *You want to play hardball, here we go [1973 + ; fr the presumed distinction in difficulty, severity, and manliness between baseball, that is, *hardball*, and softball]*

play hell (or merry hell) with something *v phr* To damage or destroy: *The rain had played hell with business/ Gloria played merry hell with the filing system [1803 + ; fr *play hell and Tommy*, attested in the mid-19th century and said to be fr earlier *play Hal and Tommy*, in reference to the behavior of Henry VIII and his minister Thomas Cromwell]*

◁**play hide the weenie (or salami or sau-sage)**▷ *v phr* To do the sex act; copulate; SCREW: *So Craig suggested that we play hide the salami (1980s +)*

play hooky (or hookey) *v phr* To stay away from work and duty, or esp from school without an excuse; be truant [1848 + ; probably fr *hook it*]

play in Peoria *v phr* To succeed in areas distinct from such foci of

power as Washington and New York or the Northeast in general:
When you're under a deadline, it's hard to judge what will play in Peoria [1970s + ; fr the theater sense of *play*, to succeed on the stage; perhaps echoing Harold Ross's criterion that he wanted *The New Yorker* to appeal to "a little old lady in Peoria"]

play inside oneself v phr To play nicely within one's capacity: *Jon did a nice job. He played right inside himself* (1990s +)

play into someone's hands v phr To give an advantage to one's opponent: *Signing that is just playing into their hands* (1705 +)

play it by ear v phr To handle a situation instinctively and extemporaneously, rather than by informed planning; improvise: *We didn't have much to go on, so we just had to play it by ear* [1961 + ; fr the playing of music imitatively, without training and notation; the phrase is found by 1674]

play it cool v phr To behave in a calm, controlled, uncommitted way; be watchful and impassive: *We asked for a price and the agent "played it cool"* (1955 +)

play it (or play) safe v phr To choose a cautious line of behavior; avoid much risk: *Now we're ahead, let's play it safe* (1919 +)

play kissie (Variations: **kissy-face** or **kissy-facey** or **kissie-kissie** or **kissy-poo** or **lickey-face** or **smacky lips** may replace **kissie**) **v phr**
1 To kiss and caress; MAKE OUT, NECK: *Salesmen got them to buy an awful lot of perfume when they weren't busy playing lickey-face/Newlyweds play kissy-poo in a resort hotel* **2** To be friendly and flattering; **PLAY UP TO** someone: *We have to play kissie with him* (1970s +)

playmate *n* One's companion in the pursuit of pleasure, esp of sexual delight (1970s+)

play (or play Man) on someone *v phr* To treat roughly; intimidate physically: *If Tony stole your woman you'll get your chance to play on him/ Dreamer can't play Man on Shake. Shake'll dust his ass* (1970s+)

play out *v phr* To develop; transpire; BREAK OUT, SHAKE OUT: *How do you See this playing out in your own State?* [1854+; fr the finishing of a stage play]

play pattycake *v phr* To cooperate cozily; PLAY FOOTSIE: *They point to the hypocrisy of local law enforcement that plays pattycake with the Mafia up on the Strip* [1976+; fr a game one plays with infants]

play rough *See* PLAY FOR KEEPS

plays *See* the WAY IT PLAYS

play second fiddle *v phr* To be in an inferior position; lack power or will to lead: *They won't play second fiddle to their spouses anymore* (1809+)

play snuggle-bunnies *v phr* To kiss and caress; cuddle amorously; PLAY KISSIE: *Mr De Varennes is playing snuggle-bunnies with Mrs Martin* (1970s+)

◁**play stinky-pinky (or stink-finger)**▷ *v phr* FINGERFUCK (1903+)

play the something card *v phr* To use an exploitive or inflammatory maneuver: *Milosevic saw that the best way to hold on to power was to play the nationalist card* (1886+)

play the deuce (or devil) with something v phr To wreck or damage something: *That will play the deuce with his election chances (1834+)*

play the field v phr To have a number of sex or love partners, rather than settling on one [1936+; fr gamblers who bet on other horses than the favorites]

play the ponies v phr To bet on horse races (1908+)

◁**play the skin flute**▷ **v phr** To do fellatio (1940s+)

play to the grandstand v phr To try ostentatiously to please the audience; HOT DOG (1888+ *Baseball*)

play up v phr To emphasize; feature; make the most of: *Hey, don't play up your bad points* [1909+; fr the featuring of a story in a newspaper]

play up to someone v phr To flatter; be compliant: *If you play up to him he'll think you're brilliant* [1826+; fr the behavior of an actor who gives featuring support to another]

◁**play with oneself**▷ **v phr** To masturbate; JACK OFF: *I was going with girls and I didn't feel the urge to play with myself (1896+)*

play (or deal or operate) with a full deck v phr 1 To be sane and reasonable; have normal intelligence • Usu in the negative: *Neither of the poor things was playing with a full deck/ But she is dealing with a full deck, as it were/ He wasn't playing with a full deck of cards 2* To be honest and straightforward; avoid deception: *He has bluffed you into thinking he was playing with a full deck (1970s+)*

play with fire v phr To do something risky or dangerous: *playing with fire to put too much into that new Web site*

play with someone's head v phr To toy with psychological influence for one's advantage; play a "mind game": *He's playing with my head, and I don't like it (1990 +)*

plea *See* COP A PLEA

plebe n A first-year student at Annapolis or West Point [1833 + Service academy; fr *plebeian*, "lower-class person," fr Latin]

pledge n A student who has agreed to join a certain college fraternity or sorority (1901 + *Students*) **v**: *Without a second thought MacCrimmon pledged Xi Phi*

plenty adv Very; very much; extraordinarily: *I was plenty cautious (1842 +)*

plink v 1 To shoot: *I could walk up to him, plink his eyes out (1966 +)*
2 To make a series of short, light, ringing sounds

plonk n 1 Inferior wine; cheap wine: *It's a humble plonk, but you'll like it (British fr Australian 1930 +)* **2** A boring and obnoxious person; PILL (1960s +) [wine sense fr French *vin blanc*, "white wine"; second sense perhaps fr the dull sound *plonk*]

plonked adj Drunk (1943 +)

plotz (PLAhts) v To burst with emotion, frustration, anger, etc: *She's so stoked she could plotz* *See* PLOTZED (1967 +)

plotzed adj Drunk: *even smashed as you were, friend, plotzed out of your wits* [1962 + ; probably fr Yiddish *plotzen*, German *platzen*,

“burst, split,” reflecting the same notion of violent destruction as *smashed, bombed, etc*]

◁**plow or plough**▷ **v** To do the sex act with or to a woman; SCREW (1606+ and probably before)

plow (or plough) into v phr 1 To collide with very hard; ram: *so long as they don't fry in the sun or plow into an atmosphere* (1972+) 2 To attack heartily; assault (1940s +)

ploy n A device or stratagem; a move, esp one designed to disconcert an opponent while keeping one's position; a shrewd maneuver [1722+; apparently fr Scots dialect; popularized by the late British humorist Stephen Potter]

PLU (pronounced as separate letters) **adj** Admirable and fitting; discriminating: *The wife admires their living room (“Very PLU, people like us”)* [1970+; fr *people like us*]

pluck¹ v To rob or cheat; fleece: *These bimbos once helped pluck a bank* [1400+; fr the image of *plucking* a chicken]

◁**pluck²**▷ **v** To do the sex act with or to; SCREW [1950s+; a euphemism for *fuck*]

plug¹ n 1 An inferior old horse; NAG (1860+) 2 An average or inferior prizefighter (1915+) [perhaps fr Dutch *plug*, “a sorry nag,” related to Swiss-German *pflag* and to Danish *plag*, “foal”]

plug² adj (also **plugged**) Worthless; PHONY: *And furthermore the author does not give a plug damn* (1888+) **n** A silver dollar (1900+) **v** 1 To shoot, esp shoot to death: *The mugger got plugged by an indignant*

on-looker (1870+) **2** To do the sex act to; BOFF, POKE, SCREW (1901+) [all senses fr the notion of *plug* as hole-filler; the second sense may be influenced by the notion of inferiority in *plug*¹] **See** PULL THE PLUG, SPARK PLUG

plug³ **n** Positive publicity: *I certainly would appreciate him giving me a plug with the owners* (1902+) **v** **1** (also **plug along** or **plug away**) To work or study steadily and fairly hard; keep busy but not excitingly so: *She's plugging away, though* (1888+) **2** To give a flattering appraisal, esp with a view to selling something; advocate and support; cry up: *Cosmetic manufacturers plugged products to give women ersatz tan/ If you'll plug my book, I'll plug yours* (1906+) [fr Oxford University slang, apparently in imitation of heavy plodding steps, or perhaps the steps of an old and tired horse; sense of selling or advocating fr the fact that such commendation was originally constant and repetitive]

plug for v phr To support actively; cheer for; ROOT FOR: *She was plugging for the coalition candidate* (1900+)

plugged in (or into) adj phr **1** In direct touch with; sensitive to and aware of: *She's plugged in, in ways I don't quite understand* **2** TURNED ON [late 1960s+; fr the metaphor of a person as an electrical or electronic device]

plugged nickel **See** NOT WORTH A PLUGGED NICKEL **plugger n** **1** A diligent but not brilliant worker or student; dependable drudge (1900+) **2** A hired killer; HIT MAN (1940s+ *Underworld*) **3**: *The Packers reluctantly shifted George Koonce from the inside linebacker (plugger) position* (1990s+ *Football*)

plug in (or into) v *phr* **1** To become a part of; participate in; gain access to: *Parents were beginning to be plugged directly into the decision-making process* **2** To discover and exploit to one's advantage; tap: *Nixon has plugged into a great national yearning* [late 1960s +; fr the notion of the electrical *plug* and socket]

plugola n **1** Illicit payment, often not in money, given to media people for mentioning commercial products in noncommercial contexts (1959 +) **2** Such a mention; PLUG [based on *payola*]

plug-ugly n **1** A rowdy; tough; GORILLA, HOOD (1856 +) **2** A prizefighter; PUG (1940s +) [origin unknown; perhaps fr rowdy fire companies in Baltimore, hence fr *fireplug*; perhaps fr New York toughs of the 1830s who wore top hats over their ears as helmets; perhaps related to *plug-muss*, “a fight,” found by the early 1950s]

plum modifier: *who recently got the plum job of heading the county's Department of Human Resources* **n** Something highly prized, esp an easy job with high pay and prestige, often given for political favors: *The winners get to pick all the plums* (1825 +) [probably influenced by Little Jack Horner's feat of reaching in his thumb and pulling out a *plum* (in fact a raisin); compare early 1800s British *plummy*, “good, desirable”]

plumb adv Completely; entirely; STONE: *What he said was plumb silly* [1748 +; fr notions of exact extent and precision associated with the *plumb bob* or sailor's *plumb line* (for measuring depth of water), ultimately fr Latin *plumbum*, “lead”]

plumber n **1** A urologist (1950s + *Medical*) **2** A member of a White

House group under President Richard M Nixon, which exerted itself to stop various leaks of confidential information: *One of the jobs carried out by the plumbers was burglarizing the office of Dr Daniel Ellsberg's former psychiatrist (1972 +)* **v** To botch; ruin: *I tho't I plumbered it (1930s +)*

plumber's (or working man's) smile **n phr** A view of the upper cleft of the gluteus maximus as a male's pants descend when he is bent over doing work: *don't want to see plumber's smiles from the town road crew*

plumbing **n 1** A trumpet (1930 + *Jazz musicians*) **2** The digestive, excretory, and reproductive systems and organs (1950s +)

plummy **adj** Rich and sonorous; orotund and fruity; unctuous; SMARMY: *the rich, plummy voice of Edward Arnold (1881 +)*

plump or **plunk** **adv** Precisely; exactly; squarely; SMACK [1734 +; fr *plumb*]

plump for someone or something **v phr** To choose; support; advocate (1834 +)

plunge **v** To bet or speculate recklessly (1876 +)

plunk **n** A dollar: *my five thousand plunks (1891 +)* **v** To shoot (1888 +) [echoic]

plush or **plushy** **adj** Luxurious; stylish; costly: *a swank, plush, exclusive cabaret club/ singer Ella Logan at the plushy Casablanca (1927 +)* **n**: *All the plush in the world won't tidy up his vulgar soul* [fr the soft and costly fabric, fr French *pluche*]

po See PISSED OFF

pocket See DEEP POCKET, IN someone's POCKET, IN THE POCKET, OUT OF POCKET

pocket litter n phr The usual miscellany in a person's pocket: *just a driver's license and some pocket litter (1973 +)*

◁**pocket pool (or polo)**▷ **n phr** The fondling of one's own genitals with a pocketed hand (*entry form 1930s +, variant 1980s +*)

pocket rocket n phr A penis, esp one with an erection: *covering the pocket rocket with a towel*

po'd See PISSED OFF

pod n Marijuana; POT: *Diane smoked jive, pod, and tea [1952 +*
Narcotics; origin unknown; perhaps fr the *pod*, or seed container, the flowering and fruiting head of the female cannabis plant; perhaps an alteration of *pot*]

pod people (or person or pods) n phr Stupid, unfeeling, machinelike people; ZOMBIES: *Have body snatchers invaded America's airwaves? Is this pure pop for pod people?/ And find you're a bug. A pod person?* [1956 +; fr the extraterrestrial creatures depicted in the 1956 movie *Invasion of the Body Snatchers*, who spawn in *pods* and take over the bodies of human beings; based on a novel by Daniel Mainwaring]

podspeak n Automatic, meaningless, ritual talk, the idiom of pod people; tedious bromides: *Clerks utter such podspeak as the inescapable "Have a nice day" (1960s +)*

Podunk (POH dunk) **n** The legendary small country town; East Jesus,

JERK TOWN [1843 + ; originally an Algonquian place name meaning “a neck or corner of land,” used for several places in New England; also the name of a small tribe]

poetry slam *n phr*: *A poetry slam is a contest for poets. Anyone who spends his or her leisure hours pouring his or her soul onto paper can enter a slam (1990s +)*

po-faced *adj* Without expression; showing a neutral mask; **DEADPAN**, **POKER-FACED**, **STRAIGHT-FACED**: *The famous portraits of the Father of our Country as an unsmiling, po-faced stuffed shirt do him an injustice [1934+ British; fr poker-faced]*

pog *n* A small cardboard disk used by children in games: *Hey, gimme back my pog! (1990s +)*

pogey or **pogie** or **pogy** (**POH** gee) *n* **1** A poor-house, workhouse, or old folks’ home (1891 + *Hoboes*) **2** A jail; **POKEY** (1940s +) **3** **POGEYBAIT** (1918 +) **4** Any form of charity or government relief [origin unknown; perhaps fr the common name of the trash fish menhaden, as suggesting something cheap, common, and to be caught with bait; perhaps fr the Southern pronunciation of *porgy*, another fish of a similar quality]

pogey (bait) *n phr* (Variations: **pogie** or **pogy** or **poggie** or **poggy** may replace **pogey**) Candy and cake, etc; sweets; nonmilitary food and delicacies carried on field exercises [1918 + ; so called because they could be used in the seduction of boys and young men, *pogues*, into homosexual acts]

poindexter *n* An overly studious person; **MERV**, **NERD**, **PENCIL NECK** (1980s +)

Students)

point *n* **1** The jaw (1925 + *Prizefighting*) **2** A hypodermic needle; SPIKE (1960s + *Narcotics*) **3** (also **point man**) A forward reconnaissance man; lookout man; scout who warns his associates of danger and may get the first shock of attack: *He is the point man for organized labor* (1940s + *Armed forces & underworld*) **See** BROWNIE POINTS

pointed head *n phr* **1** A stupid, duncelike mind; a brainless cranium: *I hope you got that idea into your pointed head, creep* (1940s +) **2** An intellectual; BIGDOME, EGGHEAD: *the guys who think we're all a bunch of pointed heads and all we want is poetry* (1972 +)

pointer *n* An item of advice or instruction: *She gave me a few pointers about how to say it* (1883 +) **See** FOURPOINTER

point man (or **person**) *n* A person who plays a crucial, often hazardous role in the forefront of an enterprise; a person designated to take the lead in a project or task: *point man on the new project*

point-shaving *n* The illegal practice, esp on the part of athletes, of controlling the score of a game, match, series, etc, so that professional gamblers will have to pay less to the bettors or will win for themselves (1971 + *Sports & gambling*)

point-spread *n* The difference between the handicapping points added or subtracted for various teams in football and basketball betting (1973 + *Sports & gambling*)

point the finger *v phr* To accuse or vilify: *Don't be too quick to point the finger in his case* [1829 + ; the dated instance refers to *the finger*

of scorn]

pointy-head or **pointhead** *n* **1** A stupid person; TURKEY **2** An intellectual; EGGHEAD: *The “pointy heads” are impractical as politicians (1972 +)*

pointy-headed *adj* **1** Intellectual; cultured: *uninterested in any of the pointy-headed criticism generated in the last two decades* **2** Stupid; idiotic [1968 + ; said to have been coined by Governor George Wallace of Alabama]

poison *n* **1** A situation, person, event, etc, that portends harm and evil; MURDER: *Don’t try that route, it’s poison (1918 +)* **2** Liquor, esp cheap whiskey (1805 +) *See* SNAKE POISON, NAME YOUR POISON

poison-pen letter *n phr* A malicious anonymous letter; an obscene crank letter (1929 +)

poison pill *n phr* Any financial stratagem that causes a company to be unattractive to takeover bidders: *Time Warner’s poison pill effectively bars an investor from owning more than 15 percent of the company’s outstanding shares (mid-1980s + Business & finance)*

poke¹ *n* **1** A cowboy: *Each poke pays his own transportation to the Rodeo (1928 +)* **2** SLOWPOKE (1940s +) <3> The sex act; PIECE OF ASS (1700 +) **v** **1** To herd cattle (1940s +) **2** To hit the ball, esp to hit fairly lightly with precise aim: *He just poked it into the hole (1880s + Baseball)* <3> To do the sex act with or to; SCREW (1868 +) *See* BUY A PIG IN A POKE, COW-PUNCHER

poke² *n* **1** A wallet, pocket, or purse: *with only about \$85 in my poke (1859 +)* **2** Money; one’s bankroll (1926 +) [fr Southern dialect,

“pocket, bag,” fr Middle English, ultimately fr Old Norman French]

poke around *v phr* To examine or search, esp in a dilatory way: *He might know we’ve been poking around the computer files* [1809+; the dated instance reads *poke about*]

poke fun *v phr* To tease; jape; mock (1840+)

poke one’s nose into something *v phr* To pry and meddle; examine: *and to poke your nose into all the most interesting places* (1860s+)

poker face *n phr* **1** An expressionless face; neutral mask; DEADPAN **2** A person whose face is usually expressionless (1885+)

poker-faced *adj* Without expression; showing a neutral mask; DEADPAN, STRAIGHT-FACED: *She’s great at poker-faced zingers* (1923+)

pokery *See* JIGGERY-POKERY

pokey or **poky** *n* A jail; CLINK, SLAMMER: *My thoughts centered around the prospect of the “Pokey”* [1919+; origin unknown]

pokey² or **poky** *adj* **1** Slow; dawdling; sluggish: *What a pokey waiter* (1856+) **2** Insignificant; paltry: *a pokey little town* (1849+) *See* HOKEY-POKEY

pol (PAHL) *n* A politician: *only another pol on the take* (1942+)

◀**polack**▶ (POH lahk) (also **Polack** or **pollack** or **Pollack** or **pollock** or **Pollock**) *n* A Pole or a person of Polish extraction • It is curious that this word is somewhat pejorative in English even though it is the Polish word for “Pole” (1879+)

pole *See* BEANPOLE, NOT TOUCH someone or something WITH A TEN-FOOT POLE

police or **police up** *v* or *v phr* To clean up a camp, barracks, parade

ground, etc; make neat and orderly (1851 + Army)

policeman *n* ENFORCER: *You had to bring in somebody who was as tough, or brutal, as they were. The kind of terminology for this role in hockey was “policeman (1980s +)*

Polish *See* IS THE POPE POLISH

polisher *See* APPLE-POLISHER

polish off *v phr* **1** To eat; consume, esp quickly and heartily: *I had polished off a platter of beans (1873 +)* **2** To finish; accomplish: *He polished off the week’s quota in four days (1837 +)* **3** To put out of action; defeat; kill: *Polish him off by crowning him with a Coca-Cola bottle (1829 +)* [fr the notion of finishing a piece of work by giving it a final *polish*]

politician *n* A person who succeeds through charm, diplomacy, mutual favors, etc • The term is mildly derogatory in suggesting a lack of true substance: *If you called him an asshole to his face you’re no politician (1592 +)*

politico (peə LI ti koh) *n* A politician, esp a spectacular or unscrupulous one: *the heavy-duty Bay State politicoes [1630 + ; fr Spanish or Italian]*

pollack or **pollock** or **Pollock** *See* POLACK

polluted *adj* Drunk (1912 +)

Pollyanna *n* An irrepressibly cheery person; undaunted optimist: *or were we all a crowd of Pollyannas? [1913 + ; fr the title and heroine of a novel by Eleanor Hodgman Porter, 1868-1920]*

po-mo *adj* Postmodern; up-to-date; trendy: *in a politically correct, bias-free, po-mo (post-modern) way (1990s +)*

◀**pom-pom**▶ *n* The sex act; SCREWING [WWII Army; perhaps fr the echoic name *pom-pom* of various rapid-fire automatic guns, found by 1889]

ponce *n* A pimp, or any man supported by a woman (1872+ *chiefly British*) *v*: *He quit work and took to poncing* [origin unknown; perhaps fr French *pensionnaire*, “boarder, lodger, person living without working”]

pond, the *n* The ocean (1641+) *See* the BIG POND

pond scum *n phr* A worthless person, often mean-spirited (*College students*)

◀**pong¹ or Pong**▶ *n* A Chinese or a person of Chinese extraction (1906+ *Australian*)

pong *n* A smell; a stink: *when I catch that pong in the air* [1919+; origin unknown; perhaps fr Romany *pan*, “stink”]

pony *n* **1** A literal translation of a foreign-language school text, used as a cheating aid (1827+ *Students*) **2** Any cheating aid used by a student (1970s+) **3** A small, bell-shaped liquor glass, used esp for brandy and liqueurs (1849+) **4** A racehorse: *Do you follow the ponies?* (1907+) **5** A chorus girl or burlesque dancer: *The ponies slumped into place* (1905+) [in all senses fr the thing being small like a *pony*; the student senses, which have or have had *horse* and *trot* as synonyms, may also suggest something that carries one, gives one a free ride]

pony act *See* DOG AND PONY ACT

pony up *v phr* To pay; FORK OVER: *He had ponied up a silver quarter*
[1824+; fr earlier British *post the pony*,

“pay,” fr 16th-century *legem pone*, “money,” fr the title of the Psalm
for Quarter Day, March 25, the first payday of the year]

poo or **poo** *interj* A mild exclamation of disbelief, dismay,
disappointment, etc: *Oh poo, I dropped it (1602+)* **n** Excrement; DO,
POO-POO • Along with *poop*, this is a euphemism used by and to
children: *Zoo Poo garden fertilizer is made from the waste of all*
manner of exotic creatures (1950s+) *See* CUTESY-POO, HOT POO, ICKY

-poo *combining word* Little; silly little • A nonsense word used after
diminutive forms to give an arch baby-talk effect: *settled down for a*
well-bred nappy-poo (1970s+)

pooch¹ **n** A dog: *a card for your pooch* [1924+; origin obscure] *See*
SCREW THE POOCH

pooch² *v* To kick a high and relatively short punt: *Bracken has not*
been much of a coffin-corner kicker, choosing instead to pooch the ball
in hopes that it gets downed near the goal line [1980s+ Football;
origin obscure]

pooched out *adj phr* Protruding: *round shoulders, pooched out*
stomach [1970s+; perhaps related to British dialect *pooch*, “to
thrust out the lips sullenly]

poochy *adj* Doggy; doglike: *a poochy smell* **n** POOCH (1920s+)

poodle-faker **n** 1 LADIES' MAN (1902+) 2 A self-important newly

commissioned officer (*WWI Army fr British*) [first sense fr the notion that such a man would emulate a *poodle* or other lapdog to ingratiate himself with women]

◁**poof**▷ *n* (also **poofter** or **poove** or **pouffe**) A male homosexual; FAGGOT, QUEER [British 1850 + , poofter fr Australian by 1903; origin unknown; perhaps fr *puff*, attested in mid-1800s British hobo slang as “homosexual”]

pooh-bah *n* An important person; a self-important person; BIG SHOT, HONCHO, VIP: *where presidents and pooh-bahs commune* [1888 + ; fr the character in Gilbert and Sullivan’s *The Mikado* who holds many high offices, the name probably coined fr two exclamations of contempt and derision]

poohed or **poohed out** *adj* or *adj phr* POOPED (1940s +)

pooh-pooh or **poo-poo** *v* To dismiss lightly and contemptuously; airily deprecate; deride: *Idon’t poo-poo his talent, just his character* (1827 +)

pool *See* DIRTY POOL, POCKET POOL

poolroom *n* An illegal bookmaker’s establishment: *a poolroom from auction-pool betting* (1875 + *Horse racing & gambling*)

◀**poon tang** or **poon**▶ *n phr* or *n* A black woman regarded as a sex object or partner: *Eye that poon tang there/ just about to get a little poon/ watching all that young poon* [1910 + ; probably fr French *putain*, “prostitute, by way of New Orleans Creole]

poop¹ *n* Information; data; SCOOP: *The girl’s given us the complete poop*

See POOP SHEET (1930s + Army & students)

poop² *n* **1** Excrement; POO • Along with *poo*, this is a euphemism for use to and by children (1744 +) **2** A contemptible, trifling person; PILL • Often used ironically and affectionately, esp of an old person: *a sweet old poop who was seventy-six* (1915 +) **v** **1**: *The dog pooped on the rug* (1903 +) **2** To tire; fatigue; BUSH: *Being with him poops me exceedingly* (1932 +) [probably fr a merging of 14th-century *poupen*, “to toot,” with 15th-century *poop*, “the rear part of a ship,” fr Latin *puppis* of the same meaning; the fatigue sense may be related to the condition of a ship that is *pooped*, “has taken a wave over the stern”]

◁**poop chute**▷ *n phr* The anus: *I fingered her pussy and poop chute* (1970s +)

pooped or **pooped out** *adj* or *adj phr* Exhausted; deeply fatigued; BEAT, BUSHED: *starting to get pooped out* [1930 +; fr a British nautical term describing a ship that has been swept by a wave at the stern; perhaps related to *pooped*, “overcome, bested,” found by 1551]

pooper *n* The posterior; ASS, BUTT: *What a fuckin’ pooper on that little snatch* (1970s +) *See* PARTY-POOPER

pooper (or **poop**) **scooper** *n phr* A shovel and container set designed for cleaning one’s dog’s feces off the sidewalk, and, by extension, anything so used: *to buy a pooper scooper or something like it* (1972 +)

poophead *n* A very unhappy person; also, someone who acts stupidly

poopicate *v* To defecate; SHIT: *You’re sure to be wondering how bats*

poopicate when they sleep upside down (1990s +)

poo-poo *n* Excrement; POO, POOP • A euphemism used to and by children: *He reverts to that childishness of poo-poo caca [1970s + ; fr poop]. See* POOH-POOH

poop (or poo) out *v phr* To fail; lose energy and impetus; FIZZLE: *They would have won, but they suddenly just pooped out (1926 +)*

poop sheet *n phr* Any set of data, instructions, official notices, etc: *Here's the poop sheet from the comptroller [1935 + Army & students; origin unknown; perhaps fr poop, "excrement"; improbably but possibly an unaccounted shortening of liripoop, "lore, tricks of the trade," as found in the 1500s phrases to know one's liripoop, to teach someone his liripoop, perhaps related to lerrie, "something learned or spoken by rote"]*

poopsie or poopsy or poopsie-woopsie *n* Sweetheart; BABE, HONEY • Often a term of endearment: *I hear you, poopsie (1940s +)*

poop someone up *v phr* To inform; brief; FILL someone IN, PUT someone IN THE PICTURE (1970s + *Army*)

poopy or poopie *adj* Depressed; also, ineffectual: *She felt poopy when they left her out (1957 +)* *n* Excrement • Mainly a children's word: *poopy in the diaper*

◁**poor-ass**▷ *adj* Wretched; nasty; LOUSY: *a poor-ass place to live (1960s +)*

poor boy *n phr* A very large sandwich; Dagwood, HERO SANDWICH [1921 + ; coined and invented by Clovis and Benjamin Martin, who

opened a New Orleans restaurant in 1921]

poor-boy it v phr To be forced to impoverished extremities; be severely deprived: *We're poor-boying it in Criminal Court (1970s +)*

poor deck See DEAL SOMEONE A POOR DECK

poor fish (or simp) n phr An ordinary person, esp regarded as a victim of existential perversity: *The poor fish is damned if he does and damned if he doesn't/They've tricked you again, you poor simp (entry form 1919+, variant 1900+)*

poor man's something or someone n phr A thing or person less glamorous, desirable, famous, etc, than the top grade: *the Poor Man's Palm Beach (1854+)*

poor-mouth v 1 To deny one's wealth and advantages; emphasize one's deficiencies; Talk Poor Mouth: *Richard Nixon often poor-mouthed his chances (1965+)* **2** To deprecate severely; BAD-MOUTH: *I'm not going around poor-mouthing the war (1967+)* [make a poor mouth, "to whine, make the worst of things," is found as Scots dialect by 1822]

◁**poot**▷ **interj**: *I checked my watch. Poot. It was only twelve forty-five n*
1 Excrement; CRAP, SHIT: *Did she think I usually walked around festooned in pigeon poot?* **2** A contemptible person; PILL, POOP: *some old poots patrolling with a dog or two* **3**: *The dog laid a loud poot v* To flatulate; FART [1970s+ Black; probably a variant of poop]

poot around v phr To waste time; behave frivolously; CRAP AROUND: *There's been a lot of pootin' around but very little maximum effort (1970s+ Black)*

pootbutt *n* A callow and ignorant person; a stupid and unfledged youth, esp one lacking the cunning of the ghetto: *show Chester that he wasn't a pootbutt (1970s + Black)*

poove *See* POOF

pop¹ or **pops** *n* **1** Father; POPPA (1838 +) **2** An older or elderly man • used in informal, yet respectful, direct address: *Hey, pop, slow down a bit (1889 +)*

pop² *n* **1** Flavored carbonated water; soda; soda pop (1882 +) **2** Ice cream or flavored ice on a stick; Popsicle™ (1923 +) **3** Nitromethane or any other fuel additive for cars: *fuel additives called pop (1960s + Car racing & hot rodders)* **4** A quantity of narcotics; BAG: *Each of them had a couple of pops on 'em (1960s + Narcotics)* <5> The sex act; sexual activity; ASS (1950s +) **6** POP-UP (1895 + Baseball) **v** **1** To take narcotics by injection; SHOOT UP (1950s + Narcotics) **2** To take pills, esp barbiturates, amphetamines, etc, and esp habitually (1960s + Narcotics) <3> To do the sex act with or to; JAZZ, SCREW: *Well, did you pop her? (1950s +)* **4** To hit; smack: *She popped him on the snoot (1386 +)* **5** To shoot; kill; DRILL: *You might avoid going to the joint, or getting popped, today's term for murder, if caught (1762 +)* **6** To catch; arrest: *But what I need is probable cause to pop a guy (late 1960s +)* [all senses related to *pop* as an echoic term for a sharp noise or a sharp blow; in the first sense, “ginger beer,” found by 1836]

pop³ *adj* Popular; having a very broad audience: *Tom Wolfe, the pop journalist* [1910 + ; found by 1862 in the senses “a popular concert,” “popular music”]

pop, a n phr A time; each occasion; CRACK: *Steinem gets \$3000 a pop for talking* [1939+; fr *pop*, “blow, stroke, crack,” and according to Eric Partridge used by the Australians in the 1920s]

pop a sweat See BREAK A SWEAT

pop a wheelie v phr To raise the front wheel of a motorcycle or bicycle off the ground in order to ride on the rear wheel only
(1960s+ *Motorcyclists & bicyclists*)

◁**pop someone’s cherry**▷ **v phr** To terminate someone’s virginity: *I would definitely pop his cherry* (1930s+)

◁**pop one’s cookies (or rocks)**▷ **v phr** To have an orgasm; climax;
COME: *Madam Gray, who couldn’t ever pop her cookies enough*
(1970s+)

pop one’s cork v phr To become furious; explode angrily; BLOW one’s TOP: *I didn’t expect her to pop her cork either* (1930s+)

popcorn n 1 Something trivial and insubstantial: *Gimbel called the charges “popcorn”* **2** Something easily done; BREEZE, PIECE OF CAKE: *As for Streep, she does what she is asked to do. But the role is popcorn*
(1973+)

Pope See IS THE POPE POLISH

Popemobile n A car specially designed and built to display and protect the Pope: *I had chased his Popemobile as he toured western Sicily on a weekend pastoral jaunt* (1979+)

popeyed adj 1 Having protuberant eyes; exophthalmic; BUGEYED
(1830+)

2 Astonished; amazed: *I just stood there popeyed* (1906+)

pop for v phr To pay for, esp as a treat to others; PICK UP THE TAB: *Go to a veterinarian or pet groomer and pop for the flea dips (1940s +)*

popgun n A pistol (1849 +)

popoff n **1** A death or killing (1880s +) **2** A bragging, blatant, brash, and/or stupid declaration: *It was a typical senatorial popoff (1940s +)* **3** BIGMOUTH, LOUDMOUTH (1940s +)

pop off v phr **1** To die: *If he had popped off sooner, less trouble for all (1764 +)* **2** To talk loudly and perhaps prematurely; SHOOT OFF one's MOUTH: *I'm not popping off about the pennant until we get it (1933 +)* **3** To leave; depart (1919 +)

pop someone off v phr To kill someone, esp by shooting: *The police never found who popped the informer off (1824 +)*

popout n A mass-produced surfboard (1960s + *Surfers*) **poppa n** **1** One's father (1765 +) **2** Any older man (1765 +) [fr *papa*, which is found by 1681]

pop party n phr A gathering or party for the purpose of taking narcotics (1960s + *Narcotics*)

popper n **1** A pistol (1889 +) **2** A pill or capsule of amyl or butyl nitrite: *I'm just giving you a harmless popper (1960s + Narcotics)* See EYEPOPPER, FINGER-POPPER, JOY-POPPER, PILL-POPPER

poppet n A young child • Usu a term of endearment (1849 +)

poppycock n Nonsense; foolishness [1865 + ; apparently fr Dutch *pappekak*, "soft dung"]

pop quiz or shotgun quiz or pop test n phr A surprise test; an

unexpected examination [1940s+ College students; *pop*, “to announce or produce unexpectedly,” is found by 1529]

pop the question *v phr* To propose marriage (1826+)

pop-top *n* **1** A small sailboat, camper, etc, whose top rises to provide headroom and sleeping room **2** (also **flip-top**) A beverage can with a preperforated opening and a ringlike lever on the top for access to the liquid (1970+)

pop-up *n* A high fly ball in the infield (1908+ *Baseball*)

pop up *v phr* **1** To appear suddenly: *for the universe to pop up tackily out of nowhere* (1706+) **2** To hit a high fly ball in the infield, either fair or foul (1867+ *Baseball*)

pop wine *n phr*: “pop” wines, low-alcohol, fruit-flavored wines specially designed for the soda-and fruit-punch palate (1971+)

porcelain god *See* PRAY TO THE PORCELAIN GOD

porcupine *n* A frayed wire rope (*WWII Navy*)

pork *n* **1** Federal appropriations obtained for particular localities or interests (1862+) **2** The police; PIG *v* <1> To do the sex act; copulate; *SCREW: I decided to lay some groundwork for porking her brains out* (1980s+) [origin uncertain; perhaps fr *poke*]

pork barrel *adj* Involving spending large amounts of money in an area that generates consumer popularity *n* A legislative appropriation designed to ingratiate legislators with their constituents (1909+)

pork-chopper *n* A person, like a venal officer or friend or relative of

an officer, on a union's payroll with a sinecure (1940s+ *Labor union*)

◁**porked**▷ **adj** Copulated; deflowered

◁**porker**▷ **n** An overweight person: *porkers in line at McDonald's*

pork out v phr To eat overheartily; overeat; PIG OUT: *We were porking out on three sweet rolls (1980s+ Students)*

pork up v phr To put on weight; fatten oneself: *Jeff Daniels porked up for Dumb & Dumber role (1990s +)*

porky adj Obese; porcine: *a porky, middle-aged waitress with a mustache and bad feet (1852+)*

porn or porno adj: *The very best porn film ever made/little prospect of pay-TV turning our homes into porno palaces n Pornography; a pornographic film, book, etc: the merry world of pimps and porno/ or witness the amount of porn around/ I found out about the porno Rita'd made (first form 1970+, second 1952+)*

porny adj Pornographic (1961+)

portsider n 1 A lefthanded person; SOUTHPAW: *We despair that portsiders will ever get their rights (1934+)* **2** A lefthanded baseball pitcher (1926+ *Baseball*)

POS n PIECE OF SHIT: *coffeemaker's a POS*

poser n A person who pretends to have various desirable traits and tastes; poseur: *My son also told me that there are also people called "posers" who DRESS like "bassers" but are, in fact, secretly "preppies" [1980s+ Teenagers; the revival of a term found by 1888]*

posh adj Luxurious; fancy; chic; CUSHY, SWANKY: *The apartment is now rather posh* [1903 + ; origin uncertain; perhaps fr the mid-1800s term *posh*, “money,” fr Romany *pash*, “a half,” referring to a half-penny; perhaps fr mid-1800s *posh*, “a dandy,” of unknown origin; perhaps fr early 1900s Cambridge University slang *push* or *poosh*, “stylish”; perhaps a mispronunciation of *polish*; improbably an acronym for *port out starboard home*, said to be the formula for choosing the side of the ship with the most comfortable cabins on the steamer route from England to India or return; perhaps none of the above]

posse n: *I thought posses were Jamaican. Language changes very fast here, now it just means a small gang* [1980s+ Black teenagers; probably fr the sheriff’s *posse* seen so often in cowboy movies]

possession n The state of having illegal drugs (1970+)

postal adj: *postal—2) Whacko, flipped n: postal—1) A state of irrational, psychotic anger and disorientation* (mid-1990s+ Teenagers)

See GO POSTAL

postcard See FRENCH POSTCARD

posted adj Informed; IN THE PICTURE: *If you hear anything, you might keep me posted* (1850+)

poster boy (or girl or child) n phr Someone given prominence in a certain cause: *The Bible-thumpers portray Col. North as the poster boy for the religious right/ Mary Matalin, for all her new visibility as a GOP poster girl, is actually a moderate/ Marky Mark became the poster child of the baby teens, smiling with sweet innocence in his Calvin Klein*

underwear from billboards around the country [1980s+ ; fr the appealing children appearing on posters in the 1930s and following, soliciting money for various disease-fighting organizations]

pot¹ n 1 The total amount bet on a hand of poker or some other gambling matter; *KITTY: The goulashes' takeout was 5 percent of the pot (1847+ Gambling)* **2** A rather obnoxious person, esp an unattractive woman; *PILL: one of the pots that sat at the table (1930+)* **3** BEER BELLY, POTBELLY (1928+)

4 A carburetor (1941+) **5** A car engine (1950s+ *Hot rodders*) **6** A locomotive (1930+ *Railroad*) **v** To shoot: *He potted a woodchuck (1860+)* [all senses fr cooking *pot*, as something containing a *pot*-luck mess of food, something sooty and unattractive, something fat-looking, something to be filled by hitting the hunt's prey, etc] **See** GO TO POT, NOT HAVE A POT TO PISS IN, RUMPOT, SEXPOT, A SHITLOAD, TINPOT

pot² modifier: *a pot party n* Marijuana; GRASS, TEA: *Most of the parties I had been invited to recently, pot had been passed around freely* [1930s+ Narcotics; perhaps fr Mexican Spanish *potiguaya*, "marijuana leaves"]

pot³ n A potentiometer (1940s+)

pot, the n phr The toilet; CRAPPER: *closed the stall door, and sat down on the pot* [1705+ ; fr *chamber-pot*, which is found by 1570] **See** SHIT OR GET OFF THE POT

potato n 1 A dollar: *You can get this wonderful coat for 497potatoes (1931+)* **2** A baseball (1940s+ *Baseball*) **See** COUCH POTATO, HOT POTATO, MEAT AND POTATOES, SMALL POTATOES, SWEET POTATO

potato-head *n* A stupid person (1832 +)

potato patch *See* FRUIT SALAD

potato soup *n phr* Vodka • Generally made from potatoes

potbelly or potgut *n* **1** A protuberant belly; paunch; BEER BELLY, POT **2** A person with a potbelly, esp a man (*first form* 1714 +, *second* 1909 +)

potbelly (or belly) stove *n phr* An old-fashioned stove, esp a rotund one: *rickety armchairs around the big belly stove* (mid-1800s +)

potboiler *n* A book play, etc, written just to get money, esp something done rather badly by a writer who can do very well [1864 +; fr the notion that one does such work only to keep the food *pot boiling* in the domicile]

potch *n* A slap, esp to a child **v** **1** To slap or spank a child **2** To slap; bump: *potching against the waves in a plastic foam Sunflower* [1892 + ; fr Yiddish fr German *patsch*, “smack, splash”]

potchkie or potchky or potsky (PAHCH kee) **v** (Variation: **around** may be added) To putter; tinker; MESS: *The dentist potchkied around in Stanley’s mouth/How you could potsky around with such superstitions* [1950 +; fr Yiddish fr German *patschen*, “splash, slap”]

pot-gutted *adj* Having a paunch; big-bellied (1773 +)

pothead *n* A user of marijuana, esp a heavy user: *a few potheads who don’t move up from marijuana* (1960s + *Narcotics*)

pothooks *n* One’s handwriting; scribble; HEN TRACKS (1795 +)

pothunter *n* A person who scavenges in abandoned buildings, towns, fields, etc: *Cemeteries are also considered fair game for pothunters* [1958 + ; probably an informal term for “archaeologist,” since *pots* and *pot* fragments are so crucial to their work]

pot liquor *n* The residue left in a pot after cooking: *rubbed him with pot liquor to give him strength (1744 +)*

potluck or **pot luck** *adv phr*: Come on and dine **pot luck modifier**: *potluck supper n phr* A meal composed of odds and ends of leftovers, or of whatever turns up (1600 +)

pot party *n phr* A gathering or party for the purpose of smoking marijuana in company; *Blast Party (1960s + Narcotics)*

potshot **See** TAKE A POTSHOT AT someone

potsy *n* The game of hopscotch (1931 + *New York City*) [game name perhaps a variant of the nickname *Patsy*]

potted or **potted up** *adj* or *adj phr* **1** Drunk (1922 +) **2** Intoxicated by marijuana or another narcotic: *all potted up on something (1960s + Narcotics)*

◁**pot to piss in, a**▷ **See** NOT HAVE A POT TO PISS IN **potty** *adj* Slightly crazy; eccentric; *DOTTY, GOOFY (1920 +)* **modifier**: *time out for a potty break n*
1 A young child’s toilet seat and chamber pot (1940s +) **2**: *failure to perform potty at the proper hour* **3** Any toilet (1940s +)

potty-mouth *n* A person who uses foul and scatological language: *Margaret Cho describes herself as a kind of potty-mouth in her standup act (1960s +)*

potty talk *n phr* Foul and scatological language: *The use of profanity, epithets, and potty talk on TV jumped 45 percent from 1990 to 1994 (1990s +)*

pot-walloper *n* **1** A pot and pan washer (1860 +) **2** A cook (1902 + *Loggers*)

potzer *See* PATZER

pouffe *See* POOF

pound *v* <1> To do the sex act to or with; SCREW (1970s +) **2** To drink, esp beer: *Let's knock off and go pound some Budweiser (1980s +)*

<**poundcake**> *n* An attractive young woman [1970s +; fr the vulgar sense of *pound*]

pound one's ear *v phr* To sleep, esp heavily (1894 +)

<**pound one's meat**> *See* BEAT one's MEAT

pound something out *v phr* To work hard at a keyboard: *pounds out the great American novel at night*

<**pound one's peenie**> *v phr* To masturbate; BEAT one's MEAT: *Who is he mooning over as he pounds his peenie? (1970s +)*

pound the books *v phr* To study hard; HIT THE BOOKS (1935 + *Students*)

pound the pavement (Variations: **pavements** or **the sidewalks** or **the streets** may replace **the pavement**) *v phr* **1** To walk a police beat **2** To trudge about the streets, esp looking for work: *the liberal arts graduates pounding the Park Avenue pavements (1940s +)*

pour cold water on v phr To put an end to something or dampen the efforts of someone: *poured cold water on my vacation idea*

poured into one's garment adj phr Wearing very tight and revealing clothing: *She's in those TV commercials, poured into her jeans (1940s +)*

pour it on v phr 1 To make an intense effort; maximize striving: *Henry Gonzalez was pouring it on thick 2* To exert all one's charm and persuasiveness; COME ON STRONG: *He was really pouring it on to that judge 3* To speed; POUR ON THE COAL: *The driver was pouring it on to close the gap (1940s +)*

pour money down the drain (or the rathole) v phr To waste money utterly; spend hugely for nothing: *The Legislature is not going to pour more money down that rathole (1970s +)*

pour on the coal v phr To travel very fast; speed up; STEP ON IT: *The pilot apparently decided to go around again and poured on the coal (1937 +)*

pow interj An imitation of a blow, collision, explosion, etc, used for sudden emphasis or to show sudden understanding: *Suddenly bells went off and I knew that was it! Pow! (1881 +)* **n** Power; influence; CLOUT: *only be apprehended by government action, that is, by political "pow" (1960s +)* [noun sense reinforced by *power*]

powder n 1: *Bonnie murdered a constable during the powder 2* The speed of a pitch, esp very high speed; STUFF (1932 + *Baseball*) **v 1** To leave; depart hastily, esp in escaping: *We better powder (1920 + Underworld) 2* To hit very hard; PULVERIZE: *after he had powdered the*

second pitch (1940s + Baseball) [sense of running away probably fr similar *dust* fr the notion of raising dust as one runs; perhaps, in view of *take a powder* and *run-out powder*, the basic notion is reinforced by that of taking a medicinal *powder*, esp a laxative, so that one has to leave in a hurry, or perhaps a magical *powder* that would cause one to disappear] **See** FLEA POWDER, FOOLISH POWDER, JOY-POWDER, RUNOUT POWDER, TAKE A POWDER

powderman *n* An explosives expert: *That's powderman in the trade (1980s +)*

powder monkey *n phr* A person who works with explosives in mining, construction, etc [1926 + Loggers & miners; found by 1682 designating a boy who handles gunpowder aboard a warship]

powder one's nose *v phr* To excuse oneself to visit the restroom • Jocular use

powderpuff *adj* **1** For or involving women; women's: *the pampered, powderpuff existence of the Ultra-feminine (1930s +)* **2** Trifling; insignificant: *Reagan offers reporters only powderpuff photo opportunities (1930s +)* *n* A cautious, agile fighter as distinct from a slugger (1940s + *Prizefighting*) *v*: *He just powderpuffed his opponent until he tired*

powder room *n* A bathroom, esp public restroom: *to the powder room at intermission*

power *v* To hit the ball very hard: *He powered that one to the wall (1940s + Baseball)* **See** FLOWER POWER

powerhouse *n* **1** A formidable team, organization, etc: *Georgia Tech,*

another powerhouse/ Texas Instruments, a powerhouse in electronics **2**
An energetic and effective person **3** A vigorous, muscular person,
esp an athlete **4** Anything that constitutes winning force: *If you
control six votes that's a powerhouse (1915+)*

power lunch *n* (Variations: **breakfast** or **feeding** may replace *lunch*)
A meal calculated to increase or negotiate influence; a feed where
important matters are on the table: *Mr. Trump was seen at both a
power breakfast and a power lunch yesterday/ If you still believe that
the Four Seasons and 44 are the only places that matter for Manhattan
media power feeding (mid-1980s+)*

power tool *n* An extremely hardworking student: *power tools
cramming all night*

power trip *n phr* A show of personal power, esp of a blatant sort: *the
classic Latin American dictator's power trip* [mid-1960s+ ; based on
the narcotics sense of *trip*]

powwow *n* A meeting; discussion: *The directors are having a crucial
pow-wow* [1625+ ; ultimately fr an Algonquian word for
“medicine man,” meaning “he dreams,” extended to mean counsel
and a council]

PR or pr (pronounced as separate letters) **modifier:** the **PR
department** *n* Public relations (1940s+)

practice *See* SKULL PRACTICE

prairie dog *v phr* To pop up one's head from an office cubicle: *Dilbert
depicts prairie-dogging*

prairie oysters *See* MOUNTAIN OYSTERS

prat or pratt *n* The buttocks; *ASS: He does not fall on his prat* [1567 +; origin unknown]

pratfall *n* **1** A fall on one's rump, esp by a clown or comedian: *a perfect pratfall* (1939 +) **2** A humiliating defeat; an embarrassing humiliation: *the principles and pratfalls of the rhyming racket* (1950 + *fr theater*)

prayer *See* HAVE A PRAYER

pray to the porcelain god *v phr* To vomit in the toilet (1970s + *College students*)

preemie or preemy or premie *n* A premature baby: *like a human preemie, it was placed in an Isolette* (1927 +)

preggers *adj* Pregnant: *Meredith gets preggers by Jos* (1942 +)

preggy *adj* Pregnant (1938 +) *n: Six preggies were waiting to see the doctor*

pregnant duck *See* RUPTURED DUCK

prego *adj* Pregnant: *as if one-half the female population is prego* *n* A pregnant teenager (1980s +)

prelim (PREE lim) *n* **1** A professional boxing match coming before the main match in a given program (1930s + *Prizefighting*) **2** A preliminary qualifying examination (1891 +)

premed (PREE med) *modifier: a required premed course* *n* **1** A premedical student **2** A premedical course of study or major

(1940s + College students)

pre-nup *n* A premarital agreement, primarily about money and property, made by persons about to marry: *A Federal court decision may mean hundreds of thousands of pre-nups are irrelevant* [1990s +; shortening of *pre-nuptial*]

prep *adj* Preparatory; preparing a student for college or university (1895 +) *n* **1** A preparatory school: *She went to Georgetown Prep* (1895 +) **2** PREPPY: *If you don't listen to Green Day or Nirvana, then you're a "prep"* (1980s +) **3** Preparation; preliminary steps: *The nurses did the prep for the operation* (1927 + *Medical*) **v** **1** To go to preparatory school: *Where'd you prep?* (1915 + *Students*) **2** To prepare; get ready: *a pitcher who has prepped earnestly for many years* (1934 +) [*prep*, "student at a preparatory school," is found by 1890, and *prepster* by the 1940s]

preppy or preppie *adj* Typical of the manners, attitudes, folkways, etc, of preppies: *The handshake is firm and preppy* *n* (also **prepster**) A student or graduate of a preparatory school: *Wouldja please watch your profanity, Preppie?/ five soft-spoken indie prepsters who happen to rule nice-kid noise pop* (1970s +) [*preppy*, "silly, immature," is found by 1900]

prep school *adj*: *prep school grad* *n phr* A preparatory school, usu rather expensive and aristocratic (1895 +)

prequel *n* A book, episode, etc, that precedes an existing work in time • Not very precisely differentiated from *flashback*: *what Hollywood calls a "prequel," an adventure that takes place at the start*

of his career [1973 + ; based on *sequel*]

pres (PREZ) *n* (also **prez** or **prex** or **prexy** or **prexie**) A president (1940s +, *prex* 1828 +, *prexy* 1871 +)

presenteeism *n* The habit of being present; working constantly instead of taking earned or available time off • A play on the opposite *absenteeism*

press *See* FULL COURT PRESS

press roll *n phr* A snare-drum roll in which the loosely held sticks are pressed onto the drumhead and allowed to vibrate (1934 + *Musicians*)

press the bricks *v phr* 1 To loaf in town (1940s + *Loggers*) 2 To walk a police beat; POUND THE PAVEMENT: *Go press the bricks* (1920s +)

press the flesh (or the skin) *adj*: *Williams conducted a press-the-flesh campaign* *v phr* To shake hands • Used chiefly of politicians and others who ingratiate themselves with the public (1926 +)

pressure cooker *modifier*: *flung into the pressure-cooker existence of live TV* *n phr* A place or situation of great personal stress: *the pressure cooker on the Hudson* (1958 +)

pretty *adv* Quite; more than a little: *The weather's pretty rotten* (1565 +) *See* *be* SITTING PRETTY

pretty boy *modifier*: *their "pretty boy" young preacher* *n* 1 A man who is good-looking in an epicene way; an effeminate dandy (1885 +) 2 A bouncer or professional strong man (1931 + *Circus*)

pretty ear *n phr* An ear deformed from blows; CAULIFLOWER EAR: *busted*

bones and pretty ear (1930+ Prizefighting)

pretty face *See* NOT JUST ANOTHER PRETTY FACE

pretty kettle of fish *n phr* A new and probably unfortunate circumstance: *Here's a pretty kettle of fish; his teeth went down the drain (1742+)*

pretty penny, a *n phr* A lot of money: *That car cost him a pretty penny (1768+)*

pretzel *n* A French horn (1936+ *Musicians*)

pretzel-bender *n* A French horn player (1936+ *Musicians*)

previous *n* An earlier conviction: *Kid looks clean; no previous (1935+)*

prexy or Prexy or prexie or Prexie *See* PRES

prez or Prez *See* PRES

priceless *adj* Very funny or amusing: *priceless observation (1907+)*

pricey or pricy *adj* Expensive; dear • Chiefly British: *Godiva chocolates and other pricey goodies (1932+)*

◁**prick**▷ *n* **1** The penis; COCK (1592+) **2** A detestable person, esp a man; obnoxious wretch; ASSHOLE, BASTARD: *He's an antagonistic prick (1929+)* [Farmer and Henley's *Slang and Its Analogues* includes six and a half pages of synonyms in the 1896 volume]

pricklies *See* COLD PRICKLIES

◁**prick-teaser**▷ *See* COCK-TEASER

◁**pricky or prickish**▷ *adj* Obnoxious; detestable: *What a pricky kid/*

a prickish man (1960s +)

prima donna *n phr* A person of great and touchy self-esteem; a person who requires to be the sole focus of adulatory attention and who indulges in temperamental displays [1936 + ; fr Italian, literally “first lady,” a title for superstar opera singers and the like]

primo *n* Crack cocaine smoked with marijuana (1990s + *Narcotics*)

prince *n* A very decent and admirable person; ACE • Often used ironically: *He told me he thinks you’re a goddam prince (1911 +)*

Prince *See* JEWISH AMERICAN PRINCE

Princess *See* JEWISH AMERICAN PRINCESS

print *n* A fingerprint: *My prints ain’t on that gun (1924 +)* **v:** *They printed me (1938 +)* *See* the SMALL PRINT

print money *See* a LICENSE TO PRINT MONEY

prior *n* An earlier conviction; PREVIOUS: “*Any priors on him?*” “*Dinged once, in Rapid City*” (1978 +)

prissy *adj* Overfastidious; primly censorious: *He has a prissy distaste for heavy shoes (1895 +)* **n:** *these do-gooding prissies* [origin uncertain; perhaps a blend of *prim* or *precise* with *sissy*]

private *See* BUCK PRIVATE

private dick or **private eye** *n phr* A private detective; a private investigator; PI (*entry form 1908 +, variant 1938 +*)

privates *n* The genitals; private parts (1846 +)

privy *n* An outdoor toilet without plumbing; BACKHOUSE, Chic Sale

(1662 +)

prize package, no *See* NO PRIZE PACKAGE

pro¹ modifier: *pro ranks n 1* A professional in any field, as distinct from an amateur, and mainly distinguished by superior and dependable performance: *hear his song played and sung by pros* (1866 +) **2** *A prostitute: He treats all women like pros and all men like enemies* (1937 +) [the last sense perhaps fr *professional* reinforced by *prostitute*, or vice versa]

pro² n A prophylactic for preventing venereal disease; condom; RUBBER (*WWII armed forces*)

pro³ n 1 Probation as a judicial sentence (1950s +) **2** A person on probation

pro-am adj Admitting or including both professional and amateur performers, esp athletes; open: *a pro-am golf tournament* (1949 +)

problem *See* HAVE A PROBLEM WITH something

production *See* MAKE A BIG PRODUCTION

production line n phr A high-scoring offensive line [1940s + Hockey; based on the industrial *production line*, the term found by 1935]

prof n Professor (1838 + *College students*)

professional student n phr A person who continues to take courses and earn degrees over a number of years instead of entering a profession related to the degrees

professor *n* **1** An orchestra leader (1940s+) **2** The piano player in a saloon, brothel, etc: *the job of regular professor (1930s+)*

profile *v* **1** To strut and attitudinize; SHOW OFF: *Now, right now, you're profiling. And I'm being bored* **2** To display prominently and proudly; SHOW OFF: *He was profiling his new Mercedes* [1960s+ Black; fr the notion of displaying one's handsome *profile*] **See** KEEP A LOW PROFILE, LOW PROFILE

prog *n* Food [1655+; origin unknown; perhaps fr obsolete *prog*, "poke and forage about," of obscure origin]

program *v* To train; predispose by rigorous teaching, condition: *He's programmed to be polite to old ladies and all (1966+ fr computers)*
See CRASH PROGRAM

project **See** CRASH PROGRAM

prole (PROHL) *n* A member of the lower or working class: *Chez Tom Wolfe proles, for example, wear new down coats* [1887+; fr *proletarian*, "member of the working class," ultimately fr Latin; popularized by George Orwell's 1949 novel *Nineteen Eighty-Four*]

promise **See** a LICK AND A PROMISE

promo (PROH moh) *n* **1** Advertising and promotion: *Who's handling the promo for this show?* **2** A film, tape, printed piece, etc, for promotion: *He shot some promos for his syndicated TV show (1963+)*

promote *v* **1** To get, esp by theft, hard persuasion, or begging: *We got to promote a boat to run the stuff in (1920+ Underworld)* **2** To accost in an acquisitive spirit; HIT: *begun promoting him for something to drink (1934+)*

promotion *See* MEXICAN PROMOTION

◁**prong**▷ *n* The penis; PRICK *v* To do the sex act to or with; SCREW: *every guy who had ever pronged her (1969 +)*

◁**prong on**▷ *n phr* A penile erection; HARD-ON: *I got this huge prong on (1970s +)*

pronto *adv* Immediately; quickly; PDQ [1850 +; fr Spanish]

prop¹ *n* An article used on stage or in a film; property (1841 + *Theater*)

prop² *n* A propeller (1914 +)

propeller head *n phr* A computer expert or enthusiast; GEEK, NERD: *Interactive multimedia software? The propeller heads live for this stuff [mid-1980s +; fr their visualization as wearing ridiculous little beanies with propellers on top]*

property *See* HOT PROPERTY

proposition *n* An invitation or request for sexual favors; PASS: *He made a rude proposition and got his ears pinned back v* To request sexual favors; COME ON TO someone, MAKE A PASS AT someone: *He propositioned every woman at the party [1924 +; defined as “a proposal of marriage” in a 1908 source]*

props¹ *n 1* The property manager at a theater or movie studio (1900 + *Theater*) **2** FALSIES *See* KNOCK THE PROPS FROM UNDER

props² *n* Proper respect: *the boys described how they gain “props,” or popularity, by yelling explicit propositions or fondling girls who pass by (1990s + Black teenagers)*

prosty n (also **prostie** or **pross** or **prossy** or **prossie**) A prostitute: *a retired prosty/ the dedicated pross with a meter ticking under her skirt* (1930+; *pross and prossy variants* 1896+)

prowl v To search by running the hands over the person; FRISK:
prowled me over carefully with his left hand (1914+) **See** ON THE PROWL

prowl car n phr A police squad car (1940s+)

prune n 1 A pedantic, stiff, and prudish person; PRISSY (1895+) **2** A dehydrated nursing-home patient (1980s+ *Medical*) **v** To accelerate faster than another car in a race (1940s+ *Hot rodders*)

prune-picker n A Californian (1918+)

prunes See FULL OF BEANS

p's and q's See MIND one'S P'S AND Q'S

pseud (S^{OOD}) adj: *That guy is really pseud, with all his big talk* (1962+) **n** Someone or something false; a fraud; FAKE, PHONY (1968+) [fr *pseudo*]

pseudo adj False; bogus, sham: *offering pseudo interest in her*

psych modifier Psychiatry; psychiatric: *makes it down from the psych ward on the 15th floor* (1940s+) **n** Psychology, esp as an academic study (1895+ *College students*) **v** (also **psych out**) **1** To outsmart another person: *The bastards psyched me* (1934+ *College students*) **2** To sense or infer the motives, behavior, etc, of others; feel out a situation: *an uncanny ability to "psych out" audiences and make them love her* (1961+) **3** To unnerve someone; cause someone to lose composure, will, skill, etc: *He won't psych me as he did her*

(1960s +)

psych oneself or psych oneself up v phr To arouse oneself emotionally, spiritually, mentally, etc, to a maximum effort; raise oneself to a state of keen readiness and capability; PUMP oneself UP: *That's almost a whole year of psyching yourself up as high as you can go/ I tried to psyche myself for this new challenge (1972 +)*

psyched or psyched up adj or adj phr In a state of excited preparedness and heightened keenness; PUMPED UP: *They were all psyched up to carry the blue and white banner of Catawba College/ are generally so psyched that elation becomes their bottom line (1968 +)*
See GET PSYCHED

psycho adj: *a special psycho channel that I know nothing about n* A crazy person; maniac; psychopath; NUT: *no buzzing broad, no nympho, no psycho, no bitch (1942 +)* [probably fr *psychotic*; the form *psychot*, “psychopath,” is found by the 1940s]

psychobabble n Talk about self, feelings, motives, etc, esp in psychological jargon: *His characters have absorbed the attitudes of post-1960s psychobabble, and tend to say things like “Viet Nam is a reality warp” (1976 +)* **v:** *“If you want space,” she tells a psychobabbling boyfriend, “go to Utah”*

psych up v phr To bring to a state of keen attention; excite and incite; PUMP UP (1957 +)

psywar (SĪ wawr) **modifier:** *an impressively orchestrated psywar operation n* psychological warfare (1954 +)

◁**pt or PT**▷ (pronounced as separate letters) **n** PRICK-TEASER (1960s +)

pub¹ n A saloon; bar; tavern: *a round of Long Island pubs* [1859 + British; fr British *public*, fr *public house*]

pub² n Publicity: *You know Dallas is going to get all that pub* (1990s +)

pub crawl n: *They went on a memorable pub crawl afterwards* **v** To carouse about from one saloon to another (1910 + British) [*gin crawl* is found by 1883, and *beer crawl* by 1902] **See** BARHOP

pubes (PYOO beez) **n** Adolescent females; TEENYBOPPERS [1960s + Students; fr *pubescent*]

pucker modifier: *The U.S. ships were taking no chances: as Capt. Mathis told his crew members, one mine is enough to keep the pucker factor up* **n** Fear; state of fright: *Don't get into such a pucker* (1741 +)

◁**pucker-assed**▷ **adj** Timid; fearful; CHICKEN [1970s + ; fr *pucker*]

◁**pud**▷ (PUHD, POOD) **n** **1** The penis (1939 +) **2** An obnoxious person; DORK, JERK: *A dexter, that's your basic nerd, dork, or pud* (1980s + Teenagers) [fr slang sense of *pudding*] **See** PULL one's PUD

◁**pudding**▷ **n** The penis: *You can't even come off unless you pull your own pudding* (1719 +)

puddinghead n A stupid person, esp one who is also amiable: *a natural nitwit, a puddinghead, a standup comedian* (1851 +)

puddle-jumper n **1** A small or rickety vehicle: *I wouldn't ride in that puddle-jumper* **2** An aircraft that makes several stops along a cross-country route (1932 +)

◁**pudlicker**▷ **n** A person who does fellatio; COCKSUCKER, DICKCLICKER: *asking when my new column, "Pudlicker to the Celebrated," was going to start*

(1990s +)

◁**pud-pulling**▷ *modifier: a stupid pud-pulling jerk n* Masturbation: *a frenzied bout of pud-pulling (1939 +)*

puff n (also **puffery** or **puff job**) A specimen of extravagant praise, esp for commercial or political purposes; PLUG (1732 +, *puffery* 1782 +) *v: There is little need for us to puff this book (1858 +)* See CREAM PUFF, POWDERPUFF

puff piece n phr Something written in extravagant praise, esp for sales purposes; HYPE: *But as my brassy page-one editor would say, those portrayals are puff pieces (1980s +)*

puffy adj 1 Obese; bloated: *these strutting athletes and puffy officials (1664 +)* **2** Very favorable; adulatory; drum-beating: *Even the stern People's Daily ran extraordinarily puffy coverage of Reagan (1980 +)*

pug n A prizefighter or boxer; pugilist [1858 +; fr *pugilist*]

puggled adj 1 Exhausted; pooped **2** Intoxicated with alcohol

pug-ugly adj Quite ugly; having a face resembling a dog's: *pug-ugly white boys on the teams*

puh-leez interj Give me a break; I do not believe or accept that: *You're my friend? Puh-leez* • Said with disgust

puke n 1 Vomit; spew **2** Something so disgusting that it might be vomit and the cause of vomit: *Who wrote this puke? (1961 +)* **v** To vomit (1600 +)

puke hole n phr 1 A toilet **2** One's mouth: *Shut your puke hole* • Often offensive

pukey or pukey *adj* Nasty; inferior; disgusting: *It's a pukey sort of ballad (1965 +)*

pull *n* **1** Influence; special power or favor; CLOUT: *irregularities and instances of political pull (1886 +)* **2** A gulp of a drink, a puff on a cigarette, etc: *I took a big pull at my drink and looked up (1575 +)* **v**
1 To drink; take a swallow: *a 17-year-old kid pulling on a beer (1436 +)* **2** (also **pull down**) To earn; receive: *I pulled an A on the quiz/ The seven magazines pull down nearly \$700 million a year (1937 +, variant 1917 +)* **3** To do; perform; effect, esp a trick or shady act: *What are they trying to pull now? (1916 +)* **See** LEG-PULL

pull a boner (or a **bonehead play**) **v phr** To blunder; commit an error, esp an egregious one: *I'm afraid you've pulled a boner this time; the thing sank (1913 +)*

pull a fast one **v phr** To execute or attempt a deception; achieve a clever fraud or swindle; PULL something ON someone: *You're accusing me of trying to pull a fast one? [1933 +; probably fr fast shuffle]*

pull a job **v phr** To carry out a crime, esp stealing: *pulled a bank job (Police and underworld)*

pull an all-nighter **v phr** To study all night (1980s + *Teenagers & students*)

pull (or do) an el foldo **v phr** To lose energy; wilt; fade; FOLD: *The Saints chose that time to pull an el foldo (1962 +)* **See** EL FOLDO

pull a one-eighty **v phr** Make a complete change of direction; make an about-face: *Of course the right quickly found itself obliged to pull a*

one-eighty [because 180 degrees indicates an exactly opposite heading on an azimuth compass]

pull a swiftie (or **swiftie**) *v phr* PULL A FAST ONE (1960s + Australian)

◁**pull a train** (or **the train** or **the choo-choo**)▷ *v phr* Of a woman, to do the sex act with several men serially: *taking some dame in the woods and making her pull a train* (1965 + Motorcyclists)

pull a vanishing act *v phr* To disappear; TAKE A POWDER: *That may be exactly why he's pulled a vanishing act* [1981 + ; fr a magician's *vanishing* or causing someone to do so; in the form *do a vanishing act* found by 1923]

pull oneself (up) by one's (own) bootstraps *v phr* To improve one's position by one's own efforts (1936 +)

pull someone's chain (Variations: **yank** or **jerk** or **rattle** may replace **pull**; **string** may replace **chain**) *v phr* 1 To deceive; fool, victimize; PULL A FAST ONE: *too busy trying to figure out if I had been pulling his chain*
2 To upset someone, esp by teasing or harassing; anger someone: *I did not know you can rattle his chain with marvelous results/ He was insecure and sensitive. It was easy to pull his string* [1980s + ; probably fr the image of a person who upsets a captive animal by *pulling* or *jerking* at its *chain*]

pull down *v phr* To earn a certain amount of money: *pulls down 100K*

puller *See* WIRE-PULLER

pull one's finger out v phr To get moving; to demand effort of a lazy person: *Pull your finger out and let's get cracking (1941 +)*

pull one's head out v phr To pay attention to one's affairs; wake up: *You better pull your head out and get to studying or you won't graduate [1960s + Students; shortening and euphemizing of pull your head out of your ass]*

pull in v phr To arrive: *She pulled in about noon [1905 + ; fr railroad]*

pull someone in v phr To arrest someone; RUN someone IN (1891 +)

pull in one's ears v phr 1 To be cautious; watch out for oneself 2 To be less aggressive; moderate oneself: *You better pull in your ears a little or you'll scare them away [1940s + ; origin uncertain; perhaps in some cases an alteration of pull in one's horns]*

pull in one's horns v phr To moderate or retract one's behavior; BACK OFF: *The USFL Pulled In Its Financial Horns [1589 + ; fr the way an anxious snail behaves]*

pull it off v phr To accomplish something; succeed; MAKE IT: *pull it off and keep the patients coming back for more (1887 +)*

pull someone's leg v phr To deceive in fun; fool; KID: *I suspected that he was pulling my leg [1886 + ; fr the act of playfully tripping someone]*

pull numbers or get digits v phr To succeed in getting the telephone numbers of potential dates, escorts, etc (1990s +)

pull off v phr 1 To succeed in or at; achieve: *Fegley managed to pull off a hat trick for this issue (1883 +)* <2> To masturbate: *At*

Smolka's signal, each begins to pull off (1922+)

◁**pull oneself off**▷ **v phr** To masturbate; JACK OFF (1900+)

◁**pull someone off**▷ **v phr** To cause someone to ejaculate semen by manipulating the penis (1900+)

pull something on someone v phr To deceive or cheat; take advantage of; PULL A FAST ONE: *At first she thought I was trying to pull a slick scam on her (1916+)*

pull out v phr 1 To leave; depart: *He pulled out after 45 minutes and disappeared (1884+)* **2** To withdraw; terminate one's association: *He threatened to pull out if we didn't raise the ante (1887+)*

pull out all the stops *v phr* To do everything possible; to use everything available: *pulled out all the stops to keep her from leaving* [fr organ stops being pulled out to extend the sound]

◁**pull something out of one's ass**▷ *v phr* To produce something, esp information or an idea, unexpectedly (1970s + *Army*)

pull something out of the fire *v phr* To salvage something; rescue: *They got hot and pulled the game out of the fire* (1893 +)

◁**pull one's pud**▷ (PUHD, PööD) *v phr* (Variations: **dong** or **joint** or **wang** or any other word for “**penis**” may replace **pud**) To masturbate; JACK OFF (1944 +)

pull one's punches *v phr* To soften one's blows; be lenient and moderate: *Ouch. You don't pull your punches* (1934 + *Prizefighting*)

pull rank *v phr* To overwhelm with one's authority; be officiously arrogant: *Each was frightened that the other would pull rank* (1923 +)

pull strings (or **wires**) *v phr* 1 To exert influence; use one's power, esp clandestinely: *If she pulls a few wires I think I might get the job* [entry form 1860s +, variant 1893 +; probably fr the use of *strings* or *wires* to control marionettes; *work wire* is found by 1886] 2 To exert private or secret influence: *pull wires to get visitation* (1862 +)

pull teeth *v phr* To do something in the most difficult way; do something the hard way (1970s + *Armed forces*) • Fr earlier *pull teeth through the armpit*

pull the plug¹ *v phr* 1 To terminate something; end support or cooperation: *if the affiliates rise up in rebellion and pull the plug*

(1940s +) **2** To terminate various mechanical and electronic efforts being used to keep life in a moribund patient (1960s +) [fr the disconnecting of an electrical *plug*]

pull the plug² v phr To dive in a submarine; submerge [1970s + Navy; fr the withdrawing of a bathtub *plug*]

pull the rug from under (or out from under) v phr To undermine or disable; put opponents at a great and often sudden disadvantage: *They were intended to pull the rug out from under left-wing critics* (1946 +)

pull the string v phr 1 To pitch a change-of-pace ball, a very slow ball after the motion for a fast one (1937 + *Baseball*) **2** To rudely reveal the truth, previously kept hidden; unveil true intentions; reveal the catch • The full form is *pull the string of the shower bath: They doubled their efforts, showering her with affection, then they pulled the string* (1928 +) [perhaps fr the use of a *string* to fasten and release a concealing sheet on something about to be unveiled; perhaps fr *pull the lanyard*, “to fire a cannon”]

pull the wool over someone’s eyes v phr To deceive; mislead: *The whole indignant act was an attempt to pull the wool over the voters’ eyes* [1842 +; aslightly earlier form is *spread the wool over someone’s eyes*]

pull up one’s socks v phr To correct one’s behavior; look to one’s performance; GET ON THE BALL: *Whittingham was terminated after having failed to pull up his socks enough during six months on probation* (1893 +)

pull up stakes *v phr* To depart; decamp: *If things don't get better we'll pull up stakes (1817+)*

pull wires *See* PULL STRINGS

pulp modifier: *a pulp romance* *n* A magazine printed on rough paper and devoted to adventure, science fiction, cowboy stories, rude erotica, etc (1931+)

pulverize *v* To defeat thoroughly; punish; CLOBBER (1631+)

pummelled *adj* Intoxicated with alcohol; also, beat up

pump *n* **1** (also **pumper**) The heart; TICKER: *He had a hole through his pump (1885+)* **2** A home run; TATER: *He had three pumps yesterday. Three home runs! (1980s+ Baseball)* *v* <1> To do the sex act; FUCK, HUMP: *Duffy wondered if Jert had been pumping Tish (1730+)* **2** To question long and closely; extract information: *The cops pumped him for three days straight (1667+)* **3** To excite; AMP, HYPE, PUMP UP, TURN ON: *That stripper at the party last night really pumped me (1980s+ Students)*

pump-and-dump modifier: *Investigators reported two "pump-and-dump" schemes in which Canadian companies were heavily hyped on computer bulletin board services. Their stock prices tripled or more in a short time, then collapsed (1990s+)*

pumped and dumped *adj phr* Exploited, then rejected; used and discarded: *Poor Emmett is feeling "pumped and dumped" (1990s+)*

pumped up *adj phr* **1** (also **pumped**) Excited and expectant; PSYCHED UP
• Used often of athletes in or before competition: *The girls were*

really pumped up/ was returning to play in his first game in more than two years and this city was pumped (1980s +) **2** Exaggerated; artificial; PHONY: *He showed pumped-up conviviality. Concannon didn't like it (1904 +)* **adj** **3** Pregnant: *She got pumped and had to quit her job (1960s + Students)*

pump iron v phr To lift weights; do body-building (1980s +)

pumpkin or pumkin or punkin n **1** The head (1890s +) **2** One's sweetheart, beloved, spouse, etc; DOLL, HONEY, SWEETIE: *We're allies in everything, pumpkin (1940s +)*

pumpkinhead or punkinhead n A stupid person (1848 +)

pumpkinheaded or punkinheaded adj Stupid; doltish (1607 +)

pump ship (or bilge) v phr To urinate: *The Duke of Wellington's most cogent advice was "Never lose an opportunity to pump ship" (1788 +)*

pump up v phr **1** To exaggerate; assign too much importance to; BLOW UP: *He wanted a scandal and wanted to fry Maxine Waters. They wanted to pump it up (1970s +)* **2** To persuade to keen excitement; AMP, HYPE, TURN ON: *Experts like Dr Edward Teller have steadily "pumped up" Reagan about the potential of such defensive-weapons systems (1980s +)*

pump oneself up v phr To arouse oneself emotionally, spiritually, mentally, etc, to a maximum effort; PSYCH oneself • Much used by sports commentators, esp by baseball announcers of pitchers: *The big lefthander's really pumped himself up for this crucial encounter (1970s +)*

punch *n* Power; force; impact; CLOUT: *This article has no punch*

(1911 +) **See** CAN'T FIGHT ONE'S WAY OUT OF A PAPER BAG, ONE-TWO, SUCKERPUNCH, SUNDAY PUNCH

punch cows (or cattle) *v phr* To herd or drive cattle (1890 +)

punch-drunk *adj* **1** Exhibiting brain damage from repeated blows to the head; slow in movement, slurring in speech, disoriented and shambling; PUNCHY, SLAP-HAPPY **2** Dazed from overwork, excessive stress, etc: *He was punch-drunk after the annual meeting* (1915 +)

punched **See** GET one'S CARD PUNCHED, HAVE one'S TICKET PUNCHED

punched-up *adj* improved; increased in energy, impressiveness, impact, etc: *no more than a punched-up form of the sentiment that the prose style of most social scientists "is Greek to me"* (1950s +)

puncher *n* COWPUNCHER (1890 + *Cowboys*)

punches **See** PULL one'S PUNCHES, ROLL WITH THE PUNCHES, TELEGRAPH one'S PUNCHES

punch in (or out) *v phr* To come or go at a certain time, esp to or from a job; CLOCK IN (or OUT) [1934 +; fr the stamping of one's work card at a time clock]

punching bag *n phr* A target; butt; whipping boy; scapegoat: *Milken has come to be regarded as a handy punching bag for everything that went wrong in the 1980s* (1980s +)

punch someone's lights out *v phr* To beat or defeat someone severely; trounce; CLOBBER: *Sugar Ray Leonard punched Thomas Hearns's lights out* [1970s +; fr the earlier *beat out someone's liver and lights*, where *lights* reflects a Middle English word for "lungs,

esp of a slaughtered animal or game animal, now certainly interpreted as “eyes and as “electric lights]

punch line *n phr* The last line or part of a joke, which makes it funny; KICKER, ZINGER: *I remember the jokes, but not the punch lines* (1921 +)

punch out *v phr* **1** To beat, esp with the fists; BEAT UP, CLOBBER: *I punched out this guy* (1970s +) **2** To use the ejection seat for escape from a aircraft (1970s + *Air Force*)

punch the clock *v phr* To do the minimum routinely required: *The public has good instincts for when people are doing significant or courageous things in space and when merely punching the clock* (1940s +)

punch up *v phr* **1** To improve; increase the energy, impressiveness, etc, of; JAZZ something UP: *I guess they hired me because their material needed punching up* (1950s +) **2** To bring a specified part of a recording tape into view, into place at the playing head, etc **3** To call up a software program (1980s + *Computers*)

punchy *adj* **1** Exhibiting brain damage from repeated blows to the head; PUNCH-DRUNK: *Sailor Bob, a punchy stumble-bum* (1937 +) **2** Feeling somewhat confused and battered, as if punch-drunk: *Even if she’s a little punchy and hyper from doing a dozen interviews that day* (1940s +) **3** Having force, impact, energy, etc; potent; JAZZY, ZINGY: *The English language may someday be as colorful and punchy as it was in Elizabethan times* (1926 +)

punk¹ *n* **1** A catamite; young companion of a sodomite; GUNSEL¹

(1904 +) **2** (also **punk kid**) Any young or inexperienced person; boy; KID: *Sparky was always a fresh punk (mid-1920s +)* **3** A petty hoodlum; meager minor tough or criminal: *to emphasize just how tough a Division Street punk could be (1917 +)* **4** Any inferior, insignificant person, like an ineffective fighter, jockey, pool player, waiter, porter, etc (1917 +) **5** Any young circus animal (1926 + *Circus*) **v** $\langle 1 \rangle$ To sodomize; do anal sex to; BUGGER, CORNHOLE: *The guy peeled off Tate's pants and punked him (1970s +)* [ultimately fr 1500s British, "prostitute, harlot," of unknown origin]

punk² adj Inferior; poor; bad: *The idea strikes me as punk (1896 +)*
modifier: *the punk workers who sell corn removers* **n** **1** Bread (1891 +) **2** A patent medicine (1940s +) [probably early 1700s, "rotting wood, touchwood," of unknown origin, usu taken to be fr *spunk*, of the same meaning, fr Gaelic *spung*, "tinder"]

punk³ adj: *The atmosphere in North London's pubs is really punk* **n** (also **punker**) An adherent to a style of dress and behavior marked by seemingly threatening, dangerous, and aggressive attributes, such as safety pins worn through ear lobes, razor blades around the neck, and torn clothes: *In the beginning, punk wasn't just fashion. Punk was outrage (1976 +)* [originally meant to be reminiscent of the hoodlums called punks in the 1950s, but soon an independent style]

\langle **punk-ass** \rangle **adj** Unpleasant, deplorable • Used to describe a person: *your punk-ass white friend (1920 +)*

punked out adj phr Having the style of dress and behavior marked by seemingly threatening, dangerous, and aggressive attributes: *I*

am a punked-out loner boy-repellent (1980s +)

punkette *n* A young woman who adopts the manners and appearance of the punk milieu: *a scruffy, androgynous punkette with close-cropped hair and dressed all in black except for a pair of electric-red socks (1980s +)*

punkin *See* PUMPKIN

punk out *v phr* **1** To quit, esp from fear; CHICKEN OUT, FOLD: *The Soho News punked out (1920 +)* **2** To adopt the style of a punk rocker (1980s +)

punk rock *n phr* Loud and crude rock-and-roll music played by persons who purport, in their dress, vile behavior and language, repellent names, and ugly appearance, to be loathsome louts: *The bad equivalent of “bubble-gum,” it was called punk-rock, and it was totally utilitarian music (1976 +)*

punk rocker *n phr* **1** A player of loud and crude rock-and-roll music who purports to be a loathsome lout **2** A person who adheres to a style of dress and behavior marked by seemingly threatening, dangerous, and aggressive attributes; PUNK (1976 +)

punt¹ *v* To gamble; bet [1706 + ; fr French *ponte*, Spanish *punta*, “point,” used for playing against the banker in faro and other games]

punt² *v* **1** To drop a course in order not to fail it **2** To give up; withdraw; COP OUT: *I hate to punt, but I just don’t have time to finish this job* **3** To improvise or do something different when faced with few or no choices: *had to punt when he didn’t get in his first-choice school*

4 To return something; throw (or kick) something back: *The high court punted the usetax issue back to Congress and cleared the way for future legislative action* **5** To stall for time; to delay; to relinquish control: *Clinton suddenly punted on health reform and shifted to welfare* [1970s + College students; fr the kick out of danger in football, fr mid-1800s Rugby football, “kick the ball before it hits the ground,” of unknown origin; perhaps echoic]

punter *n* A gambler; a bettor: *Inside the clubhouse, the punters sit enraged on their slatted benches* [1706 + ; fr French *punter*, “to place a bet against the bank in a card game,” of uncertain origin]

punt someone or something **off v phr** To deliberately forget; ignore and evade; BAG: *He decided to punt the whole problem off* (1970s + College students)

pup *n* **1** A young, inexperienced person; KID, PUNK (1890 +) **2** HOTDOG (1940s +) **3** A small four-wheeled truck trailer (1940s + Truckers) **4** (also **puppy**) A thing; BABY, SUCKER: *I guess we turn this pup around/ You can mail this puppy in or you can appear at the tribal court* (1980s +) [ultimately fr French *poupée*, “doll”] **See** GUTTERSNIPE, SNUGGLE-PUP

puppies or **pups** *n* The feet; DOGS (1923 +)

puppy *n* **1** A wimp or softie: *You’re such a puppy* **2** A thing or part of a thing: *Put that puppy down and help me*

puppy love *n phr* Love or infatuation of very young persons; CALF LOVE (1834 +)

pup (or dog) tent *n phr* A small tent; an Army shelter tent: *The crew*

loaded pup tents and cooking equipment into motorcycle sidecars
(1863+)

purgatory *n* An extremely unpleasant experience; a temporary condition of suffering: *the purgatory of drug abuse* (1807+)

purple haze *n phr* LSD mixed with methedrine (1967+)

purple heart *n phr* Any barbiturate, or a mixture of a barbiturate and morphine; GOOFBALL, NIMBY [1960s+ Narcotics; fr the US decoration awarded for a combat wound]

◁**pus bag**▷ *n phr* A despicable person; a filthy wretch; SCUMBAG: *He hissed that I was “a goddam scum-sucking pus bag”* (1970s+)

push *n* 1 A fight between street gangs; RUMBLE (1940s+ *Street gang*)

2 A supervisor: *Jigger’s first season as a camp push* (1930+ *Loggers*)

3 A radio frequency, such as is tuned by pressing a push-button

(1970s+ *Army*) 4 An intense sustained effort: *They made a big push*

to get the damn thing done (1940s+) **v** 1 (also **push across**) To kill

someone: *when one of our boys gets pushed/ He might have pushed*

Foster across (1940s+) 2 To approach a specified age: *You’re*

pushing 50 (1937+) 3 To advertise; publicize; promote: *They don’t*

have to push reference books too much (1894+) 4 (also **push**

for)To recommend; boost; GET BEHIND: *He decided to push my idea, and*

push for two new labs (1888+) 5 To sell, esp in an aggressive way;

hawk: *Push the specials today, okay?* (1940s+) 6 To press or

importune, esp too often and too hard: *I’ll probably do what you*

want, just stop pushing (1578+) 7 To sell narcotics; peddle; DEAL:

Funny cigarettes ain’t all that one pushes (1930s+ *Narcotics*) 8 To

distribute and pass counterfeit money (1940s + *Underworld*)

push a button v phr To provoke a response; reach one's feelings; hit a "hot button": Don't *push my button*. *I haven't exactly been behind him, pushing and clapping/ The issue of domestic disputes pushes buttons, summons up personal emotions (1980s +)*

push a pen v phr To do office work: *Why should I want to push a pen in an office? (1911 +)*

push comes to shove sentence A touchy situation becomes actively hostile; a quarrel becomes a fight; the CHIPS ARE DOWN: *If push comes to shove, can you count on him? (1958 +)*

pusher n 1 A narcotics peddler or distributor; CANDY MAN, CONNECTION: *queen of the Broadway narcotics pushers (1935 + Narcotics)* **2** A distributor or passer of counterfeit money; PAPERHANGER (1940s + *Underworld*) **See** COOKIE-PUSHER, GOSPEL-PUSHER, PENCIL-PUSHER, PEN-PUSHER, PILL-PUSHER, WOOD-PUSHER

pushing (number) v phr Used to denote that someone is nearly a particular (advanced) age: *She is pushing 50 (1974 +)*

push-in robbery (or crime) n phr A violent burglary or mugging done as the victim opens the door (1976 +)

push one's luck v phr To take additional risks when things are going well: *He pushed his luck and lost the whole bundle (1911 +)*

push off v phr 1 To leave; SHOVE OFF (1918 +) **2** To kill; murder; PUSH (1940s + *Underworld*)

pushover modifier: He wasn't a pushover kind of cat n 1 A person who

is easily defeated, imposed upon, convinced, etc: *an eight-round preliminary with some pushover* (1926 +) **2** Punchboard, ROUNDHEEL (1906 +) **3** An easy job or task; CINCH, DUCK SOUP: *Two ways to do it. One was a pushover* (1906 +)

push poll *n phr*: *It's called a "push poll" because the idea is to see whether certain "information" can "push" voters away from the opposition candidate to the candidate supported by the people paying for the poll* (1990s +)

◁**push-push**▷ *n* The sex act: *If they don't go where she wants, it's no push-push for him that night*

push the envelope *v phr* To expand possibilities; innovate boldly; take risks: *What we want is to create the next computing revolution. We want to push the envelope* (late 1980s +)

push the panic button *See* HIT THE PANIC BUTTON

push up daisies *v phr* To be dead; be buried (1860 +)

puss¹ *n* The face: *one sock in the puss* [1890 +; fr Irish *pus*, "lip, mouth"] *See* GLAMOUR-PUSS, PICKLEPUSS, SOURPUSS

puss² *adj* Excellent; wonderful; GREAT, RAD, TITS [1990s +; fr *pussy*]

pussy *adj* Harmless and undemanding; fit for the timid: *The bumper cars are pussy* (1970s +) *n* ◁**1**▷ The vulva or vagina (1879 +) ◁**2**▷ A woman as a sex object or partner; ASS, TAIL: *Where I come from we call that kind of stuff table pussy* (1879 +) ◁**3**▷ A harmless person, either gentle or timid or both; PUSSYCAT: *Space Invaders are pussies compared to the marketing aggression of the major*

producers (1859+) [fr *pussy*, “cat,” found by 1726] **See** EATIN’ STUFF, WOOD-PUSSY

◁**pussy butterfly**▷ **n phr** An intrauterine contraceptive device; IUD (1980s+)

pussycat n 1 A harmless, gentle, or timid person: *Iacocca is no closet pussycat masquerading as a tiger* **2** A pleasant and amiable person; DOLL, HONEY (1859+)

pussyfoot or pussyfoot around v or v phr To be careful and hesitant; be evasive; tergiversate; BEAT AROUND THE BUSH: *Please stop pussyfooting and get to the point* [1903+; fr the nickname of W E Johnson, given because of his catlike stealth as a law-enforcement officer in the Indian Territory (Oklahoma); Johnson became a famous advocate of Prohibition, and the term briefly meant “prohibitionist”]

◁**pussy-whipped**▷ **adj** Dominated by one’s wife or female lover; obsequiously uxorious; henpecked: *Francie had had it with bore-ass “pussy-whipped” men* (1956+)

◁**put**▷ **v** To proffer or do the sex act; LAY: *With men buyers, you get them put and you can sell them the Brooklyn Bridge* [1930s+; a shortening of *put out*] **See** KNOW WHAT ONE CAN DO WITH something, TELL someone WHAT TO DO WITH something

◁**puta**▷ (Poo tah) **n 1** A prostitute: *A white puta like you got to have more money than that* **2** Punchboard [1950s+; fr Spanish]

put a bug in someone’s ear v phr To give someone a special and private piece of information, esp in the hope of favorable action

(1940s +)

put a cork in it v phr To keep silent; SHUT UP • Often an irritated command: *A New York judge has mercifully told Woody and Mia to put a cork in it (1990s +)*

put a crimp in someone or something v phr To thwart or hamper; block or interfere with; STYMIE: *How can we put a crimp in this guy's plans?* [1896 +; fr the notion of a severe pinching-in as an obstacle]

put something across (or over) v phr 1 GET something ACROSS **2** To succeed; PULL IT OFF: *Ask her, she knows how to put it across (1917 +)*

put a damper on v phr To discourage or dishearten; also, to decrease the intensity of something: *Insects put a damper on my plans to move to Maine*

put a fork into someone v phr To show that someone or something is definitively finished; confirm failure: *If American businesses don't catch up you can "put a fork into 'em. They're done"* [1990s +; fr the cook's way of testing whether something baked or roasted is ready to serve]

put a lid on someone or something v phr To suppress; quiet; quell: *Putting a Lid on The Kid (1970s +)*

put a move on someone v phr (Variations: **make** can replace **put**; **the move** or **the moves** can replace **a move**) To make a sexual advance to someone; PROPOSITION: *Why don't you put a move on that Tuck girl?/ tryin' to put the moves on every girl in the place (1980s + Students)*

put (or stick) a sock in it *interj* Please keep quiet; SHUT UP: *Would you please be so kind as to force the media to put a sock in it/ And they can stick a sock in it. Or maybe a bratwurst (1919+)*

◁**put one's ass in a sling**▷ See HAVE one's ASS IN A SLING

◁**put one's ass on the line**▷ *v phr* To assume risk and responsibility; put oneself in peril: *I agreed with him, but I wasn't going to put my ass on the line to prove the point (1940+)*

put a verb in it *sentence* To get into action; stop loafing and wasting time; GET one's ASS IN GEAR: *Make up your bed, and put a verb in it; we don't have all day! (1990s+)*

put away *v phr* To eat or drink, esp heartily or excessively: *They were able to put away a lot of noodles, turkey hash, corn, Jell-O, bread, peanut butter, jelly, and water (1878+)*

put someone or something away *v phr* **1** To commit to an asylum or send to jail, an old-age home, nursing home, etc (1872+) **2** To kill someone (1588+) **3** To please someone enormously; KNOCK someone's SOCKS OFF: *It put me away. It destroyed me (1970s+)*

◁**put balls (or hair) on**▷ *v phr* To make more emphatic, effective, etc; add impact to: *Rewrite that paragraph and put balls on it (1970s+)*

put daylight (or distance) between *v phr* To separate things, esp to separate oneself from someone or something disadvantageous: *The President is trying hard to put daylight between himself and the National Rifle Association (1970s+)*

put-down *n* Something disparaging, humiliating, or deflating; a reducing insult; KNOCK: *since it is such a neat put-down of the arrogant administrator (late 1950s +)*

put someone or something down *v phr* **1** To kill: *Criticizing Jim Brady's wife Mohan said, "Because of all her barking and complaining, she really needs to be put down. A humane shot at a veterinarian's would be an easy way to do it" (1560 +)* **2** To criticize adversely and severely; denigrate; DUMP ON, KNOCK: *Not that I mean to put down the Old Masters (late-1950s +)*

put someone or something down for something *v phr* To identify or classify; recognize; PEG: *When I see a guy with a pull-over sweater under a double-breasted suit, I put him down for an Englishman (1950s +)*

put one's finger on something *v phr* To recall or specify a desired matter with precision; define exactly: *I remember it, but can't quite put my finger on the outcome (1889 +)*

put one's foot in it *v phr* To get into difficulties, esp by blundering: *Trying to be delicate, I put my foot right in it (1856 +)*

put one's foot in one's mouth *v phr* To make an embarrassing comment; say something stupid: *part of the same hysterical syndrome that caused me to put my foot in my mouth (1940s +)*

put someone in the picture *v phr* To give necessary orienting data; brief; BRING someone UP TO SPEED: *Nobody put me in the picture, and I was confused for weeks (1942 +)*

put in one's two cents worth *See* PUT one's TWO CENTS IN

put it in your ear or take it in the ear *v phr* To insert something figuratively into one's ear as a means of contemptuous disposal; STICK IT • Mild euphemistic forms of *stick it up your ass*, used for reduced effect and among friends: *It was easy to say things like "take it in the ear" to them. They didn't get it (1940s +)*

put it on ice *v phr* To make victory certain; ensure success: *Back-to-back doubles put it on ice in the ninth inning (1918 +)*

put it on the line *See* LAY IT ON THE LINE

put it on the street *v phr* To disclose something, esp rather publicly: *So we put it on the street that she was leaving (1970s +)*

put it over on someone *v phr* To deceive; fool: *Be careful, nobody puts it over on her [1913 +; found slightly earlier as put it all over on]*

put it past someone *See* NOT PUT IT PASTE someone

◁**put it to someone**▷ *v phr* To do the sex act with or to; SCREW (1940s +)

put one's money where one's mouth is *sentence* Support your statements, brags, opinions, etc, with something tangible; PUT UP OR SHUT UP: *I won't believe he's leaving until he puts his money where his mouth is and goes away (1942 +)*

put someone's nose out of joint *v phr* To make someone envious or jealous (1581 +)

put-on *adj* Feigned; affected: *his put-on machismo (1621 +)* **n 1** An act, remark, etc, intended to fool someone; a more or less amiable

deception: *a master of the “put-on,” a mildly cruel art/ They nudge us that what they’re doing is just a “put-on” (1896 +)* **2** (also **put-on artist**) A pretender; PHONY: *to equate an original talent like Kenneth Anger with a put-on like Andy Warhol (1960s +)*

put someone on v phr To fool someone, esp by pretending; tease: *The Countess who adores the poet pities him and puts him “on” (1896 +)*

put on airs v phr 1 To affect a refinement and hauteur one is not born to: *Now that I have the Rolls Royce I’ll put on airs 2* To be snobbish and aloof (1781 +)

put on an act v phr To behave misleadingly, esp pretentiously; SHOOT someone A LINE (1934 +)

put one over on someone v phr To deceive someone; best someone by a trick (1912 +)

put something or someone on hold v phr To defer an immediate decision; postpone consideration: *I’m afraid that whole matter is on hold just now* [1960s +; fr the *hold* function of a telephone, with which one can close off a conversation temporarily]

put on the feedbag (or the nosebag) v phr To eat; have a meal (1874 +)

put someone on the floor v phr To please someone enormously; PUT someone or something AWAY, KNOCK someone OUT: *Schaefer said the strip “put me on the floor” (1970s +)*

put something on the line *See* LAY something ON THE LINE

put on the ritz (or the dog) v phr 1 To make a display of wealth and

luxury: *everything they could to put on the ritz/ put on the dog and give him the ritz like this* **2** To dress stylishly and flashily **3** PUT ON AIRS [entry form 1926 +, variant 1934 +; fr the name of the Swiss César Ritz and the various luxurious European hotels he built; *put on the dog* fr a late 1800s college, esp Yale, expression]

put someone on the spot v phr **1** To require action, a solution, etc, at once: *It had to be ready tomorrow, which put our department on the spot* **2** To embarrass; put in a difficult position: *I don't want her to put us on the spot again (1929+)*

put something on the street v phr To make known publicly something that others may not want known: *put it on the street that he was into illegal stuff*

put someone on to someone or something v phr To introduce someone; get someone access to: *that little Andronica you put me onto (1887+)*

putout n An out, other than a strikeout (*Baseball*)

put-out adj Angry; upset; offended: *I know you will be put out at my not writing (1887+)*

◁**put (or give) out**▷ **v phr** To proffer sexual favors, esp to do so readily; be promiscuous: *A guy gives a dame a string of beads and she puts out/ As a Yale woman I am resented because I will not "put out" for Yale men/ A guy buys a gift for his wife because he knows she won't give out if he don't*

put someone out v phr To impose upon; cause inconvenience (1940s+)

put someone or something out of the way v phr To remove an obstacle, eliminate a barrier: *put that project out of the way to concentrate on this*

put someone or something out to pasture v phr To retire; take out of active use, practice, etc, usu after long service: *That old machine's about shot, and we should put it out to pasture* [1930s +; fr the farm practice of letting an old horse graze at will and work no longer]

put paid to v phr To finish; also, to put to rest or finish off (1919 +; *British*)

put one's pants on one leg at a time v phr To have traits of ordinary humanity: *Even giants put their pants on one leg at a time* (1960s +)

put one's papers in v phr 1 To apply for admission, enlistment, etc (*Teenagers*) 2 To retire or resign (1950s + *Police*)

put one's skates on v phr To hurry (1895 +)

putter-offer n A procrastinator: *No, admitted Franklin Roosevelt, as weakly as any putter-offer* [1940s +; found as *putter-off* by 1803]

put that in your pipe and smoke it sentence Take that: *I'm not going. Put that in your pipe and smoke it*

put the arm (or the sleeve) on someone v phr 1 To detain or arrest, esp by force: *It was a signal for the waiter to hustle over and put the arm on the customer who was trying to stiff him* 2 To hit; beat up: *in case a tough greengrocer tries to put the arm on you* 3 To ask for a loan; PUT THE BITE ON someone or something: *writing a letter to my friend*

Ted without putting the arm on him for a couple of bucks (1930s+)

put the bite (or the bee) on someone or something *v phr* **1** To ask for money, esp for a loan: *And how do you put the bite on me (1900s+)* **2** To make a request; solicit: *Sullivan continues putting the bee on other government agencies (1933+)*

put the clamps on *v phr* To seize, esp to steal (1940s+)

put the eye on someone *v phr* **1** To look at invitingly or seductively; GIVE SOMEONE THE EYE: *I was having the eye put on me* **2** To look at; look over; examine; SCOPE OUT (1940s+)

put the fear of God into *v phr* To terrify (1905+)

put the finger on someone *v phr* **1** To locate and identify a victim; FINGER **2** To provide evidence leading to the arrest of a criminal; betray a criminal to the police: *He put the finger on my husband (1926+ Underworld)*

put the freeze (or chill) on someone *v phr* To reject; treat very coldly: *Women are quick to put the freeze on free loaders (1960s+)*

put the hammer down *v phr* To accelerate; go full speed: *Guerrero put the hammer down and passed Unser a few laps later (Car racing 1960+, fr truckers)*

put the heat on someone *v phr* To use coercive pressure; LEAN ON someone: *He put the heat on me to vote that way (1936+)*

put the icing on the cake *See* ICE THE CAKE

put the kibosh on someone or something *v phr* To quash or stifle; put the quietus to: *I was praying that the kid wouldn't put the*

“*kibosh*” *on me* [1836 + ; origin unknown and richly speculated upon; many regard it as probably fr Yiddish because it sounds as if it ought to be; Padraic Colum, however, attributed it to Irish *cie bais*, “cap of death,” presumably the black cap donned by a judge before pronouncing the death sentence, which is a semantically appealing suggestion; the *phrase* was used by Dickens in his first published book, in 1836, and put into the mouth of a London urchin]

put the make on someone **v phr** To make sexual advances; MAKE A PASS AT someone: *The codger was horny and put the make on the lady cop (1970s +)*

put them in the aisles See LAY THEM IN THE AISLES

put the moves on **v phr** To try to seduce someone: *put the moves on her lab partner*

put the pedal to the metal **modifier** Regulating or deregulating highway speeds: *President Clinton will sign what friends and foes alike call “the pedal to the metal bill” v phr* To accelerate; go fast; GIVE IT THE GUN: *Bolan settled back on creaky springs, and put the pedal to the metal (1980s +)*

put the screws to (or on) someone **v phr** To use extreme coercive pressure; harass; PUT THE HEAT ON someone: *The only reason Fidel agreed was to put the screws to Reagan [1940s + ; fr a torturer’s use of thumbscrews; put the screws on is found by 1834]*

put the skids under someone or something **v phr** To cause to fail, be defeated, be rejected, etc: *They put the skids under him when they*

found out he had cheated (1917+)

put the slug on someone v phr 1 To hit or attack; SLUG: *finned for putting the slug on a heckling fan* **2** To criticize harshly; KNOCK: *needn't think he can get away with putting the slug on rummies (1940s+)*

put the snatch on someone or something v phr To take or commandeer; seize; kidnap: *The Treasury Department is going to put the snatch on virtually the entire 40 grand (1940s+)*

put the spurs to someone v phr To urge and goad; prod; GOOSE: *had been critic of the Pentagon and had "put the spurs to us from time to time" (1898+)*

put the squeeze on someone v phr To put under heavy pressure or exigency; LEAN ON someone, PUT THE HEAT ON someone: *She hired me to put the squeeze on Linda for a divorce (1941+)*

put the wood to someone v phr To punish; coerce by threat of punishment: *Why can't Mayor Barry put the wood to school administrators and demand more caring than this? (1970s+)*

put (or run) someone through the mill v phr To subject to an arduous experience; be rough on someone: *She's quite eager to try again, although they really put her through the mill (1818+)* See GO THROUGH THE MILL, THROUGH THE MILL

put someone through the wringer v phr To subject to harsh treatment, esp by severe interrogation [1942+; fr the image of squeezing something out by passing it through a clothing *wringer*]

putting See OFF-PUTTING

put-together *adj*: *Calm, cool, and collected. Never blew his stack. Never raised his voice. A real put-together guy (1970+)*

putt-putt *n* **1** A small marine engine **2** A motorboat, esp a slow one: *A sneaker's no good. Got to use a putt-putt* **3** Any small motor vehicle
v: *We'll putt-putt over to the island [1905+; fr the sound of a two-cycle engine]*

put (or add) one's two cents (or two cents worth) in *v phr* To volunteer one's advice, esp when it is not solicited; KIBITZ: *If I may put my two cents in, I think we should shut up (1930s+)*

putty *n* A very malleable or biddable person or persons: *they'll be putty and do exactly what you want (as they should) (1924+)*

put someone under *v phr* To arrest someone; COLLAR, HOOK SOMEONE UP, PINCH
[1990s+ Police; shortening of *put someone under arrest*]

put someone under the table *v phr* To remain sober while one's drinking companion(s) becomes drunk: *She can drink most under the table (1921+)*

put up *v phr* To contribute or pay money, esp money bet or promised
(1865+)

put someone up *v phr* To provide lodging for (1800+)

put-up job *n phr* A prearranged matter; a contrived affair: *The surprise award was a put-up job (1838+)*

put up or shut up *sentence* PUT ONE'S MONEY WHERE ONE'S MOUTH IS
(1878+)

put someone up to something *v phr* To incite or persuade someone: *I*

know who did it, but not who put him up to it (1824 +)

put up with someone or something **v phr** To tolerate or accept: *I'll put up with it if you think I should (1755 +)*

put someone wise v phr To make aware; inform, esp of something shrewd and elementary or covert: *The kindly old clerk put me wise to how things were done around there (1896 +)*

◁**putz**▷ **n 1** A detestable person; obnoxious wretch; PRICK, SCHMUCK: *Here comes the Moravian putz (1964 +)* **2** An ineffectual person; NEBBISH: *There wasn't much that worried him. Dying like a putz in a fucked-up gag was one thing that did (1964 +)* **3** The penis (1934 +) [fr Yiddish, literally "ornament"]

putz around v phr To behave idly; putter around; FOOL AROUND, FUTZ AROUND: *Dad was putzing around in the background [1970s + ; fr putz and semantically related to dick around, fuck around, though less coarse than these to any but, probably, Jewish ears]*

puzzle palace n phr 1 Any higher headquarters, including the Pentagon **2** A place, like the White House, where vital decisions are made in great and pompous secrecy: *some kind of puzzle palace on the Potomac (1970s + Army)*

pyramids See PLATFORMS

pyro n A pyromaniac, lover of fire (1977 +)

pythons n Quite muscular upper arms: *flexing his pythons after going to the Y*

Q

Q sign *n phr* A sign of death: the patient's mouth is wide open with tongue hanging out (1980s + *Medical*)

QT, the *See* ON THE QT

quack *n* An incompetent and fraudulent doctor [1659 + ; a shortening of *quacksalver*, “a person who boasts about the virtues of his worthless remedies”; fr Dutch and found by 1579]

quackery *n* The practices of “quacks”: *and knew it was “world-class quackery”* (1709 +)

quad *n* **1** Any architectural quadrangle, esp one at a college or university (1820 +) **2** QUOD (1804 +) **3** A car having four headlights (1950s + *Hot rodders*) **4** An idiot; fool; SPAZ, TARD: *I feel like such a quad, falling on my face while skating with those cute boys* (1990s + *Canadian students*) [said to be a shortening of *quadrilateral*, “square”]

quads *n* A set of four headlights on a car (1950s + *Hot rodders*)

quadzillion *See* JILLION

quail *n* ◀1▷ An attractive young woman; CHICK: *a lovely little quail from Arkansas* (1859 + *Students*) **2** A cornet or trumpet: *Listen to that kid blow that quail* (1950s + *Jazz musicians*) *See* SAN QUENTIN QUAIL

quant or **quant jock** *n* or *n phr* by 1990s An expert in quantitative analysis of stock-market and other business trends: *While not all the students entering business school can be classified as “quant jocks,” those whose strengths lie in their quantitative abilities*

quarterback *v* To lead or direct; control; manage: *and quarterbacking the rise of Action News at Channel 6 (1945 +)* **See** MONDAY MORNING QUARTERBACK

queen *n* **1** A woman, esp a wealthy and gracious one: *Wouldn't it be luck if some ritzy queen fell for him! (1900 +)* **2** A male homosexual, esp one who ostentatiously takes a feminine role: *The queens look great strutting along the boardwalk (1924 + Homosexuals)* *v* (also **queen it**) To behave in a refined and haughty way (1611 +) [homosexual sense probably a late 1800s alteration of *quean*, “harlot, prostitute,” influenced by connotations of *queen*, “aged, dignified, tawdry, and overadorned”] **See** CLOSET QUEEN, DRAG QUEEN, MAIN QUEEN, SIZE QUEEN, TEAROOM QUEEN, TOE-JAM QUEEN

queer *adj* **1** Counterfeit (1740 +) <2> Homosexual; CAMP, GAY • In the early 1990s *queer* was adopted as a nonpejorative designation by some homosexuals, in the spirit of “gay pride”: *Some girls said that I was queer (1922 +)* *n* **1** (also **the queer**) Counterfeit money: *eagle-eyed concessionaires always on the lookout for the queer (Underworld 1900s +); (1812 +)* <2> (also **queerie**): *a lot of queerries in the State Department (1932 +)* *v* To spoil; ruin; GOOF UP: *Food is what queered the party (late 1700s + British) ;(1812 +)*

<**queer as a three-dollar bill**> *adv* Obviously homosexual • Usually considered offensive: *He is queer as a three-dollar bill*

◁**queerbait**▷ **n** **1** A person who attracts gay people; a person who acts gay but claims to be straight **2** A person held in disdain: *Hey, queerbait! What are you looking at*

queer fish n phr A strange or weird person; odd fellow; WACK, WEIRDO (1750+)

Que pasa? sentence What's happening? What's going on?: *Hey, baby. Que pasa*

quick-and-dirty adj Hastily done as an expedient; slipshod: *The gossip in this quick-and-dirty, self-pitying memoir (1977+)* **n** GREASY SPOON (1968+)

quick buck See FAST BUCK

quick fix n phr A hasty repair or relief job: *He called my idea a quick fix at best, but he'd do it [1966+; fr fix as "repair" influenced by fix as "dose of narcotics"]*

quickie modifier: the new "quickie divorce" law n **1** (or **quicky**, also **quick one**) A quick drink of liquor (entry form 1940+, variant 1928+) **2** Anything taken or done very hastily; something rushed: *a "quickie," one of those overnight film concoctions (1926+)* **3** The sex act done very hastily: *We may have time for a quickie (1940s+)* **4** An unauthorized strike; WILDCAT (1943+)

quick like a bunny adv phr Very quickly [1940s+ Students; possibly a reference to the rapid copulation of rabbits]

quick on the draw (or the trigger or the uptake) adj phr Quick to respond or react; touchy; sensitive (1940s+)

quiff *n* A prostitute or promiscuous woman; ROUNDHEEL: *because some quiff is going to give you head* [1923 + ; origin obscure; probably related to the sense “copulate,” found by 1719]

quill *n* A folded matchbook cover used to hold heroin or cocaine for sniffing (1960s + *Narcotics*)

◁**quim**▷ *n* The vulva or vagina; CUNT [1613 + ; origin unknown]

quits *See* CALL IT A DAY

quit while one is ahead *v phr* To stop doing something after achieving success or at least partial success: *had won at slots, so he quit while he was ahead* **quod** (KWAHD) *n* A prison [1700 + ; perhaps fr *quadrangle*; perhaps fr Romany *quaid*, “prison”]

quote unquote *interj* An expression to emphasize a word or *phrase*, esp for irony or sarcasm: *your quote unquote friends*

quux *interj* A exclamation of disgust; FEH, YUCK [1983 + Computer; said to have been coined by Guy Steele, editor of the 1983 *The Hacker’s Dictionary*]

R

RA (pronounced as separate letters) **n** Anger; the RED ASS (1942+)

rabbi n An influential sponsor; a patron: *I see you got the gold tin; who's your rabbi?* [1932+; the dated instance has to do with post-office workers]

rabbit v To run away fast; escape in a hurry; LAM: *The man who had rabbited was later identified* (1887+)

rabbit ball n phr An especially lively baseball (1910+ *Baseball*)

rabbit ears n phr 1 A V-shaped television antenna (mid-1960s+) **2** Exceptionally keen hearing: *He was a terrific umpire, although he had one of the worst cases of rabbit ears I've ever seen* (1930s+)

rabbit food See BUNNY FOOD

rabbit punch n A very quick punch, esp a short blow to the neck

race See DRAG RACE, HORSE RACE, RAT RACE

rack v 1 (also **rack out**) To sleep; nap; COP ZS: *I'll rack out for awhile on the grass till I get it together* (1960s+ *Teenagers*) **2** To denigrate severely; TRASH: *Why rack Clinton?* (1990s+) [probably fr torture on the *rack*, a stretching machine, the verb found by 1433] **See** MEAT RACK, OFF-THE-RACK, RIM-ROCK

rack, the n Bed; SACK: *Jeanne is pretty good in the rack (1940s + Navy)*

rack duty (or time) n phr Sleep; time spent in one's bunk; SACK TIME
(1940s + Navy)

racked adj Hit in the testicles **adv** For certain; under control; TAPED:
As for the next step, I have that racked [1960s + ; probably fr the racking of the balls before a pool game, putting them in a precise pattern]

racked out adj phr Asleep; in bed (1960s + Teenagers)

racket n 1 Any illegal concern or enterprise; a criminal business;

DODGE, GRIFT: *G Marks and Abe Cohn have a new racket now of*

promenading Clinton Street dock (1785 +) **2** A party or dance, esp a

noisy one • In recent usage this is most common among the police:

passing evidence around like a pretzel tray at a retirement racket

(1745 +) **3** Any concession, stand, etc (1940s + Circus & carnival) **v**

To lead a busy life professionally and socially: *Monk's seesawing*

years, from 1935 to 1940, were spent racketing endlessly back and

forth between Europe and New York, an itinerant pianist and

boulevardier (1760 +) [fr early 1800s British underworld fr *racket*,

“noise, confusion,” etc]

racketeer n A person who works in an illegal racket; a member of
the rackets; GANGSTER, MOBSTER, WISE GUY (late 1920s +)

rackets, the n phr Organized crime; the syndicate; the Mafia; the MOB
(late 1920s +)

rack up¹ v phr To register or post; accumulate; achieve: *more*
representative of actual consumer use than 60,000 miles would have

been if racked up in short order [1960s + ; probably fr the *racking up* of pool balls in a triangular frame before a game]

rack up² *v phr* To wreck; ruin; damage severely; TOTAL: *He got caught raping a nine-year-old Japanese girl. He got racked up (1970s +)* See RACK

racy *adj* Somewhat indecent; RAUNCHY: *The movie has a lot of racy dialogue (1901 +)*

rad *adj* Extraordinary; wonderful; AWESOME, CHILL, GNARLY: *Want to go to this way rad party? (late 1970s + Teenagers)* **n** A radical (1820 +)

raft *n* A large number; OODLES, SLEW: *I have rafts of reasons for not doing that* [1833 + ; fr earlier uses of *raft* to mean a dense flight of waterfowl, a mass of logs in a river, etc]

rag *n* **1** An article of clothing: *She got into her rags (1855 +)* **2** A tent (1940s + *Circus*) **3** The pennant awarded to the annual winner of a league championship (1908 + *Baseball*) **4** A newspaper or magazine, esp one that the speaker does not like: *This so-called revolutionary organ is a horrible rag (1734 +)* **5** RAGTIME (1897 +) **6** A piece of ragtime music (1897 +) *v* **1** To play in a ragtime style: *The street bands ragged a tune by taking one note and putting two or three in its place (1897 +)* **2** To tease; banter disparagingly with; NEEDLE, RIDE: *Sometimes we'd rag one another in the rough manner that is safe only for friends (1808 +)* See the BIG RAG, DAMP RAG, GLAD RAGS

◁**rag, the**▷ *n* **1** A sanitary napkin or tampon: *She told him she had the rag on, which cooled his ardor some* **2** Menstruation; the CURSE (1930s +) See CHEW THE FAT, HAVE THE RAG ON, ON THE RAG

rag bag modifier: *a rag-bag collection, but an interesting one* **n phr** Any miscellany, esp a very random and confusing one: *What he calls his philosophy is a ragbag of trite trivialities (1820+)*

rage n A good party: *This is a rage, man (Australian 1980+, Canadian 1990s+)*

ragged *See* RUN someone RAGGED

◁**raggedy-ass**▷ or **raggedy-pants** **adj** Inferior; sloppy; HALF-ASSED: *some kinda raggedy-ass agreement she thinks is a legal will/ picked up from some raggedy-pants US trackside [WWI armed forces; found as ragged-arse by 1896]*

rag on someone or something **v phr** To disparage; strongly deprecate; TRASH: *Ivey, who was hosting the show, began ragging on him/ He overheard Mel ragging on one of his shots (1980s+ Students)*

rag out (or up) **v phr** To dress in one's best clothes; DOLL UP (*entry form 1875+, variant 1934+*)

rags *See* GLAD RAGS

rag-tag and bobtail **n phr** The rabble; hoi polloi: *Oh Lord, deliver me from the rag-tag and bobtail [1820+; tag-rag and bobtail is found by 1659; bobtail, "cur, lout," by 1619]*

ragtime modifier: *a ragtime classic* **n** A highly syncopated style of music, esp for the piano, having a heavily accented tempo and a melody consisting of many short rapid notes (1897+)

ragtop or **rag-roof** **modifier:** *I sure wouldn't sleep in that rag-top car* **n** A convertible car: *It's been a while since the ragtops rolled off the*

assembly line/ Return of the rag roofs (1955 +)

rag trade, the *n phr* The clothing and fashion industry; the garment industry; SEVENTH AVENUE: *the enormously canny middle-aged men of the rag trade (1890 +)*

rah-rah *adj* Naively enthusiastic and hortatory, esp in a partisan collegiate context: *Some are rah-rah types, some are hard-ass disciplinarians (1911 +)* *n*: *I just couldn't see myself spending four years of my life with rah-rahs like them* [a shortening of *hurrah*, found by 1877 as used in cheers]

rail *n* **1** A thin row of powdered narcotic to be sniffed; LINE: *I snorted the rails that Hondo offered (1960s + Narcotics)* **2** An elongated sort of competition hot rod (1970s + *Hot rodders*)

railbird *n* An ardent horse-racing devotee: *another three-year old that set the railbirds agog (1890 +)*

railroad *v* **1** To convict and imprison someone very rapidly, perhaps unjustly or illegally: *The prisoner is railroaded to jail* **2** To force a resolution of something quickly, perhaps without due process: *if all cases were railroaded through that quick (1884 +)* **See** a HELL OF A WAY TO RUN A RAILROAD

railroad tracks *n phr* **1** An Army captain's two silver bars, the insignia of rank (*WWII Army*) **2** Braces on teeth: *a chubette with "railroad tracks" across her teeth (1970s +)*

rain *v* To complain; BITCH (1960s + *Black*)

rain cats and dogs *v phr* (Variations: **chicken coops** or **darning needles** or **pitchforks** may replace **cats and dogs**) To rain very

hard [entry form 1738 + , *pitchforks* 1850 + ; origin unknown; although many improbable derivations have been proposed, from classical Greek to pagan Scandinavian; rain dogs and polecats is found by 1652]

rain check *n phr* A postponement or delay, with promise of renewal, of a sports event, dinner, party, date, receipt of a sale item at a store, etc [1884+ Baseball; fr the ticket stub that permits one to see another baseball game if the game one has a ticket for is not played on account of rain] **See** TAKE A RAIN CHECK

raincoat *n* A condom; RUBBER: *If a guy said “I ride bareback,” I’d tell him he needs a raincoat. Instead of gonorrhoea, I’d talk about the clap (1980s +)*

rainmaker *n* A powerful and successful representative or agent, esp for a law firm: *to a six-figure “rainmaker” generating fees for one of the most politically connected law firms in the state (1968 +)*

rain on someone’s parade *v phr* To spoil someone’s day, performance, special occasion, etc (1941 +)

raise *v* To leave; CUT OUT, SPLIT (1990s + *Black*) **See** MEXICAN PROMOTION

raise a stink *v phr* RAISE CAIN: *I didn’t even raise a stink when Bradley’s stylist guy came over [1970s + ; kick up a stink is found by 1948; stink, “fuss, disturbance,” is found by 1812]*

raise Cain (or a ruckus) *v phr* To make a disturbance; complain loudly and bitterly; KICK UP A FUSS (1840 +)

raise hell *v phr* 1 (Variations: **living hell** or **merry hell** or

unshirted hell may replace **hell**) RAISE CAIN: *They raised living hell/
cold frosts raise unshirted hell with fishing (first variant 1980s +)* **2** To
carouse and celebrate boisterously **3** To rebuke strongly; castigate:
He raised hell with me when he found out (1896 +)

raiser *See* HELL-RAISER

raise the roof v phr **1** To complain angrily and bitterly; issue a
strong rebuke: *When the president sees this fuck-up, she'll raise the
roof (1860 +)* **2** To make a boisterous noise; carouse raucously
(1894 +)

raisin ranch n phr A retirement community • Referring to wrinkles:
raisin ranches all over Florida

raked adj Of a customized car, having the front end lower than the
rear (1960s + *Hot rodders*)

rake in v phr To acquire large sums of money: *The Yosemite Fund has
so far raked in \$200,000 from the sale of 15,000 plates (1583 +)*

rake-off n **1** A gambling house's percentage of each pot or stake **2** An
illegal or unethical share or payment [1888 +; fr the *rake* used by
casino croupiers]

rake on someone v phr To denigrate and humiliate someone
(1980s + *Students*)

rake someone over the coals *See* HAUL SOMEONE OVER THE COALS

rally *See* PEP RALLY

ralph v (also **Ralph** or **ralph up** or **rolf**) To vomit; BARF: *He ralphs up
the downers and the quarts of beer [1967 + Teenagers; probably*

echoic]

-rama or -arama or -orama *suffix used to form nouns* A spectacular display or instance of what is indicated:

boatarama/bunsorama/videorama [1824 + ; fr *panorama*, ultimately fr Greek *horama*, “sight”]

ram-bam thank you ma’am *See* WHAM-BAM THANK YOU MA’AM

Rambo *modifier* Violent; loutishly aggressive: *Each day Bush ratchets up the Rambo rhetoric and closes more alleys of diplomatic escape for Saddam Hussein* [1985 + ; fr the main character of the movie *Rambo*]

rambunctious *adj* Boisterous; obstreperous; wild [1859 + ; origin unknown; *rambunctious* is found by 1830]

ram something down someone’s throat *v phr* To force someone to hear or do something: *ramming religion down our throats*

◁**ram it**▷ *v phr* STICK IT (1950s +)

rammer *See* MOTHERFUCKER

ranch *See* BUY THE FARM, HENCOOP

R&R *n* Rest and relaxation or recuperation: *lots of R & R after this is over (Military)*

randy *adj* 1 Sexually aroused; HORNY: *a desperately randy brain surgeon*
2 Desirous; yearning: *randy for the smell of setting cement* [1847 + ; origin unknown; various dialect senses suggest a possible derivation fr “wild movement,” “boisterousness,” “wantonness”]

rank *adj* inferior; contemptible **v** **1** To say or do something that reveals another's guilt: *She ranked him by busting out with that new fur so soon after the robbery (1920s + Underworld)* **2** To harass; annoy; KID, NEEDLE: *the fine, foul art of "ranking."* *Light insults were his way of making friends (1934 +)* [second sense used by 1960s teenagers in the preferred variant *rank out*, both as a verb phrase and a noun phrase] **See** PULL RANK

rank someone (out) **v phr** To chastise or criticize someone: *ranked Terry out for smoking*

rank on someone **v phr** To insult; disparage; PUT someone or something DOWN: *Fred ranked on Dawn after the fight was broken up (1980s + Students)*

rap¹ **n** **1** A rebuke; blame; responsibility; KNOCK: *Who'll take the rap for this? (1777 +)* **2** Arrest, indictment, or arraignment for a crime: *Gangs with influence can beat about 90 percent of their "raps" (1903 +)* **3** An official complaint or reprimand: *Honest cops will often take a "rap" or complaint rather than testify against a fellow cop (1928 +)* **See** BEAT THE RAP, TAKE THE RAP

rap² **n** **1** Informal talk; candid conversation and communion (1929 +) **2** RAP SONG (1970s + *Black*) **v** **1** To converse; chat and exchange views, esp in a very candid way: *drugs, youth cult, ecstasy questing, rapping (1929 +)* **2** To chant a rap song (1970s + *Black*) [origin unknown; perhaps related to *repartee*, perhaps to *rapport*, perhaps to *rapid*]

rap club (or **parlor** or **studio**) **n phr** **1** A place that offers sexual

services in the guise of conversation and companionship: “*rap clubs*,” which have replaced *massage parlors* 2 A nightclub, discotheque, etc, featuring rap music (1973 +)

rap someone’s **knuckles v phr** To give a light and insufficient punishment; GIVE SOMEONE A SLAP ON THE WRIST: *Tokyo had been rapped over the knuckles* [1749 +; the dated instance might indicate a more severe punishment than modern use does]

raper¹ **n** 1 A person who charges or identifies another as a criminal (1904 +) 2 A judge or prosecutor (1904 +) 3 A crime for which someone not guilty has been punished: *a couple of gang murders solved, but they were just rappers* (1940 +)

raper² **modifier**: *raper talk, which pulls in language from 40s hipsters, 60s hippies, and even cockney rhyming slang* **n** 1 A person who converses and chats, esp a member of a rap (discussion) group (1960s + *Counterculture*) 2 The chanter of a rap song (1970s + *Black*) 3 A devotee of rap music and its attendant styles of dressing, dancing, etc: *as rappers pick up on a little new wave style and make their moves* (1970s + *Black*)

rap session n phr 1 A conversation; a bout of candid chat: *talk shows featuring rap sessions between hosts and listeners* 2 A meeting of a discussion group: *I was asked to lead a rap session* (1970 +)

rap sheet n phr: *Their rap sheets listed convictions for the possession or sale of controlled substances* (1960 +) **See** RAPPER¹

rap song (or music) n phr A song that is rapidly spoken rather than actually sung, usu with an electronic rhythm accompaniment

(1970s+ *Black*)

rare back v phr To gather one's strength; poise oneself for action:
She rared back and let him have it [1930s+; fr the verb *rear*, and the image of a horse *rearing* on its hind legs]

rare bird n phr Someone or something quite different and remarkable: *rare bird of a man who will do housework*

raring to go, be v phr To be very eager and keen to begin; Lean Forward in the Saddle [1927+; fr the image of a *rearing*, mettlesome horse]

rasberries or razzberries (RAZ behr eez) **interj** An exclamation of disbelief, defiance, disgust, etc; NUTS (1925+)

raspberry (or **razzberry**), the (RAZ beh ree) **n phr** A rude and contemptuous expulsion of breath through vibrating lips: *that staccato sputter of derision known as the Bronx cheer, or raspberry* [1880+; fr Cockney rhyming slang *raspberry tart*, "fart"] **rat combining word** A frequenter and devotee of the place indicated: *arcade rat/ rink rat* (1970s+) **n 1** A treacherous and disgusting person: *He's acting like a prime rat on this* (1629+) **2** An informer; STOOL PIGEON: *In most cases they were "rats" and the best tools the keepers had* (1902+) **v 1** To betray; desert; turn one's coat (1812+) **2: an inmate, rankled by Angelo's attempts to woo his daughter, ratted on them (1910+) **3** HOODGE (1980s+) **See** BRIG RAT, LOOK LIKE A DROWNED RAT, PACK RAT, RUG RAT, SHACK MAN, SMELL A RAT**

◁**rat-bastard**▷ **n** A thoroughly despised or wretched person: *the rat-bastards who live here*

ratchet *v* To change by increments in one direction: *Gold had ratcheted down to 385* [1977 +; fr the *ratchet* action of a winch or of a wrench, where an increasing pressure, torque, pull, etc, is registered by the clicking of a pawl on a gear wheel]

ratchet-mouth or **ratchet-jaw** *n* A person who is constantly talking; MOTOR-MOUTH [1970s +; perhaps because a *ratchet* wrench can be operated without pause and makes a constant rapid rasping, clacking noise]

rate *v* **1** To merit; deserve: *He rates a big cheer, folks* (1920 +) **2** To be highly esteemed: *What stunt did he ever pull that makes him rate?* (1940s +) **See** FIRST-RATE

rated **See** X-RATED

rate with someone *v phr* To be highly regarded, cherished, trusted, etc, by someone: *That sort of persuasion doesn't rate a damn with me* (1928 +)

rat fink modifier: *the rat-fink Eastern press* *n phr* A treacherous and disgusting person; BASTARD, SHITHEEL: *that rat-fink Danny's kid* (1963 + *Teenagers*) [perhaps originally fr labor-union use, since both terms mean "scab"]

◀**rat fuck**▶ *adj phr* **1** Unacceptable to conventional moral traditions **2** FAR OUT *n phr* A despicable person; RAT FINK: *You lousy bastard rat-fuck* *v phr* **1** To have a good time; JAM **2** To loaf and idle about; rat around (1950s + *College students*)

rathole *n* A wretched, messy place; a filthy hovel; DUMP: *Those days we lived in a rathole* (1812 +) *v* To store up food and supplies;

stockpile; STASH (1950s +) **See** POUR MONEY DOWN THE DRAIN

rations See GROUND RATIONS

rat on someone v phr To inform on someone; give evidence against someone; SQUEAL: *No power on earth can keep her from ratting on you* (1932 +)

rat out v phr To abandon or desert; withdraw; FINK OUT: *I wouldn't feel you were ratting out* [1941 + ; fr the rats that desert a sinking ship]

rat someone out v phr To betray or inform on someone; RAT ON someone: *My little brother ratted me out, though* (1990s +)

rat pack n phr A teenage street gang: *juvenile gangs, sometimes called rat packs* (1951 +)

rat race the n phr A job, situation, milieu, etc, marked by confusion and stress; futile and enervating hyper-activity; the everyday world of toil and struggle; the routine workaday: *the rat-race of ordinary social gatherings* [1939 + ; found by 1937 as the name of a dance]

rats interj An exclamation of disgust, disappointment, dismay, etc (1886 +)

◁rat's ass, a▷ **See** NOT GIVE A DAMN

◁rat's asshole▷ **n phr** A despicable person; BASTARD, RAT FINK: *You rat's asshole* (1970s +)

rattle v 1 (also **rattle on**) To talk on and on, esp foolishly or pointlessly; babble (1594 +) **2** To confuse; upset; disturb concentration: *I rattled him with veiled menaces* (1869 +)

rattlebrain or **rattlehead** *n* A silly or stupid person; SCATTERBRAIN:

Mother would like to travel around but not with an old rattlebrain like you driving (first form 1709+, second 1641+)

rattle someone's **cage** (or **caboose**) *v phr* **1** To criticize; needle; sting; BUG: *Reiner and friends affectionately rattle the cage of rock music and its every pretension* **2** To make a scene or disturbance; RAISE CAIN: *I'm going into his office and rattle his cage (1980s+)*

rattle cages *v phr* To cause excitement; shake things up: "You like to rattle cages," the saleswoman observed, explaining that it was a California expression (1980s+)

rattle someone's **chain** *See* PULL SOMEONE'S CHAIN

rattled *adj* Confused and upset: *rattled by the news*

rattler *n* **1** A railroad train: *a very luxurious rattler (1903+)* **2** A fast freight train or a freight car (1913+ *Hoboes*) **3** A rattlesnake (1827+) [in the first sense, *rattler*, "coach," is found by 1630] *See* CAGE RATTLER

rattlesnakes *See* UP TO ONE'S ASS IN something

rattletrap *n* A ramshackle coach or other vehicle, esp an old car (1822+)

rattling *adj* Good; GREAT: *a rattling party (1690+)* *adv* very; extremely: *a rattling good story (1829+)*

ratty or <rat-ass> *adj* Shabby; slovenly; SCRUFFY, TACKY: *The skinny Berkley, with her ratty hair and sharp teeth/ the rat-ass rags he's always wearing (1867+)*

raunch *n* Vulgarity; smut; PORN: *No obscenities in Glen's Bar. Too tired for raunch/ the latest batch of 8mm raunch (1964+)* **v** To do the sex act with or to; SCREW: *just because she's raunched a few law students (1970s+)* [back formation fr *raunchy*]

raunchy *adj* **1** Sloppy; slovenly; careless: *depending on how good or how "raunchy" we were (1939+)* **2** (also **rotchy**) Inferior; cheap; CRUMMY, GRUNGY: *my raunchy old jeans (1950+ Teenagers)* **3** Vulgar; salacious; DIRTY: *In the beginning there was Playboy, then came raunchy Penthouse (1967+)* [origin uncertain; the pronunciation and the early currency among aviation cadets in Texas suggest a possible origin in Spanish *rancho*, "ranch," found by 1857, and called by 1864 "a place of evil report"; a ranch, of course, may be regarded as a place of animal filth, odors, etc]

rave *modifier*: *rave notices* **n** **1**: *The critics gave it a rave (1926+)* **2**: *Organized on the fly (sometimes by electronic mail) and often held in warehouses, raves are huge, nomadic dance parties that tend to last all night, or until the police show up/ all-night, Ecstasy-fueled parties known as raves/ Rave head dictates nonviolent fashion and dancing spasmodically to very fast "techno" music (1990s+)* **v** To commend or applaud enthusiastically: *He's raving over this new book (1816+)* [*rave* meant "party" in British slang by 1960] **See** FAVE

raver *n* A person who has a wild time, especially sexually (1959+)

rave-up *n* **1** A wild party (1940+ *British*) **2** Something loud and exciting: *in "Take Me Back," a lively rave-up (1967+)*

raw *adj* **1** Inexperienced; unfledged; callow: *a raw young actress*

(1561 +) **2** Harsh; inhospitable: *a raw reception* (1546 +) **3** Nude; naked; IN THE RAW: *You can't go raw on this beach, ma'am* (1931 +) **4** Vulgar; salacious; dirty; raunchy: *He offended us all with a very raw story* (1940s +)

raw deal *n phr* A case of harsh, unfair, or injurious treatment; a ROYAL FUCKING: *The Academy officers were heaping raw deal after raw deal on him* (1912 +)

ray of sunshine *n phr* An infectiously happy person (1915 +)

rays *n* Sunshine: *soaking up some rays* (1980s +) **See** BAG SOME RAYS

razorback *n* A manual laborer; roustabout (1940s + *Circus & hoboes*)

razz *v* To insult and ridicule; NEEDLE, RIDE: *Is there ever any razzing about the fact that you report to your wife?* [1920 +; *fr raspberry*; found in the form *razoo* by 1890]

razz, the *n phr* Mocking insults; rude splatting sounds; the RASPBERRY: *They begin to give him the razz* (1920 +)

razzberry, the **See** the RASPBERRY

razzle-dazzle *adj*: *its razzle-dazzle weapons and command and control systems* **modifier**: *a razzle-dazzle quarterback* **n 1** Adroit deception; slick dodging and feinting; DIPSY-DOODLE, RAZZMATAZZ: *suspecting some sort of razzle-dazzle* (1898 +) **2** Excitement; gaudiness; spectacular show: *put razzle-dazzle into the grocery business* (1889 +) **3** An exciting carnival ride (1935 + *Carnival*) [probably a reduplication of *dazzle*]

razzmatazz or **razzamatazz** *adj* Spectacular; showy; dazzling; RAZZLE-

DAZZLE: *a razzmatazz New Year's Eve bash* **n** 1 Swift and adroit deception; slick jugglery; RAZZLE-DAZZLE: *more glitter, more razzmatazz, more false human interest* (1894 +) 2 Anything outdated, esp old and sentimental; CORN, RICKY-TICK¹: *"Razzmatazz" is corny jazz* (1950s + *Jazz talk*)

reach-me-down *adj* Inferior; shoddy: *the nice and the reach-me-down manners* **n** HAND-ME-DOWN (1862 +)

reaction *See* GUT REACTION

read **n** 1 A book or other printed matter: *Ultimately, it's Maas' reporter's eye for detail that makes "China White" a great read* (1958 +) 2 Understanding; interpretation; TAKE: *What's your read on this?* (1990s +) **v** 1 To inspect clothing for lice (WWI Army) 2 To receive and interpret a radio signal; understand: *He's breaking up and I can't read him* (1940s + *Radio operators*) 3 To understand; DIG: *I read you, baby, and I flatly agree* (1956 +)

read 'em and weep *sentence* Here is some probably unwelcome information for you; here is the truth [1940s + *Gambling; fr the crapshooter's or poker player's injunction that his opponents look carefully at a winning roll or hand*]

reader *See* MITT-READER

readers **n** Marked playing cards: *The cards and dice were crooked, the cards being readers* (1894 + *Gambling*)

read from the same page **v** *phr* To agree; see eye to eye: *These guys, reading from the same page for the first time in years, signed the pact* (1990s +)

read someone his rights *See* GIVE SOMEONE HIS RIGHTS

read someone like a book *v phr* To know and understand someone thoroughly, including deep motives and likely actions: *She thinks she's pretty clever, but I read her like a book (1844+)*

read someone loud and clear *v phr* To understand someone very well; comprehend perfectly: *Do you read me loud and clear, mister? (1940s+ Radio operators)*

read my lips or can you read lips *sentence* I am thinking but not uttering something obscene, insulting, or otherwise not for the public ear: *Psst. Hey, parents! Read my lips* *v phr* You seem to be too stupid to understand what I'm saying, so look at me very attentively and try (1980s+)

read the riot act *v phr* To rebuke firmly; reprove severely, esp in the vein of a stern warning (1819+)

ready, the *n phr* Money: *Take the ready and send it along [1688+; fr ready money]*

ready for this? (are you) *interj* Get ready to hear something surprising

real *adv* Really; truly (1658+) *See* FOR REAL, IT'S BEEN REAL

◁**real bitch**▷ *n phr* A particularly nasty, difficult, or annoying person or thing: *Opening that is a real bitch*

real cheese, the *See* the CHEESE

real gone *adj phr* Excellent; wonderful; COOL, FUNKY FRESH: *a real gone chick (1950s+ Students)*

reality check *n phr* A confirmation of fact, esp when compared with fantasy: *Proxmire's pronouncements provided a reality check on spending requests (1990s +)*

really pick 'em *See* ONE CAN REALLY PICK 'EM

real McCoy, the, or the **McCoy** *n phr* Any genuine and worthy person or thing; the genuine article: *egg bagels, a sweeter variety of the real McCoy/ You can trust her, she's the McCoy [1922 + ; origin uncertain; the real Mackay is found by 1883; revived during Prohibition times to describe liquor]*

real money *See* HEAVY MONEY

real pro *See* PRO

ream *v* 1 (also **rim**) To cheat; swindle, esp by unfair business practice; *SCREW: A new technique for reaming the customers (1914 +)* 2 (also **ream out**) To rebuke harshly; *BAWL SOMEONE OUT, CHEW SOMEONE OUT: I've seen him just ream guys out for not getting the job done (WWII armed forces)* <3> (also **rim**) To stimulate the anus, either orally or with the penis (1942 + *Homosexuals*)

rear end *n phr* (also **rear**) The buttocks; *ASS: She's a pain in the rear end (1937 +, variant 1796 +)* *v* To hit a car from the rear: *his Grand Am was rear-ended (mid-1970s +)*

rear-ender or **back-ender** *n phr* An automobile accident in which the victim is hit from behind

rearrange the deck chairs on the Titanic *v phr* To behave with appalling futility; *FUCK THE DOG: The Administration seems quite willing*

to rearrange the chairs on the deck of the Titanic while money and confidence flow out of the deposit insurance system (1990s +)

reat *See* ALL REET, REET

Rebel or Reb *n* A white Southerner (1862 +)

rebop *n* BOP (1940s +)

rec *Modifier* Recreation: *worked for park and rec for years (1929 +)*

recap (REE kap) *n*: *I gave her a quick recap of the incident* *v* To repeat, esp in a summary form; recapitulate; REHASH (1940s +)

recharge (one's batteries) *v phr* To replenish one's energies, resources, etc: *I came to New York to recharge my cultural batteries (mid-1970s +)*

recon *n* Reconnaissance: *orders for recon only (1966 + Military)*

record *See* BROKEN RECORD, OFF THE RECORD, TRACK RECORD

red *adj* Intoxicated with narcotics, esp with marijuana; HIGH (1990s + *Narcotics*) *n* Chili con carne: *places to consider when I need a bowl of red (1990s +)* *See* IN THE RED, MEXICAN RED, PAINT THE TOWN RED, SEE RED

Red or Red Devil *n* or *n phr* Seconal[™], a barbiturate capsule: *dropping Reds and busting heads (1960s + Narcotics)*

◁**red ass**▷, the *n phr* Anger; PISS-OFF (1940s + *Southern*)

◁**red-assed**▷ *adj* Very angry; livid; PISSED OFF (1940s + *Southern*)

red carpet *adj phr* Luxurious; plush; RITZY: *Jewelry gives you a red carpet elegance (1950s +)* *n phr* A sumptuous welcome: *He was sort of expecting the red carpet and not the fish-eye (1934 +)* [fr an

ancient custom, at least as old as Aeschylus's *Agamemnon*, of putting down a *red carpet* over which a welcomed dignitary would walk] **See** ROLL OUT THE RED CARPET

red cent, a (or one) *n phr* (Variation: a (or one) **red**) A cent; the least amount of money; a THIN DIME: *The poor man claimed he didn't have a red cent* [1839 +; fr the fact that a copper *cent* is *red*]

red dog n phr A defensive assault in which the linebacker goes directly for the quarterback (1966 + *Football*)

redd up v phr To make neat and clean; put in order: *workers are redding up after the gale* [1718 +; fr Scots dialect, of uncertain origin]

redeye n 1 Raw and inferior whiskey; PANTHER PISS, ROTGUT: *Barrow put down a slug of redeye* (1819 +) **2** Ketchup (1927 +)

red-eye, the, or the **red-eye special n phr** An airline flight from coast to coast, esp from west to east, that leaves one coast late at night and arrives early in the morning: *I just flew in on the red-eye* [1968 +; fr the bleary sleepless look of overnight passengers]

red face See HAVE A RED FACE

red-faced adj Embarrassed; abashed; guilty-looking (1950s +)

redflag v To inject narcotics by hypodermic needle; MAINLINE, SHOOTUP: *take it home and redflag the works into your arm* (1990s + *Narcotics*)

red flag modifier Subject of a special warning or suspicion: *His article identifies several "red flag" professions that have a higher-than-usual chance of being audited* [1976 +; found as a sign of warning by

1777]

red herring *n phr* Something used to divert attention from the real issue or matter: *All this talk of deficits is just a red herring* [1884+; fr the use of a dead *red herring* to confuse or test the scent of hunting dogs, found by 1686]

red hot *adj phr* Very hot; sizzling • An intensive of all slang senses of *hot* (1758+) *n phr* A frankfurter; HOT DOG (1892+)

red-hot mama *n phr* **1** A type of heavy, loud, and somewhat vulgar woman singer of the 1920s (1926+) **2** An especially lively, amorous, and attractive woman (1936+)

red ink *n phr* **1** Red wine, esp of an inferior sort: *A pint of red ink still sells for two bits* (1919+) **2** Financial loss or losses: *a flood of red ink totaling close to \$80 billion* (1929+)

red-letter day *n phr* An important day; a memorably happy or noteworthy day: *red-letter days marked on the calendar*

redlight *v* **1** To push someone off a moving train; kill by pushing off a train: *Who'd you redlight, Ferris? (Circus & carnival)* **2** To eject someone from a car

red light, the *n phr* A warning or command to stop: *We were all set, but the boss gave us the red light* [1931+; found by 1849 in the time before traffic lights]

redline *v* **1** To cross a soldier's name off the payroll for some wrongdoing (*WWII Army*) **2**: *aimed at preventing redlining, the practice of denying loans to entire neighborhoods based on the*

predominant race or economic class of their residents (1973 +) **3** To achieve maximum speed; push the dial up to the red line: *He had the car redlined (1990s +)* **4:** *Comparerite also does what's called "redlining," which allows you to add notes and comments that won't become part of the final document but can be seen by the next reader (Computers)*

redneck modifier: *This is a redneck rural county* **n 1** ◀CRACKER▶
(1893 +) **2** A bigoted and conventional person; a loutish ultraconservative: *Fred is a crude redneck, and Carol is his latest bimbo (1975 +)* [perhaps fr the characteristic ruddy *neck* of an angry person, and influenced by the image of a bigoted rural Southern white person; perhaps fr the fact that pellagra, a deficiency disease associated with poor Southern whites, produces a dermatitis that turns the neck red; first noun sense found by 1830 in a more specialized derogatory use, "the Presbyterians in Fayetteville"]

rednecked *adj* Angry; RED-ASSED (1940s +)

red paint *n phr* Ketchup (1900 +)

redshirt **n 1** A student whose period of athletic eligibility has been extended **2** An act of redshirting: *Indiana forward Alan Henderson is recovering from knee surgery, so a medical redshirt is a possibility* **v 1** To extend a college student's period of athletic eligibility **2** Various noncollege and nonsports instances of providing an extra year of eligibility: *It is a capricious misuse of scarce resources when public schools provide redshirting, borrowing the term used in college athletics/ To get them eligibility for additional schooling: Under the redshirt plan,*

special education students could extend their high school program by at least one year [1955+ Sports; fr the *red shirts* worn by such athletes in contrast with varsity players]

red state *n phr* Any US state that tends to vote for candidates of the Republican party in a general election (2000+)

red-tag *v* To label a house officially as damaged and uninhabitable: *Because of the Northridge earthquake, a Pacoima house I rented out was red-tagged* (1990s+)

red tape *n phr* Delay and complication; bureaucratic routine; petty officious procedure [1736+; fr the tape used for tying up legal and official documents]

red tide *n* A woman's menstrual period: *down with the red tide*

red zone *n phr* The part of the field closest to the defender's goal line: *We wouldn't be talking about a lull if we wouldn't have made the mistakes in the red zone* (1990s+ Football)

reeb *n* Beer [1990s+; an interesting modern case of back slang]

reefer¹ *n* A refrigerated railroad car, truck, ship, etc; FREEZE: *A malfunction in a refrigerated trailer, or reefer, raises the temperature* [1914+; fr *refrigerated*]

reefer² or **reefer weed** *n* **1** A marijuana cigarette; JOINT **2** A person who smokes marijuana; POTHEAD [1920s+ Narcotics; origin unknown; perhaps originally *rifa* fr Mexican Spanish *grifa*, "marijuana," the g lost because it is not aspirated or exploded in Spanish pronunciation and hence not readily heard by English]

speakers]

reefer³ or **refer** *n* A front-page paragraph referring to a story on an inside page: *The Times ran a reefer with the new term for “change of mind” subtly noted/ The Timeses of New York or LA could produce front pages of refers, meaning concise summaries that resemble the tops of articles (1990s+ Newspaper office)*

reeler *n* A spree; drunken carouse: *before he realizes he is off on a reeler (1930s+)*

reenter *v* To cease feeling the effects of a narcotic; descend from a narcotic ecstasy [Narcotics; fr the *reentry* of a space vehicle into the earth’s atmosphere]

reentry *n* The act of descent from a narcotic ecstasy (1960s+ *Narcotics*)

reet or **reat** *adj* (also **reet** and **compleat**) Good; proper; excellent; right: *With her good looks, she was still “reet” with me/ looking extremely reet and compleat (1930s+ Jazz musicians) See ALL REET*

ref *n* A referee (1899+) *v*: *I started reffing basketball in southern Illinois in 1957 (1929+)*

refi *n* Refinancing: *a year ago, many refis*

refrigerator mom *n phr* A working or absentee mother who communicates with her children by notes on the refrigerator door: *Autistic kids are not due to refrigerator moms (1990s+)*

register *v* To express with the face and body: *I jumped up and registered horror (1901+)*

regs *n* Regulations; rules: *All regs say you can't* (1940s +)

regular *adj* **1** Real; genuine: *He thinks he's a regular Casanova*

(1821 +) **2: regular coffee** *n* A cup of coffee with the usual moderate amount of cream and sugar • In New York City no sugar is included (1950s + *fr lunch counter*)

regular fellow (or **guy**) *n phr* An honest, pleasant, convivial person, esp of the moral bourgeoisie: *I know I'm not a regular fellow, yet I loathe anybody else that isn't/ She's like Wallace. A real fighter. A regular guy* (first form 1920 +, second 1840 +)

rehab (REE hab) *modifier*: *more work-release and rehab centers* *n* Rehabilitation, esp of a drug addict, alcoholic, etc: *After a few weeks' rehab they sent him back home* (1948 +) *v* To rehabilitate, esp a building, factory, etc: *Williams has worked for minimum wage, rehabbing houses/ had to give up a sublease because the building was rehabbed* (1970s +)

rehash *n*: *a rehash of stale political charges* *v* To review; discuss again; repeat; RECAP: *the things they had hashed and rehashed for many a frugal conversational meal* [1880 +; called vulgar in the dated source]

reinvent the wheel *v phr* To go laboriously and unnecessarily through elementary stages in some process or enterprise; waste time on tediously obvious fundamentals (1980s +)

rejigger or **rejig** *v* To alter or readjust; tinker with: *sought to raise output this year by rejiggering its agricultural policies* [first form 1940s +, second 1960 +; *fr* mid-1800s *jigger*, "shake or jerk

rapidly,” related to *jig* as a rapid movement, dance, etc, hence “rearrange or readjust by shaking,” semantically similar to *shake up*]

religion *See* GET RELIGION

reloading *n*: *In one of the worst scams, called “reloading,” consumers who have already lost money are bilked again by companies that offer to recover their losses (1940s +)*

◁**reltney**▷ *n* The penis: *My reltney was ready for action [origin unknown]*

reno (REH noh) *modifier*: *Today a boarded-up construction site, tomorrow a reno Parthenon* *n* A renovated house: *Buying an off-the-rack reno is expensive and not very adventurous (1970s + Canadian)*

rent *See* BET THE FARM, HIGH-RENT

rent-a-cop or ▷**rent-a-pig**▷ *n* A uniformed security guard; square badge: *a part-time rent-a-cop, somebody’s doorman [1970s + ; coined on the model of rent-a-car, on which model depends also the coinage Rent-a-Kvetch and many others]*

rent-boy *n* A male prostitute, esp young (1969 +)

rent party *n phr* A party where one’s friends and neighbors buy drinks, food, etc, and help one pay the rent; PERCOLATOR, SHAKE (1925 + *Black*)

rents or ‘rents *n* Parents; PARENTAL UNIT(S): *I’m sure your only salvation is to hit up your rents (1960s + Teenagers)*

rep¹ *n* Reputation: *gettin’ the rep a not havin’ a big schnozz (1705 +)*

See DEMI-REP

rep² n A representative: *The sales rep from Kokomo (1896 +)* **v:** *Both of whom are repped by yours truly*

rep³ modifier: *a rep company n* Repertory: *She played in rep a couple years (1925 + Theater)*

rep⁴ n A repetition: *I mused on this while I did 15 reps at 250 (1864 +)*

repeaters n Loaded dice (1950s + Gambling)

repeat on someone v phr To cause eructation or belching: *I never eat chili because it always repeats on me (1930s +)*

replay See INSTANT REPLAY

repo¹ (REE poh) n A car repossessed for nonpayment of installments (1970s +) **v:** *when the best times are to repo or rip off cars*

repo² (REE poh) n A type of investment: *investments known as retail repurchase agreements, or repos for short (1963 +)*

repo (or snatch) man (REE poh) n phr A person employed to confiscate repossessed cars: *He had become unpopular as a result of his work as a repo man, work that had required him to carry a sawed-off shotgun/ Baraka gave young black artists a place to go outside of white bohemia and black academia, though some of us still landed in those two purgatories to stay ahead of the snatch man (1970s +)*

res (REHZ) n An Indian reservation: *He won't get off the res (1990s +)*

resin See KISS THE CANVAS

rest See GIVE IT A REST

restless *See* the NATIVES ARE RESTLESS

◁**retard**▷ (REE tard) *n* A stupid person; AIRHEAD, SPAZ: *the stereotype of the crazy retard* [1960s + ; fr *mentally retarded*]

◁**retarded**▷ *modifier* Defective and annoying: *this retarded bicycle*

retread (REE tred) *n* **1** A used tire with new tread (1914 +) **2** A former military person recalled or accepted for additional service (*WWII armed forces*)

retro *adj* Nostalgic; historically resurrectional: *I'm going to give them retro names like Madge or Verna or Ralph* *n* A retrospective art exhibit, movie festival, etc: *the Bleecker's current Godard retro* [1974 + ; fr *retrospective*]

Reuben *n* HAYSEED, HICK, RUBE (1905 + *Carnival circus*)

re-up *v* **1** To re-enlist: *Are you really going to re-up and go to that chopper school?* **2** To obligate or engage oneself again: *paying him \$6,000,000 to re-up with the Cubs* [1906 + Army; fr the requirement of holding up one's right hand while taking an oath]

rev or **rev up** *v* or *v phr* **1** To speed up a motor; increase the rpms (1916 +) **2** To stir up; stimulate; enliven; JAZZ something UP: *seems to think he has to really rev his prose every now and again* (1956 +)

revamp *v* To improve by remaking; renovate; revise: *We can't just patch it up; we need to revamp the whole proposal* [1850 + ; fr shoemakers, "to replace the upper front part of a shoe"]

revolving-door *modifier* Of short duration; helter-skelter; transient: *revolving-door presidents and prime ministers, that's what's happening*

revved up *adj phr* Excited; expectant; PUMPED UP: *We were really revved up that here was somebody who was going to try to run up the middle* (1931 +)

RF (pronounced as separate letters) *n* **1** RAT FINK **2** RAT FUCK **3** a ROYAL FUCKING (1960s + *College students*)

RHIP (pronounced as separate letters) *sentence* Rank hath its privileges (1930s + *Army*)

rhoid *n* A truly annoying person; PAIN IN THE ASS

rhubarb¹ *n* A loud quarrel or squabble; a controversy of riotous potential, esp among baseball players on the field: *beanball throwing, rhubarbs, and umpire baiting* [1938 + *Baseball*; origin unknown and richly speculated on; said to have been first used in a broadcast by Garry Schumacher]

rhubarb² *n* A low-level aerial strafing mission (*WWII Air Forces*) *v*: *flying for rhubarbing* [an arbitrary code name]

rhubarbs, the *n phr* Small towns; rural venues; the provinces: *what the game meant as it's played out in the rhubarbs* [1915 + *Baseball*; fr a humorous alteration of *suburbs*]

rib *n*: *Carson sensed that he was the victim of a rib* *v* To tease; make fun of; KID, RAG, RIDE: *His trick is gently ribbing the audience* (1930 +) [origin unknown; perhaps fr a symbolic nudge in the *ribs*]

ribbie or **ribby** or **rib-eye steak** *n* A run batted in; RBI: *had two other big ribbies/ Brandon had two homers and seven rib-eye steaks (RBI)* (*first forms baseball 1960s +, third 1990s +*)

rib joint *n phr* A brothel: *fracas in a Minneapolis rib joint* [1943+; probably fr earlier *rib*, “woman,” fr *Adam’s rib*, influenced by the designation of a restaurant specializing in barbecued spareribs]

ribs *n* Food; a meal [1950s+ Bop & cool talk; extension of barbecued spareribs, semantically similar to the extension of *grits*]

rib-tickler *n* Something amusing, esp a joke (1933+)

rice-burner or **rice-grinder** or **rice-rocket** *n* A motorcycle of Japanese manufacture (1980s+ *Motorcyclists*)

rich *See* STRIKE IT RICH, TOO RICH FOR someone’s BLOOD

Richard Roe *See* JOHN DOE

◁**rich bitch**▷ *adj phr*: *his rich-bitch mother-in-law* *n phr* A wealthy woman (1940s+)

rich rich *adj phr* Very rich: *They’re rich, OK, but not rich rich* [1963+; found by 1725 in a poem of Edward Taylor, but the meaning is not clearly the same]

ricky-tick¹ (also **ricky-ticky** or **rinky-tink**) *adj* Old-fashioned; outworn; CORNY: *a brassy, ricky-ticky big band sound* (1930+ *Jazz musicians*) *n* Bouncy ragtime music of the 1920s (1930+ *Jazz musicians*)

ricky-tick² *adj* RINKYDINK

ride *n* **1** A sexual encounter: *He asked her for a ride and she slapped him* (1937+) **2** An improvised passage; BREAK, RIFF (1930+ *Jazz musicians*) **3** A saddle horse (1787+) **4** A psychedelic narcotic experience; TRIP (1960s+ *Narcotics*) **5** A car: *This you ride, man?*

(1929 +) **v 1** To tease; heckle; make fun of; NEEDLE, RIB: *I can remember riding Pete Rose to death from the bench* (1912 +) **<2>** To do the sex act with or to a woman; mount; SCREW (1250 +) **3** To hit the ball hard; POWDER: *Goslin rode it right out of the park* (1929 + *Baseball*) **See** FULL-RIDE, GO ALONG FOR THE RIDE, HITCH A RIDE, JOY RIDE, LET something RIDE, SLEIGHRIDE, TAKE someone FOR A RIDE, THUMB

<ride someone's ass> v phr To harass someone; BUG, HASSLE: *somebody wants to bother you, man, really ride your ass* [1980s + ; *ride* is found by 1583 in the stronger sense “to dominate cruelly, oppress”]

ride herd on someone or something **v phr** To keep someone or something under control; monitor and correct; manage: *Chief Suarez hasn't been riding herd on his guys* (1897 +)

rideout v To play the last chorus of a jazz number in a free and lively way (1925 + *Jazz musicians*)

rider See BAREBACK RIDER, FREE-RIDER, JOY-RIDER, LOW RIDER, SLEIGHRIDER

ride shotgun v phr 1 To act as a guard, esp on a vehicle; keep a vigilant eye peeled; ensure safety: *beefing up security and changing the pattern of deliveries, although nobody will start to ride shotgun/ Several wives have gotten wise and are riding shotgun on who checks in and out* (1963 +) **2** To ride in the front passenger seat of a car (1960s + *Teenagers*) [fr the Old West practice of having an armed guard with a *shotgun riding* beside the driver on the stagecoaches]

ride the arm v phr To collect a fare without using the meter; ARM IT, HIGHFLAG (1970s + *Cabdrivers*)

ride the gravy train (or gravy boat) v phr To enjoy a good and

effortless life; bask in prosperous ease (1927+)

ride the lightning v phr To be executed in the electric chair; BURN, FRY
(1935+ *Prison*)

ride the pine (or pines) v phr To sit idle on the player's bench: *who right now seems destined to ride the pine a lot behind Mark Jackson/ I'd rather ride the pines on Mars than play the outfield for these mo'fuckers* (1980s+ *Sports*)

ridge-runner n 1 A southern Appalachian mountain dweller; HILLBILLY
(1917+) **2** A white person; OFAY, Gray (1960s+ *Black*)

ridic adj Ridiculous (1925+ *Students*)

rif (pronounced as separate letters or as an acronym, RIF) **n 1** A dismissal; layoff **2** A demotion **v 1** To notify an employee of dismissal or layoff: *when he receives his Reduction in Force letter, and he will say, "I've been rified"* **2** To demote: *had been "rif'd" back to sergeants* [1953+; fr *reduction in force*]

riff¹ n 1 An improvised passage, esp a solo; BREAK, LICK: *an initially funky bass riff* (1917+ *Jazz musicians*) **2** A solo passage of any sort: *He never inflates a movement, never accelerates into showy riffs of excess energy* (1917+ *Jazz musicians*) **3** A particular variation or version: *I have actually eaten something called a pastrami burrito dog, sort of a riff on the oki dog* (1990s+) **4** A piece of personal behavior, esp of entertainment; SHTICK: *allow the star to do character riffs that approximate the sort of things she does as monologues in her one-woman show/ He can make out the riffs and scams of the inner city like a dog picking up a scent* (1980s+) [origin unknown; perhaps

echoic; perhaps fr *refrain*; perhaps fr *riffle* or *ripple* in the sense of “try, shot, crack”]

riff² n A refrigerator car; REEFER¹ (1950s + Railroad)

riffle¹ n A hard swing at the ball; RIPPLE: *gives it a really good solid riffle* [1932 + Baseball; probably fr *ripple* fr *rip*]

riffle² n: *Give that deck a good riffle* **v** To shuffle playing cards (1894 + Cardplaying) [probably echoic]

riff on someone v phr To take advantage of someone: *Hey, don't riff on me, man, just because I'm sick* (1980s + Students)

rig n 1 (also **rig-out**) Clothing; outfit: *How come you're wearing that rig?/ a waiter's or a chef's rig-out* (1843 +) **2** A truck, bus, ambulance, etc (1930s + Bus drivers & truckers) **v** To prearrange or tamper with a result or process; FIX: *Prizefights or horse-races have been rigged* (1930s +)

right adj Reliable; safe: *He assured them his partner was all right* (1856 +) **affirmation** Yes; correct: *Did you say left? Right!* (1588 +) **question** Am I not right? CAPEESH, OK: *He's in charge, right?* (1961 +)

See ALL RIGHT, ALL RIGHT ALREADY, DEAD TO RIGHTS, FLY RIGHT, HANG A RIGHT

Right See MISTER RIGHT

right as rain, (as) modifier Completely correct: *right as rain, son*

righteous adj Excellent; genuine; the GREATEST: *what we used to call the righteous jazz/ "Is that righteous gold?" "Righteous it ain't, but gold it is"* (1900 + Jazz musicians)

righteous moss n phr Hair of a Caucasian sort; non-kinky hair; GOOD

HAIR: *It looked just like that righteous moss (1942 + Black)*

right-handed *adj* Heterosexual; **STRAIGHT:** *He was about 60 percent right-handed and he ended up as a male go-go dancer (1970s +)*

right money *n phr* the **SMART MONEY:** *It's the combination of likely lad and a good horse that makes "right money" dig down in its jeans (1941 +)*

right-o *affirmation* (also **righto** or **rightho** or **rightho**) Yes; correct; all right (1896 + *British*)

right off the bat *adv phr* Immediately; without delay: *I normally get four cars right off the bat [1914 + ; hot from the bat is found by 1888]*

right on *adj phr* Precisely right; very effective: *Michael Caine is right on as the medic (1960s +)* **interj** An exclamation of approval, encouragement, agreement, etc: *Oh mercy, baaabeh, riiight onnnn! (1925 + Black)* [interjection sense popularized as a Black Panther usage in the middle 1960s]

rights *See* **DEAD TO RIGHTS, GIVE someone HIS RIGHTS**

right stuff, the *n phr* by 1848 The best human ingredients, such as fortitude and resolution: *a heart that was made of the right stuff to set off to advantage his iron frame* [popularized by Tom Wolfe's 1979 book about the first astronauts]

right there *See* **IN THERE PITCHING, THERE**

right up one's **alley** *modifier* Perfect for someone; exactly what someone is best at: *Teaching grammar is right up her alley*

right up there *adv phr* Among the leaders, the most distinguished, etc; in contention: *Two weeks to go and the Mets are still right up*

there (1970+)

righty *n* A right-handed person, esp a baseball player; NORTHPAW
(1940s+) **See** ALL RIGHTY

rig out *v phr* To dress; clothe: *Then they rigged me out in a uniform*
(1616+)

◁**rim**▷ *v* To lick or suck the anus (1959+ *Homosexuals*) **See** REAM

rims **See** ON THE RIMS

rinctum *n* The rectum (1950s+ *Black*) **See** SPIZZERINKTUM

ring *v* **1** To substitute one horse illegally for another in a race: *to attempt ringing* (1812+ *Horse racing*) **2** (also **ring up**) To call on the telephone; GIVE someone A RING: *I rang him the next day, but he was out* (1940s+, *variant* 1880+) **See** THROW one'S HAT IN THE RING

ring a bell *v phr* To remind one of something; sound familiar:
“Nineteen seventy-six. June 25” “Ring a bell?” (1934+)

ring-a-ding-ding or **ring-a-ding** *adj*: *Our new stack addition is a huge brick building full of metal, a ring-a-ding book box* *n* Glamour and show; spectacular impressiveness; RAZZLE-DAZZLE: *an aura of breathless showbiz ring-a-ding-ding* (1970s+)

ring someone's bell (or **chimes**) *v phr* To be sexually attractive to someone; TURN someone ON (1970s+)

ring changes *v phr* To make or try out variations, esp ingeniously: *Berle could do the same mugging bits and ring many more changes on them* [1614+; fr *change-ringing*, the elaborate esp British ringing of sets of church bells]

ring-dang-do (RING DANG ㊦) *n* A complicated process, scene, affair, etc; rigmarole: *the whole ring-dang-do of moral Darwinism* (1970s+)

ring-ding *n* A stupid person; DING-A-LING: *that South American ring-ding with his sequined rodeo shirt* (1970s+)

ringer *n* **1** A person or animal substituted for another, esp a racehorse put in to run in place of an inferior beast: “ringers,” *good horses masquerading as poor ones* (1890+ *Horse racing*) **2** A person who arranges the illegal substitution of a horse: *the master horse ringer of them all* (1890+ *Horse racing*) **3** A person or thing that closely resembles another; DEAD RINGER: *With the mustache and glasses, Blackmer is a ringer for Teddy* (1891+) [fr the expression *ring someone in*, “announce or herald someone”]

ringmaster *n* A yardmaster (1940s+ *Railroad*)

ring off *v phr* **1** To end a telephone conversation; hang up (1882+) **2** To stop talking; SHUT UP (1895+)

ring off the hook (or **the wall**) *v phr* To ring constantly and often: *Says the director of the hotline: “The phones have been ringing off the hook”* (1970s+)

ringtail *n* **1** A grouch (1931+ *Hoboes*) **2** An offensive person; BASTARD, JERK (1931+ *Underworld*) ◀**3**▶ An Italian dockworker or one of Italian extraction (1940s+ *Dockworkers*) ◀**4**▶ A Japanese (WWII *Navy*) [origin unknown]

ring the bell *v phr* To succeed; be a winner: *That last contribution rang the bell* [1900+; fr the carnival machine where one wins, esp

a cigar, by *ringing a bell* with a hard hammer stroke]

rink rat *n phr* A person who frequents hockey rinks, does odd jobs there for free admission, etc (1945 + *Canadian*)

rinktum *See* SPIZZERINKTUM

rinkydink *adj* (also **ricky-tick**) Inferior; cheap; CRUMMY: *described by federal attorneys as rinky dink and a very strange document/ its deserted beaches, summer houses, and ricky-tick towns (1913 +) n 1 Cheap and gaudy merchandise; DRECK, JUNK (1912 + *Carnival*) **2** Used merchandise; secondhand articles: *Let's go see what sort of rinkydink the Salvation Army has this week (1913 +) 3 A small, cheap nightclub, cabaret, etc; HONKY-TONK: *as she was called when she played the rinkydinks (1912 +) 4 A deception; swindle; THE RUNAROUND: *Don't give me the rinkydink (1912 +) See* RICKY-TICK***

rinky-tink *See* RICKY-TICK

riot, a *n phr* A very amusing person or thing, joke, occasion, etc; a HOOT, a SCREAM (1909 +)

riot act, the *See* READ THE RIOT ACT

riot grrrl *n phr* A militant female feminist: *Watching this magazine drool like a dirty old man over riot grrrls is very amusing. Like a riot grrrl would ever have sex with an Esquire reader (1990s +)*

rip¹ *n* A debauched and dissolute person; libertine: *the proper way to treat a rip [1797 + ; perhaps a variant of rep fr reprobate]*

rip² *n 1* An official demerit or fine (1939 + *Police*) **2** An insult; a disparagement; KNOCK: *master of the off-field rip (1940s +) 3 A joy; a*

pleasure: *What a rip it is to know there are still people who feel for the cars they put together (1970s +)* 4 A try; attempt; CRACK, RIPPLE, SHOT: *I'll have a rip at that old record (1940s +)* 5 RIPOFF (1990s +) **v** 1 To strongly criticize, disparage: *William Proxmire who is usually ripped for refusing to bring home the bacon (1857+ British dialect)* 2 (also **rip-ass**) To speed; BARREL, TEAR: *cars rip-assing up and down the street (1853 +)* [all, one way or another, fr *rip*, “tear”; third noun sense perhaps related to *ripping*, “excellent, first-rate,” found by 1846] **See** GIVE something A SHOT, HAVE A CRACK AT something

ripe adj 1 Smelly or foul: *smelling a bit ripe* 2 Intoxicated by alcohol: *bit ripe after three Heinekens*

ripoff n 1 A theft; an act of stealing 2 A fraud; swindle; SCAM: *The whole arms-reduction policy is a big ripoff* 3 (also **ripoff artist**) A person or company that steals or swindles: *He was the biggest ripoff ever seen, even in Congress (1960s+ Black)*

rip off v phr 1 To steal: *Somebody ripped off my bike* 2 To swindle; defraud; GYP: *I don't know who rips us off more, business or government [1960s+ Black; rip, “to steal,” is found by 1200]*

rip on someone v phr To harass and insult; RIP: *When those two get together they totally rip on Jeff (1960s+ Black)*

ripped adj 1 Intoxicated, either from narcotics or alcohol; HIGH: *I'm ripped to the tits as it is (1971 +)* 2 Showing well-defined muscles: *So ripped you can see her liver, or think you can (1980s+ Students)*

ripper n One that is an excellent or admirable example of its kind: *Every episode is a ripper (1838 +)*

ripple *n* A try; an attempt; CRACK, RIP, SHOT: *I'll never figure out how these pieces fit, so why don't you have a ripple?* [origin uncertain; perhaps fr *rip* in the sense of a strong action, attempt, or blow; perhaps fr 1800s *make a riffle* or *ripple*, "to succeed, make it," based on crossing or getting through dangerous rapids in a river] **See** GIVE something A SHOT, HAVE A CRACK AT something

rip-roaring or **ripsnorting** *adj* Boisterous, vigorous: *rip-roaring good time*

◁**ripshit**▷ *adj* Very angry; PISSED OFF, STEAMED: *Michael was ripshit* (1980s +)

ripsnorter *n* A person or thing that is remarkable, wonderful, superior; etc; BEAUT, HUMDINGER: *The villain is a real ripsnorter* (1840 +)

rise, a **See** GET A RISE OUT OF someone

ritz, the **See** PUT ON THE RITZ

ritzy *adj* 1 Elegant; luxurious; CLASSY, POSH, SWANKY: *The ritziest dance hall was the Haymarket* 2 Haughty; supercilious; STUCK-UP (1920 +)

river **See** SELL someone DOWN THE RIVER, SEND UP, UP THE RIVER

roach *n* 1 A police officer (1932 + *Prison & black*) 2 A racehorse, esp an inferior one; BEETLE (1940s + *Horse racing*) 3 The stub or butt of a marijuana cigarette: *He lighted the toke again, a roach now that he impaled on a thin wire* (1938 + *Narcotics*) 4 An unattractive woman (1960s + *Students*) [narcotics sense perhaps fr earlier *roach mane*, a horse's mane clipped very short and tied; perhaps fr the insect]

roach clip (or **holder**) *n phr* Any tweezerlike device for holding a

marijuana cigarette stub too short to be held in the fingers; CRUTCH:
necessitating the invention of the “roach clip,” which holds roaches
(1960s + *Narcotics*)

roach-coach n: *At lunch time he spots a roach-coach lunch wagon that dispenses burgers, hot dogs, french fries (1990s +)*

road modifier Traveling; touring, itinerant: *a road show (1900 +*

Theater) **See** GO THE HANG-PUT ROAD, HARD-ROAD FREAK, HIT THE ROAD, LET’S GET THE SHOW ON THE ROAD, ONE FOR THE ROAD, ON THE ROAD, SKID ROAD, WHERE THE RUBBER MEETS THE ROAD, WIDE PLACE IN THE ROAD

road apple See ALLEY APPLE

road dog n phr A good friend; best friend; ACE BOON COON (1980s +
Philadelphia black)

road hog n phr A driver who takes more than his or her share of the road (1891 +)

roadie n (also **roadster**) A person who travels with a musical, political, theatrical, or other group to handle booking, business arrangements, equipment, etc: *Microphones tossed by Chapman land in unlikely places, one on a roadie, another in the lap of the audience (1969 +)*

road kill n phr 1 A person or animal struck by a car and killed; ROAD PIZZA: *After screeching to check for roadkill, these young motorists started howling, laughing it up (1980s +)* **2** Something undesirable and unpalatable, like the meat of an animal killed in traffic: *Plagiarism proclaims that some written words are valuable enough to steal. But what if the borrowed stuff is a flat, lifeless mess, the road kill*

of passing ideas? (1980s +) 3: Nothing like a road kill. For our young guys who are new to the team, nothing is better than getting a road win (1990s + Sports)

road people *n phr* Persons, esp young, who travel about in vans or with backpacks; itinerants: *Some road people tend to display a continual inability to adjust (1960s +)*

road pizza *n phr* 1 A dead animal smashed in traffic (1980s +) 2 (also **road rash**) Abrasions from a crash (1990s + Cyclists)

road rash *n* A skin injury from rubbing up against concrete or the ground: *road rash from skateboarding*

road warrior *n* A person who travels frequently, especially on business (1980s +)

roam *v* To use a cellular phone outside of one's own service area: *Hi honey. I'm roaming in San Francisco (1990s +)*

roast *n*: *this national love for a good "roast," this spirit of mockery* *v* To make fun of; ridicule; insult, often in an affectionate way: *had been roasted often by the critics as a ham (1710 +)*

roasting *adj* Uncomfortably hot (1768 +)

robber *See* BELLY-ROBBER, CRADLE-ROBBER

rob someone **blind** *v phr* To steal from someone, esp by overcharging: *robbed him blind buying pre-made salad at the grocery*

robocop *n* A robot police officer (1990s +)

rob the cradle *v phr* 1 To marry or date someone much younger

than oneself **2** To recruit, use, or exploit young persons (1940s +)

rock *n* **1** A dollar; BUCK: *I want to see you make twenty rocks* (1840 +) **2** Any precious stone, esp a diamond (1908 + *Underworld*) **3** A rock-and-roll devotee: *teenagers called "rocks"* (1950s +) **4** Rock-and-roll music: *hard rock* (1950s +) **5** A small cube of very pure cocaine, intended for smoking rather than inhalation: *Dealers sell pellet-size "rocks" in small plastic vials* (1980s + *Narcotics*) **6** A cellblock: *When is the wagon due back on this rock, Pops?* (1970s + *Prison*) **7** A basketball (1980s + *Basketball*) **v** \triangleleft **1** \triangleright To do the sex act with or to; SCREW, RIDE: *My man rocks me with one steady roll* (1900 +) **2** To move, dance, writhe, etc, to rock-and-roll music; BOOGIE, BOP: *Soon just one couple was rocking in the middle of the floor* (1950s +) **3** To be resonant with and physically responsive to rock-and-roll music; JUMP: *Soon the whole room was rocking* (1950s +) **See** ACID ROCK, GLITTER ROCK, HARD ROCK, HOT ROCK, PUNK ROCK, RIM-ROCK

Rock, the *n phr* **1** Alcatraz Island and its (former) federal penitentiary (1940s +) **n** **2** Gibraltar (*mid-1800s* +)

rockabilly *modifier*: *showing up at rockabilly dances and clubs in full '50s regalia* *n* A blend of black rhythm and blues with white hillbilly music (1956 +)

rock bottom *modifier* At the lowest level or part, esp in price: *rock-bottom prices on Easter stuff* *n* The lowest level or part: *hit rock bottom last week*

rock 'em, sock 'em *adj phr* Violent and energetic; concussive: *the rock 'em, sock 'em action that goes on inside a full-sized truck* (1970s +)

rocker¹ **n** **1** A rock-and-roll musician, singer, radio station, etc:
general manager of rhythm-and-blues rocker WOL in Washington, DC **2**
A rock-and-roll song: *classic country rockers, sometimes with an old-timey flavor (1950s +)* **See** PUNK ROCKER, TEENYBOPPER

rocker² **See** off one's NOODLE

rocket **n** A complaint or rebuke; BEEF, DING • Chiefly British: *You get a rocket from one of the parties (1941 +)*

rocket scientist **See** YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE A BRAIN SURGEON

rockhead *modifier: some rockhead hoodlums* **n** A stupid person
(1950s +)

rocking or **rockin'** *adj* Excellent: *rockin' time on New Year's Eve*

rock jock **n** *phr* A rock climber; mountain climber; Alpinist: *In about a year she's gone from novice climber to total rock jock (1980 +)*

rock on *interj* A happy greeting or good-bye; an admonishment to carry on because everything is copacetic; also, party on: *Rock on, roadmeister*

rock out **v** *phr* To totally enjoy a rock-and-roll song: *rocked out to Nirvana*

rocks **n** **1** Ice cubes (1946 +) <2> The testicles; FAMILY JEWELS, NUTS
(1948 +) [*stones* in the second sense is found by 1154] **See** GET one's
ROCKS, HAVE ROCKS IN one's HEAD, HOT ROCKS, ON THE ROCKS, TOUGH SHIT

rocks in one's (or the) head **n** *phr* Stupidity; foolishness; mental incapacity: *dedicated to whiny losers with rocks in their heads*
(1951 +) **See** HAVE ROCKS IN one's HEAD

rock the boat *v phr* To cause trouble; create inconveniences; disrupt things: *Fritz Mondale doesn't want to rock the boat (1931 +)*

rocky *adj* **1** Drunk **2** Weak and unsteady; groggy; *WOOZY: came back to work, looking pale and rocky (1895 +)* **3** Difficult; trying; *TOUGH: That was a very rocky time for our family (1873 +)*

Rocky Mountain canary *See* MOUNTAIN CANARY

Rocky Mountain oysters *n phr* A lamb's testicles used as food (1889 +)

rod *n* **1** A pistol: *Here's a rod, blow your brains out (1903 + Underworld)* **2** A car, esp a specially prepared car; *HOT ROD: A restless youth buys a broken-down rod (1940s + Hot rodders)* **3** The penis; *SHAFT (1902 +)* *See* HAVE A ROD ON

rod-man *n* A gunman; *TORPEDO (1929 + Underworld)*

rod up *v phr* To arm; provide with a pistol: *They do not rod up or arm themselves (1940s + Underworld)*

Roe *See* JOHN DOE

Roger or rodger-dodger *affirmation* Yes; I understand; *OK: Get your asses over there, Roger* [WWII armed forces; fr the US military phonetic alphabet word designating R for "received," said also to have been used by the Royal Air Force by 1938]

rogues' gallery *n phr* **1** A police collection of photographs of criminals; *MUG SHOTS* **2** Any group or collection of unsavory persons; den of thieves: *The new building commission is a plain rogues' gallery (1859 +)*

‘roid or **roid** *n* **1** A steroid drug used for body-building: *‘Roids, dude. The Wheaties of the ‘80s (late 1980s +)* **2** Hemorrhoids: *cream for his roids*

‘roid (or **roid**) **rage** *n phr*: *Normally easygoing, he recalls bouts of roid rage, an urge to destroy that often strikes steroid users (late 1980s +)*

Rok (RAHK) *n* A South Korean, esp a soldier [Korean War armed forces; fr *Republic of Korea*]

rolf *See* RALPH

roll *n* **1** Money; funds; BANKROLL (1846 +) **2** The sex act; a ROLL IN THE HAY (1940s +) **v** **1** To rob, esp a stuporous or helpless drunkard who is literally rolled over for access to pockets: *rolling a stiff/ the less perilous profession of rolling lushes (1873 +)* **2** To displace another worker: *Negro firemen on the good runs should be “rolled” by whites (1950s + Railroad)* **3** To run or start a movie camera: *Quiet, and roll ‘em (1939 + Movie studio)* *See* JACKROLL, JELLY-ROLL, LOG ROLL, MICHIGAN ROLL, ON A ROLL, PRESS ROLL, ROCK

rollback *n* A reduction, esp of wages or production (1942 +)

rolled *modifier* Nabbed by law enforcement, esp for minor infractions: *They got rolled for having alcohol in the dorm room*

roller *n* **1** A prison guard (1940s + *Prison*) **2** A police officer (1964 + *Black*) **3** A thief who robs drunks (1915 +) [first two senses fr late 1700s British *rollers*, “horse and foot patrols of police”] *See* DOWN THE GOODYEARS, HIGH ROLLER, PILL-PUSHER, STEAMROLLER

rollin’ *adj* On a roll; having great success: *Now she is rollin’ on the project*

roll in v phr To arrive; SHOW UP: *What time did you finally roll in?*
(1940s +)

rolling doughnut See TAKE A FLYING FUCK

rolling in money (or it) modifier Enjoying wealth (1782 +)

rolling off a log See EASY AS PIE

roll in money v phr To be very rich (1773 +)

roll in the hay n phr The sex act, esp when regarded as casual and joyous: *A roll in the hay with Seattle Slew cost \$710,000* (1940s +)

roll out the red carpet v phr To give someone a very sumptuous or ceremonious welcome (1952 +)

rollover n The last night of a prison sentence (1940s + *Prison*)

roll over v phr 1 To reinvest bonds, certificates of deposit, or other monetary instruments upon maturity, rather than liquidating them (1957 +) **2** To inform on one's criminal associates; SQUEAL: *It was the easiest flip Stone ever made. The man rolled over like a puppy and proceeded to hand up his associates so fast that Stone had to tell him to slow down* (1973 + *Police*)

roll over and play dead v phr To surrender or acquiesce, esp without resisting: *We're not about to roll over and play dead while the Republicans rubber stamp their extremist agenda* [1940s +; fr a trick one would teach a dog]

roll the bones v phr To play craps [1929 +; *bones*, "dice," is found by 1386]

roll with the punches *v phr* To behave so as to defend oneself against damage and surprise; absorb punishment and survive: “*You roll with the punches. My experience was, I was going to lose her. But I’m thankful for what I’ve gotten so far*” [1951 +; fr the evasive action of a boxer who does not avoid a *punch* but reduces its effect by moving in the direction of the blow]

romp *n* A fight, esp between street gangs; RUMBLE (1960s + *Street gang*)
v: *The gangs romped on Thursday*

ronchie *See* RAUNCHY

-roo *See* -EROO

roof *See* FALL OFF THE ROOF, RAISE THE ROOF

roof falls (or caves) in, the *v phr* A sudden and total catastrophe occurs; one’s joy and world collapses : *long before the roof fell in on Gossage/ But then the roof caved in on the Bucks* (1958 +)

rook *n*: *Balcony seats for 40 bucks are a real rook* *v* To cheat; defraud;
GYP: *who would rook them for two dollars* (1577 +) [probably fr the thieving habits of the *rook*, which it shares with other corvine birds like the crow and magpie]

rookie or rookey or rooky *modifier*: *The shooting of “rookie” patrolman James A Broderick* *n* A newcomer; recruit; tyro: *the rookies and substitutes* (1892 +) [probably fr shortening of *recruit*; perhaps fr the black, *rook*-colored coat worn by some British army recruits]

room *n* A nightclub; boite, NITERY (1950s + *Show business*) *See* BALLOON ROOM, BUCKET SHOP, ELBOW ROOM, RUMPUS ROOM, TEAROOM

root *n* One's home; PAD (1940s +)

root¹ *v* **1** To cheer; applaud; urge on: *We rooted and rooted, but our side folded* **2** To eat food like an animal; PIG OUT [1888 +; origin obscure]

root² *n* **1** A cigarette (1900 +) **2** A marijuana cigarette (1960s + *Narcotics*) [perhaps fr *cheroot* or *cigaroot*]

◁**root**³▷ *n* The penis [1846 +; fr something that is or can be planted]

rooter *n* A supporter or fan, esp of a team, fighter, school, etc (1890 +)

root for *v phr* **1** To be a regular supporter of; be a fan of: *He rooted for the Giants* (1889 +) **2** To urge hopefully: *I'm rooting for the tax bill* (1922 +) [perhaps fr British dialect *route*, "roar, bellow"]

rootin'-tootin' *adj* Boisterous; noisy; vigorous: *He's a hifalutin' rootin'-tootin' son of a gun from Arizona* [1924 +; probably fr *rooting*, "cheering loudly," and *tooting*, "blowing a horn"]

rootle out *v phr* To root or grub out; seek and eliminate • Chiefly British: *rootle out Government fraud and waste* [an 1809 source says "to dig up roots like swine"]

rooty *adj* Sexually aroused; HORNY [1960s +; fr *root*, "penis"]

rooty-toot *n* Old-fashioned music; CORN, RICKY-TICK (1936 + *Musicians*)

rope *n* **1** A cigar; EL ROPO, HEMP (1934 +) **2** A hard-hit line drive; CLOTHESLINE, FROZEN ROPE (1960s + *Baseball*) **v** **1** (also **rope in**) To ensnare someone with amity and concern as a means of swindling;

ROPE IN (1848 +) **2:** *Surhoff roped an RBI double to the gap in left-center*

See GOAT FUCK, GO PISS UP A ROPE, KNOW THE ROPES, SUCK

ropy or **ropey** *adj* Of low quality; bad; inferior; unsatisfactory
(1942 +)

ro-ro *n* A roll-on roll-off ship, whose cargo is driven on and off
(1955 +)

Roscoe or **roscoe** or **John Roscoe** *n* A pistol; HEAT [1914 + ; a pet name, used for dissimulation]

rose *n* A comatose and dying patient [Medical; fr the color and the perilous frailty of such a patient] **See** COME UP SMELLING LIKE A ROSE, SMELL LIKE A ROSE

◁**rosebud**▷ *n* The anus (1970s + *Homosexuals*)

rose garden **See** FRUIT SALAD

rose room *n phr* A room where comatose and dying patients are treated (1970s + *Medical*)

rosy *adj* **1** Slightly drunk; TIDDLY (1905 +) **2** Promising; favorable; COPACETIC: *Things look rosy now* (1887 +)

rot *n* Nonsense; BALONEY, BULLSHIT (1848 +) **v** To be deplorable, nasty, inept, bungled, etc; STINK, SUCK: *This idea of yours rots* (1960s + *Teenagers*)

Rotacy (ROH tə see, RAH-) *n* (also **rot-see** or **rotasie** or **Rot-corps**)
The Reserve Officers Training Corps (1940s + *College students*)

rotchy *adj* RAUNCHY (1960s + *Students*)

rotgut *n* Inferior liquor; PANTHER PISS: *pre-Prohibition rotgut* (1597 +)

rotorhead *n* A helicopter pilot or crew member (1970s + Army)

Roto-Rooter *n* 1 Any medical device that clears or cleans out obstructions in tubes: *More than 100,000 Americans had a surgical procedure known as carotid endarterectomy, a kind of Roto-Rooter for cleaning out clogged arteries* 2: *The number of computers directly connected to the Internet is updated periodically by sending a computer program crawling around like a Roto-Rooter tallying the number of connections* [1980s +; fr a trademarked plumber's device for cleaning out clogged pipe]

rotten *adj* Deplorable; nasty; inept and bungled: *This is a rotten situation altogether* (1880 +)

rotten apple *n phr* A corrupt or unfit person who may corrupt others: *But a certain number of rotten apples, predisposed to brutality, make it through psychological testing that can be woefully inadequate* [1940s +; fr the saying "one rotten apple can spoil a barrel"; stated in a 1528 source as "For one rotten apple lytell and lytell putrifieth an whole heape"]

rotten egg *n* A bad or despicable person: *acts like a rotten egg sometimes*

rough *adj* 1 Lewd; salacious; DIRTY, RAUNCHY: *Some of the jokes were pretty rough* (1958 +) 2 Difficult; dangerous; TOUGH: *Conditions were very rough that winter* (1856 +) *n* A used car that has been in a wreck (1950s + Salespersons) **See** PLAY FOR KEEPS

rough-and-tumble *adj* Free and uninhibited; with no limits or reservations; NO HOLDS BARRED: *It was a rough-and-tumble confrontation*

[1832+; originally of a fight where the usual rules were not observed; an article of 1810 says that “in roughing and tumbling it is allowable to peel the skull, tear out the eyes, and smooth away the nose”]

rough around the edges *adj phr* Somewhat crude; unpolished: *a slightly rough-around-the-edges New York manner (1940s+)*

rough as a (corn) cob *adj phr* Very rough [1940s+; fr the rural use of *corncobs* as toilet paper]

◁**rough-ass**▷ *adj* Harsh; crude; KICK-ASS: *She liked his rough-ass ways for a while (1940s+)*

roughhouse *adj*: *roughhouse work for the political boss* **n** **1** Boisterous and rowdy behavior; more or less harmless scuffling (1897+) **2** Physical violence; mayhem (1887+) **v** **1**: *The kids roughhoused half the night (1900+)* **2**: *Gun-toting bodyguards roughhoused Swedish citizens (1902+)*

roughie **n** **1** A tough or crude person **2** A shrewd or unfair trick: *sprang a roughie on him* **3** A long shot to win (*Australian*)

rough it **v phr** To live under harsh or primitive conditions: *roughing it in the woods*

roughneck **n** **1** A thug and brawler; PLUG-UGLY, TOUGH: *The so-called roughneck is hit with everything (1836+)* **2** A worker or laborer, esp in a circus or on an oil-drilling rig (1917+) **See** RUFFNECK

rough stuff **n phr** **1** Physical violence; mayhem: *have graduated from the “rough stuff” class (1913+)* **2** Obscenity; profanity; PORN

(1950s +)

rough trade *n phr* A sadistic or violent sex partner, often heterosexual; ruffianly partner of a homosexual: *I hope the next time he meets some rough trade from uptown (1935 + Homosexuals)*

rough someone up *v phr* **1** To hit or pummel, esp as intimidation: *He told it like a good citizen, and got roughed up for his pains* **2** To injure someone: *The wreck roughed me up some (1920 +)*

roulette *See* VATICAN ROULETTE

rounder *n* A debauchee; habitual carouser: *some rich “rounders” of the town [1854 + ; one who “makes the rounds” of saloons]*

◁**round-eye**▷ *modifier*: *a round-eye woman* *n* A Caucasian as distinct from an Asian (*Korean War armed forces*)

roundheel or **roundheels** *n* **1** An inferior prize-fighter; PALOOKA (1920 +) **2** A promiscuous woman; Punchboard: *little roundheels over there (1926 +) [because such persons readily topple over backwards]*

roundheeled *adj* Willing; complaisant; easily induced; like a “roundheel”: *The chronically roundheeled US Congress is a wholly owned subsidiary of the huge Japanese real estate and industrial investments (1980 +)*

roundhouse *modifier* **1**: *He swung a roundhouse left* **2**: *a roundhouse pitch* *n* **1** A long, looping punch to the head (1920 + *Prizefighting*) **2** A sweeping curve-ball (1910 + *Baseball*)

round the bend *adj phr* **1** AROUND THE BEND (1929 +) **2** STIR-CRAZY (WWII)

prisoners of war)

round the horn *See* AROUND THE HORN

round-tripper *n* A home run: *a round-tripper in the ninth (1950s + Baseball)*

round up *v phr* To find and bring together, esp to a police station or lockup: *Round up the usual suspects [1885 + ; found by 1847 of the collection and corralling of animals]*

roust *n* Raid or harassment: *What's the roust? You gonna close this place? v 1* Esp of police officers, to harass someone; CHIVVY, ROUGH UP: *always being roused by cops 2* To arrest: *Try rousting me and see what real resistance is like 3* To raid: *They're rousting all the gay bars [1970s + ; fr rouser or rooster, "a deckhand or waterfront laborer," attested fr the mid-1800s, hence with connotations of roughness; related to roustabout, fr British dialect rous-about, "unwieldy," rousing, "rough, shaggy," and rousy, "filthy"; the semantic core seems to combine roughness with laziness, in the old heroic mold, and to be associated with the behavior of the rooster, who combines rough vigor with long periods on the perch; first verb sense found in 1904 prison slang in the sense "to jostle," and by the 1940s in the sense "to jostle so as to pick a pocket"]*

roustabout *n* A general laborer, esp an oil-rig worker (1948 +)

routine *n 1* A passage of behavior; act; BIT, RIFF, SHTICK: *They did a Laurel and Hardy routine (1926 + Show business) 2* An evasive or contrived response: *I look for revelation and get routine (1950s + Cool talk)*

row *n* An elongated pile of narcotic, esp cocaine, for sniffing; LINE: *and*

snorted a row of coke (1960s + Narcotics) **See** a HARD ROW TO HOE, HAVE
one's DUCKS IN A ROW, KNOCK someone or something FOR A LOOP, SKID ROW

row with one oar *v phr* (Variation: **in the water** may be added) To
behave irrationally; be crazy or stupid: *Ellis sounds as if he is rowing
with one oar (1970s +)*

royal *adj* Thorough; definitive: *gives me a royal pain in the ass
(1940s +)*

◀**royal fucking, a**▶ *n phr* Very rough and unfair treatment; RAW DEAL
(1940s +)

royal pain *n* A thoroughly annoying person or thing; PAIN IN THE ASS:
Finishing this is a royal pain

RTFM (pronounced as separate letters) *sentence*: “RTFM” for “Read
the Fucking Manual,” which is a message people often send back to you
when you ask them for technical help

rub *n* **1** A dancing party (1920s + Students) **2** A session of hugging
and kissing (1930s + Students) **3** A complaint; BEEF, BITCH: *What’s your
rub? (1990s +)* *v* RUB OUT (1848 +)

rubber¹ *n* ◀**1**▶ A condom: “Rubbers,” Cushie told him (1930s +) **2**
Automobile tires: *The thing’s a wreck but has good rubber (1961 +)* *v*
To gaze; gape: *Don’t be rubbering at McCorn (1896 +)* **See** BURN RUBBER,
LAY RUBBER

rubber² *n* A professional killer; HIT MAN (1934 + *Underworld*)

rubber boots *n phr* Condoms: *My husband don’t like rubber boots
(1970s +)*

rubber check *n phr* A check that cannot be cashed because not enough money is on deposit [1927 + ; because it “bounces”]

rubber-chicken *modifier* Featuring the unappetizing usual sort of banquet food occupationally eaten by politicians, lecturers, etc:
She’s on the rubber-chicken circuit (1959 +)

rubber duck *See* TAKE A FLYING FUCK

rubber meets the road *See* WHERE THE RUBBER MEETS THE ROAD

rubberneck *n* (also **rubbernecker**) A person who stares and gapes; gawking spectator: *The courtroom was full of rubbernecks/ These were rubbernecker, staring curiously at a bloody accident (1896 +)* *v*:
They all slowed down and rubbernecked at the wreck

rubbernecking delay *n phr* A traffic slowdown due to drivers staring at a wreck (1980s +)

rubberneck wagon (or **bus**) *n phr* A sightseeing bus (1900s +)

rubbish *n* Something of inferior quality; nonsense (1600 +)

rube or **Rube** *adj* Green; newbie: *a rube police force* **n 1** A rustic; farmer; HAYSEED **2** An unsophisticated person, esp a newcomer; GREENHORN **3** A member of the audience or public; CITIZEN: *Mr Todd knows how to panic the rubes (Circus)* [short for *Reuben*] *See* HEY RUBE

Rube Goldberg *n phr* A much overcomplicated machine or arrangement: *The public’s got the idea that this is a boondoggle, a Rube Goldberg* [1940 + ; fr the fancifully articulated machines drawn by the cartoonist Rube Goldberg (1883--1970); the British artist Heath Robinson (1872--1944) amused his public with similar

gadgets]

rub (or **nudge**) **elbows** *v phr* To meet and consort; spend time together; mingle: *colleagues with whom we rub elbows in the course of a day's work*

rub it in *v phr* To increase the pain or embarrassment of something; exacerbate something: *always trying to rub it in* (1870+)

rub someone's **nose in it** *v phr* To punish or chide with undue harshness: *I screwed up that one time, and they rubbed my nose in it for years* [1940s+; fr the punishment of a puppy or kitten that has irresponsibly evacuated]

◁**rub off**▷ *v phr* To masturbate (1903+)

rubout *n* A murder; gangster-style killing: *the hombre she blamed for Paddy's rub-out* (1927+ *Underworld*)

rub out *v phr* To murder; kill; HIT: *whose husband you rubbed out* (1846+)

rub parlor *n phr* A massage parlor: *the rub parlors, kiddy porn* (1970s+)

◁**rub the bacon**▷ *v phr* To do the sex act; FUCK, SCREW: *January and Trumball are rubbing the bacon* (1980s+)

rub someone **the wrong way** *v phr* To be distasteful or obnoxious to someone's sensibilities; regularly displease: *I don't quite know why, but that woman rubs me the wrong way* [1883+; *rub the hair the wrong way* is found by 1868]

ruckus *n* A disturbance; uproar; brawl; RUMPUS [1890+; perhaps fr

ruction plus rumpus]

ruffneck modifier Violent; rabble-rousing; GANGSTA: *Even some rappers are having trouble drawing a line between their “ruffneck” lyrics and real life* **n** A devotee of rap music; B-BOY: *He is also a B-boy. That’s right, a ruffneck (1990s + Black)*

rug n A toupee; hairpiece; DIVOT: *I even wear a little rug up front (1940s + fr theater)* **See** CUT THE RUG, PULL THE RUG OUT FROM UNDER

rug-cut v 1 To dance at rent parties and other fairly cheap occasions (1930s + Black) **2** To dance to swing music; JITTERBUG (1930s + Jive talk)

rug-cutter n A person who dances to swing music: *the rug-cutter’s way of saying “all right” (1938 + Jive talk)*

rug rat or carpet rat or rug ape n phr (Variations: **yard** may replace **rug** or **carpet**) An infant or small child; crumbcatcher: *He lived with his wife and their two rug apes (1960s +)*

rule v To dominate; to be the most important: *Girls rule!*

rum bag n phr A drunkard; LUSH: *a lot of cowardly rum bags (1940s +)*

rumble n 1 Information or notification given to the police: *The cops had gotten a rumble that gangsters were holed up (1911 + Underworld)* **2** A police search or raid; ROUST: *If there’s a rumble, we do the time (1940s + Police)* **3** A fight between street gangs: *Teenagers Injured in Brooklyn Rumble (1940s + Street gang)* **v** To steal; loot: *ending a run by rumbling everything from airline glasses to grub (1970s + Airline)*

rum-dum *adj* Stupefied by liquor; DEAD DRUNK **n** A stupid person, esp one slow-witted from habitual drunkenness: *The murmuring rums were being let out to wash* (1891 +)

rummy or **rummie** **n** A drunkard; LUSH: *He spotted the old rummy at the corner* (1851 +)

rumor *See* LATRINE RUMOR

rumor mill **n phr** The source of rumors, esp those that seem to be deliberately passed along: *There has been a rumor mill on him for years* (1973 +)

rumpot **n** A heavy drinker; drunkard; LUSH (1933 +)

rumpus **n** A disturbance; uproar; RUCKUS [1764 +; origin unknown]

rumpus room **n phr** A family room used for games, parties, etc (1939 +)

run **n** A route followed by a vehicle, esp regularly: *In the middle of her run, the bus driver was attacked by a gang of thugs* (1925 +) **v** **1** To be in charge of; manage; supervise: *Who's running this operation, anyway?* (1864 +) **2** To drive; convey; transport: *If you keep jerking me around, I'm going to run your ass down to the drunk tank* (1864 +) **3** To play basketball on a pickup basis: *Enough of this crap, let's run* (1980s + *Black*) **4** To go on; proceed; happen; SHAKE OUT, WORK OUT: *That's the way it'll run. They'll throw me the bone* (1374 +) *See* CUT AND RUN, DRY RUN, IN THE LONG RUN, MEAT RUN, MILK RUN, TAKE A RUN AT **someone**

run after **v phr** To seek a sexual relationship with: *ran after him all of high school* (1526 +)

run a game on v phr DO A NUMBER ON: *Then he had to run a game on Iris*
[fr black; perhaps fr *running* a whole game of pool without yielding
the cue]

run a make v phr To perform a checking procedure for identifying
someone, that is, for “making” an identification (*1970s + Police &*
prison)

run-and-gun adj: *the Lakers’ run-and-gun offense* v To play in an
aggressive single-handed way, for high scoring: *as a big city ball*
player looking to run-and-gun (1970s + Basketball)

run-and-shoot modifier Combining running and passing, in an
offense: *The Lions’ run-and-shoot offense almost exclusively uses four*
receivers (1980s + Football)

run a number on See DO A NUMBER ON

runaround, the *n* Deceptive, evasive, and diversionary treatment,
esp in response to a request: *All he gets is a polite runaround*
(*1915 +*) **See** GIVE SOMEONE THE RUNAROUND

◁**run around with one’s finger up one’s ass**▷ v phr To be
frantically ineffectual: *You and your little band of merry men scoff up*
truckloads of narcotics while we run around with our fingers up our
asses (1970s +)

run something by again v phr To repeat; COME AGAIN: *Just run that name*
and address by me again, will you? (1980s +)

run circles around someone or something v phr To be much faster
or more effective than someone or something: *They follow directions*

and they run circles around other teams (1940s +)

rundown *n* A summary or account: *a brief rundown of what happened (1945 +)*

run someone down *v phr* To disparage; denigrate; BAD-MOUTH: *He's your pal, so I won't run him down (1668 +)*

run something down *v phr* To tell or explain completely: *Maybe one day I'll run it down to you (1964 + Black)*

run hog-wild *See* GO HOG-WILD

run hot *v phr* **1** To drive a police car with siren, lights, etc, turned on: *Wager didn't bother with running hot (1970s + Police)* **2** To be ahead of one's schedule: *I have to slow down because I'm running hot (1990s + Bus drivers)*

run-in *n* A quarrel; an unpleasant confrontation: *Sorry we had the run-in (1905 +)*

run in *v phr* To run an engine at a special rate, with special fuel, etc, to prepare it for full operation (1919 +)

run someone in *v phr* To arrest; PULL someone IN: *Am I going to have to run you in? (1859 +)*

run interference *v phr* To provide justification, protection, etc: *The average personnel department merely pushes paper, occasionally running interference for the line managers who actually make hiring decisions [1947 +; the primary football use is found by 1929]*

run into a buzz saw *v phr* To get into trouble; encounter fierce resistance: *The House ran into a buzz saw when GOP leaders tried to*

adjourn until Monday afternoon without first working out a deal to reopen the entire government [1990s + ; *buzz saw* is found by 1886 as “a characteristic and picturesque Americanism”]

run (or work) something into the ground v phr To overdo; carry too far: *You already warned us, so now don't run it into the ground* (1826 +)

run one's mouth v phr To talk too much: *running her mouth again about nothing important* (1940 +)

runner n 1 A messenger **2** A deliverer of illegal drugs or other contraband **See** FRONT RUNNER, RIDGE-RUNNER

running dog n phr A subordinate with little authority [1970s + Army; fr abusive Chinese and North Korean Communist phrases like “a *running dog* of Western imperialism,” fr Mandarin *zou gou*, “running dog,” a dog that runs at its master's command]

running gag n phr A recurrent thematic pleasantry: *which are actually just a running gag that allows Martin to stammer, stumble and mug appealingly* (1980s +)

running shoes See GIVE SOMEONE HIS WALKING PAPERS

run off at the mouth v phr To talk too much; SHOOT OFF one's MOUTH: *I'm not about to run off at the mouth to the tabloids* (1909 +)

run-of-the-mill or run-of-the-mine adj Ordinary; average; GARDEN-VARIETY (1930 +)

run on all cylinders v phr To run well, smoothly, and efficiently

run on empty (or on fumes) v phr 1 To be ineffectual; fail: As

television, “*The Africans*” is sometimes stunning; as scholarship it runs on empty 2 To be nearly devoid of resources: *The school system is running on empty, too, with a \$400 million deficit/ Our bank account must be running on fumes again* [1980s+; fr the needle of a fuel gauge indicating “Empty”]

run-out *n* A fleeing; desertion; escape: *has taken a runout with the bankroll* (1928+)

run out of gas (or steam) *v phr* To lose impetus, effect, etc; fail; stall: *He ran out of gas a lot slower/ A succès d’estime is a success that’s run out of steam* (1920s+)

run out on *v phr* To abandon, leave (1920+)

run over someone *v phr* To treat arrogantly, slightly, or flippantly (1836+)

run someone ragged *v phr* To exhaust; wear out (1918+)

runs, the *n phr* Diarrhea; the GIS (1962+)

run scared *v phr* To show signs of panic and fear; try to escape: *Members aren’t exactly running scared* (1950s+)

run short *v phr* To lack resources; exhaust one’s supply: *Please send me two dollars. I run short* (1752+)

run the table *v phr* To finish a season undefeated: *When a team runs the table in a major conference and then wins one of the big bowl games, it usually finds a national title at the end* [1990s+ Football; fr the feat of sinking all the balls on the table successively in pool]

run-through *n* A rehearsal; DRY RUN: *After the first run-through, Mr*

Berlin casually tossed out three songs (1923 +)

run through *v phr* To rehearse: *I ran through my story once more, to polish it (1923 +)*

run-up *n* A substantial increase over a relatively short period of time

run up against *v phr* To meet someone or something as an opponent or obstruction: *We were doing fine until we ran up against those real scumbags (1821 +)*

run something up the flagpole *v phr* (Variation: **and see if anybody salutes** may be added) To test the reaction to; to try out an idea, concept, etc: *Television runs these vapidities up the flagpole and we salute as though we had been programmed to do so [1960s + ; an expression attributed to the Madison Avenue advertising milieu, along with others like “Put it on a train and see if it gets off at Westport”]*

run with it *v phr* To grasp and capitalize on something: *“Say nothing about this, until I can get something solid in our hands.” “Please. Take it and run with it” [1980s + ; fr the notion of seizing and running with a football]*

ruptured (or pregnant) duck *n phr* A lapel pin, featuring an eagle rather than a duck, given to veterans honorably discharged after World War II (*WWII armed forces*)

rush *n* **1**: *appears to want to give her a big rush* **2** A motion-picture print made immediately after the scene is shot (*1924 + Movie studio*) **3** An intense flood of pleasure, with quickened heart rate, felt soon after ingestion of a narcotic: *He didn’t have to wait long for*

the rush (1960s+ *Narcotics*) 4 A surge of pleasure; an ecstasy: *To Friend, it's a kind of a rush, the last big high/ gives her a unique rush* (1960s+) v 1 To court a woman ardently: *He had "rushed" her, she said, for several months* (1899+) 2 To entertain and cultivate a student wanted as a fraternity or sorority member (1890s+ *College students*)

rushee *n* A person being rushed, esp by a college fraternity or sorority (1916+)

rush hour *n phr* The times when people are going to or leaving work, notable for heavy traffic (1890+)

rust bowl (or **belt**) *modifier*: *Wall Street, Chrysler, high-tech enterprises vs "rust bowl" basic industries* *n phr* The beleaguered and declining industrial areas, esp of the Middle West: *in the midwestern middle, the "rust bowl"/ Breaking the Rust Belt loose* (1984+) [modeled on the 1930s term *dust bowl* and the 1970s term *sun belt*]

rust bucket *modifier*: *the recent grounding in New York of a rust-bucket freighter* *n phr* 1 An old worn vessel (WWII Navy) 2 An old car • Originally Australian: *Has your old rust bucket driven its last mile?* (1969+)

rustle v 1 (also **rustle** one's **bustle**) To bestir oneself; GET OFF one's ASS (1882+) 2 (also **rustle up**) To find and produce: *where I knew I could rustle up the Lompoc phone book* (1844+) [origin unknown; perhaps fr *rush* plus *hustle*]

rusty-dusty *n* The buttocks; rump; ASS • Nearly always with the suggestion of torpor or laziness: *the necessity of welfare recipients*

getting off their rusty dusties [1930s+ Black; fr the notion that something not in frequent use or active motion will become *rusty* and *dusty*]

rutabaga *n* A dollar: *We've spent 60,000 rutabagas* (1940s+)

S

-s suffix used to form singular nouns A diminutive or affectionate version of what is indicated, used as a term of address: *babes/ ducks/ moms/ sweets* (1936+ *in ducks*)

SA (pronounced as separate letters) **n** Sex appeal (1927+)

sac fly n phr A sacrifice fly, a fly ball that permits a runner to score [1980s+ Baseball; the unshortened form is found by 1908]

sack¹ modifier: sack duty n 1 A bed, bunk, sleeping bag, etc; sleeping place; **RACK:** *Let me stay in the sack all day* (1829+) **2** Sleep; **SACK TIME:** *He needed some sack* (1940s+) **3** A dress that fits loosely over the shoulders, waist, and hips and is gathered at the hemline (1957+) **4** A base; **BAG, PILLOW:** *He slid into the sack* (1891+ *Baseball*) **v** To discharge; dismiss; **CAN, FIRE:** *by refusing to sack his aide* (1841+) [verb sense probably fr the notion of giving a discharged person a traveling bag or sack, since the earliest expression was *get the sack*]
See FART SACK, HIT THE HAY, **the** KEYSTONE, SAD SACK

sack² n 1: *The Lions made 18 sacks in the first half* (1972+ *Football*) **2** An assault or blow: *You have to credit Dim Rome for hanging in there and taking the sack he accused Everett of being afraid to take* (1990s+) **v** To tackle the quarter back behind the line of scrimmage (1969+ *Football*) [fr sack, “to assault and pillage”]

sack, the *n phr* **1** Discharge from a job; dismissal; the BOOT: *He was late once too often and got the sack (1825 +)* **2** Bed as the site of sexual activity: *Was this guy also a miracle worker in the sack? (1980s +)* [first sense apparently fr an old practice of giving someone a *sack* when sending him away; corresponding expressions are found in French: *donner son sac à quelqu'un*]

sack artist *n phr* **1** A chronic loafer; GOLDBRICK, GOOF-OFF (*WWII armed forces*) **2** A sexual virtuoso: *Goddess, riot grrrl, warrior, tattooed love child, sack artist, leader of men: The 21st Century Woman (1990s +)*

sack duty (or **drill** or **time**) *n phr* Sleeping time; sleep; loafing: *Get in some sack drill (WWII armed forces)*

sacker *See* FIRST SACKER, SECOND SACKER, THIRD SACKER

sack out (or **in** or **up** or **down**) *v phr* To go to bed; sleep; HIT THE HAY: *Well, it's time to sack out (WWII armed forces)*

sack time *n phr* **1** SACK DUTY **2** Bedtime; time to retire (*fr WWII armed forces*)

sacred cow *n phr* Someone or something that may not be questioned or altered: *Everything is on the table. There are no sacred cows [1910 +; fr the venerated status of cows in Hinduism]*

sad or **sad-ass** or **sad-assed** *adj* Inferior; botched or bungled; CRUMMY: *It's a sad dump/ What a sad-ass town (first form 1899 +, second 1971 + third 1974 +)*

saddled with *adv* Burdened with something or someone: *saddled with doing all the laundry*

sadie-maisie *See* S AND M

sad sack *n phr* An awkward, unfortunate, harried, and maladjusted person; EIGHTBALL, SCHLEMAZEL: *nevertheless stuck with an inexplicable sad sack of a leading man* [Students 1920s+ & esp WWII armed forces; fr the unflattering image of a human being as primarily a container for feces]

safe or **safety** or **French safe** *n* or *n phr* A condom; FRENCH LETTER, RUBBER (1897+)

safecracker *n* A person who blows or breaks open safes; BOX MAN, PETE-MAN (1930s+)

said a mouthful, someone *sentence* Someone spoke accurately and cogently; someone said something very important • Often an expression of vehement agreement: *Daisy sure said a mouthful* (1922+)

said it *See* YOU SAID IT

sail in *v phr* To go boldly to the attack or to the rescue (1856+)

sailing *See* CLEAR SAILING

sail into *v phr* To attack; criticize severely; LAMBASTE: *He quickly sails into anyone that complains* (1856+)

Sal or **Sally** or **Sally Ann** *n* or *n phr* The Salvation Army, or any other mission or place that gives food and shelter (1930s+ *Hoboes*)

salad *See* FRUIT SALAD

salt *n* 1 A sailor, esp an old and seasoned one (1840+) 2 Heroin in

powder form (1960s + *Narcotics*) **See** GO POUND SALT

salt and pepper *adj phr* **1** Interracial; BLACK AND TAN: *a salt and pepper neighborhood in Detroit (1950s +)* **2** Referring to hair that is turning gray (1915 +) *n phr* Impure or low-grade marijuana (1960s + *Narcotics*)

salt away *v phr* To save or store, esp money; hoard: *tapping the millions he had salted away to finance the company's renaissance (1902 +)*

salt mines, the **See** BACK TO THE SALT MINES

salts **See** LIKE SHIT THROUGH A TIN HORN

salty *adj* **1** Audacious; daring; aggressive: *I relaxed, smiled. Salty little bugger (1920 + Navy)* **2** Terrible; nasty; unpalatable (1940s + *Jive talk*) **3** Angry; hostile (1938 + *Black*) **4** Expensive; also, falsely bid higher

salute **See** RUN something UP THE FLAGPOLE

salvage *v* To steal; loot; LIBERATE (*WWI Army*)

salve *n* **1** Butter (1915 + *Hoboes*) **2** Cajolement; flattery; SOFT SOAP: *I handed him a little salve (1864 +)* **3** A bribe; PALM OIL (1940s +) **4** Money, esp as a remedy or reward for something unpleasant (1940s +)

Sam or **sam** *n* A federal narcotics agent; NARC [1960s + *Narcotics*; fr *Uncle Sam*]

same difference, the *n phr* The same thing; something exactly equal: *So they fire him or he quits, it's the same difference (1945 +)*

same here *interj* An exclamation of agreement (1895 +)

same old same old *n phr* The same old thing • Said with resignation:
What's new? Same old same old

same old story *n phr* An often-repeated story or occurrence: *Every time we ask him to check in, it's the same old story*

same wavelength, the *See* ON THE SAME WAVELENGTH

Sam Hill *n phr* Hell: *Where in Sam Hill do you think you're going?*
[1839 + ; an echoic euphemism]

sammich *n* A sandwich, esp a savory one: *I'll make you the best sammich you ever ate* • Purposeful mispronunciation

sand *See* GO POUND SALT

sandbag *n* A type of life preserver (*WWII Navy*) **v 1** To attack someone viciously, esp with a blackjack or similar bludgeon;
BUSHWHACK: I was sandbagged from behind (1887 +) 2 To intimidate;
COW; BULLDOZE: Persuasion didn't work, so they tried to sandbag her (1901 +) 3 To check and then to raise the bet (*1940 + Gambling*) **4** To pretend weakness or ineptitude; mislead an opponent by apparent inferiority: *He charged that the Aussies were "sand bagging" (deliberately losing) to take the limelight off their disputed keel (1970s +) 5* To drive a hot rod very fast (*1950s + Hot rodders*)

sandbagged *adj* Temporarily evicted from one's dormitory room so that one's roommate can entertain a lover: *Bill's girlfriend came up for the weekend and Bob got sandbagged again (1980s + Students)*

sand biter *n phr* A soldier in the desert: *held in similar disregard by*

*“sand biters,” those troopers who were sweltering in the desert heat
(Gulf War Army)*

sandlot modifier: *sandlot ball n* A rough or improvised baseball field;
Hogan’s Brickyard (1890+ *Baseball*)

S and M or S/M or sadie-maisie n phr or n Sadoomasochism;
perverse sexual practices featuring whips, chains, etc (1960s+)

sandwich See HERO SANDWICH

sandwich bag n phr A \$40 bag of marijuana (1990s+ *Narcotics*)

sandwich board n phr A board bearing advertising messages and
worn one in front and one behind by a sandwich man (1864+)

sandwich man n phr A person paid to walk about bearing sandwich
boards (1864+)

San Quentin quail n phr A girl below the legal age of sexual
consent; JAIL BAIT [1939+; fr the name of a California state
penitentiary]

Santa Claus n phr 1 A check pilot who is very lenient and agreeable
on a pilot check flight (1970s+ *Airline*) **2** A male donor or
benefactor; a very generous man: *What the orphanage needed was a
Santa Claus to pay the debts* (1970s+)

sap¹ n A stupid person; fool, esp a gullible one: *Quit acting like a sap*
[1815+; fr British dialect, short for *sapskull*, “person with a head
full of soft material”; probably influenced by early 1800s British
schoolboy slang, “compulsive studier, grind,” which is probably fr
sap as an ironic abbreviation of Latin *sapiens*, “wise,” and is hence

semantically akin to *sophomore*]

sap² n A blackjack; bludgeon: *The sap, a nice little tool about five inches long, covered with woven brown leather (1899+)* **v:** *One of the others sapped him from behind with the blackjack (1926+)* [perhaps fr Middle English *sappe*, “shovel,” the shovel being for a ges a popular club]

sapfu (SAP f^{oo}) **adj** Surpassingly and incredibly botched **n:** *a stupefying sapfu we had [WWII armed forces; fr surpassing all previous fuck-ups]*

saphead n A stupid person; BLOCKHEAD, SAP: *one young woman who just seems to be a saphead (1798+)*

sappy adj 1 Stupid; foolish; GOOFY: *Lay off them sappy songs (1670+)* **2** Sentimental; mawkish; SCHMALTZY: *the Velveeta-voiced crooner of sappy tunes*

sarge n A sergeant (1867+)

sashay v To go; walk; flounce: *after a great deal of extravagantly publicized sashaying about [1836+; fr the squaredance gait, fr French *chasser*, “chase”]*

sass n Impudence; impertinent back talk: *if this reporter was going to give her any sass (1835+)* **v:** *He kept sassing his mama till she decked him [fr *sauce*, “rude and impudent language or action”]*

sassy adj Impudent; impertinent; IN-YOUR-FACE (1831+)

satch n 1 (also **satchelmouth**) A man with a large mouth **2** An overly talkative man; WINDBAG: *in the days when I was fearlessly*

denouncing old satch (1940s +)

satchel *n* **1** The buttocks; rump; KEISTER: *a chance to rest my satchel* **2**

SATCH **3** A jazz musician who plays a horn **v** To prearrange the outcome of a fight, race, etc; FIX, RIG: *It was satcheled against him* [1940s + ; verb sense fr *in the bag*]

saturated *adj* Drunk: *to keep them saturated indefinitely* (1902 +)

Saturday night special *n phr* **1** A cheap, small-caliber revolver quite easy to obtain: *Detroit lawmen began to refer to the weapons as "Saturday night specials"* (1968 +) **2** A person, often an alcoholic, who comes to a hospital on weekends seeking a bed and board (1970s + *Medical*) [*Saturday night pistol*, "25-caliber semi-automatic," is found by 1929]

sauce *n* **1** Impudence; impertinence; LIP, SASS (1835 +) **2** A steroid drug used for body-building; 'ROID (*mid-1980s* +) **See** APPLESAUCE

sauce, the *n* Liquor; whiskey; BOOZE: *It made him sad and he almost began hitting the sauce* (1940 +) **See** HIT THE BOTTLE, ON THE SAUCE

saucebox *n* An impudent person (1588 +)

saucers *n* The eyes (1864 +)

sausage *n* **1** A prizefighter, esp one with a swollen and battered face (1930s +) **2** A stupid person; MEATHEAD (1940s +) <3> A penis

sausage hound (or **dog**) *n phr* A dachshund; WIENER DOG (1940s +)

savage *n* A young police officer eager to make arrests (1940s + *Police*)

save someone's ass *v phr* To rescue someone: *I figure I better come down and save your ass (1980s+)*

save one's bacon *v phr* To save oneself; work one's preservation: *We'd better act right now if we want to save our bacon (1654+)*

saved by the bell *adj phr* Rescued, relieved, or preserved at the last moment: *Some Republicans argue that the threat of recession makes serious deficit cutting unwise right now. Saved by the bell!* [1950s+; fr the plight of a boxer who is being severely punished when the *bell* rings to end the round]

savvy or savvy *adj*: *a very savvy lady* *n* Comprehension; intelligence; BRAINS, SMARTS: *He's a guy with much savvy (1785+)* *v* To understand; know; grasp: *I'm the honcho here, savvy? (1785+)* [fr West Indian pidgin fr Spanish *sabe usted*, "do you know?"; modern use influenced by French *savez*, "you know"]

saw *n* **1** SAWBUCK (1940s+) **2** The landlord of a rooming house (1950s+ *Black*) *See* DOUBLE SAWBUCK

sawbones *n* A surgeon; a physician: *without being able to rouse a sawbones (1830+)*

sawbuck *n* A ten-dollar bill; ten dollars [1850+; fr the resemblance of the Roman numeral X to the ends of a *sawhorse*] *See* DOUBLE SAWBUCK

sawdust parlor (or saloon) *n phr* A cheap nightclub, restaurant, etc: *not a rug joint but rather a sawdust parlor* [1950s+; fr the former use of *sawdust* as a floor covering]

sawed-off *adj* Short of stature: *sawed-off fight manager from Newark*

(1887+)

saw wood v phr **1** To sleep, esp very soundly **2** To snore [1940s+; fr the sound of snoring]

sax modifier: a sax virtuoso n A saxophone (1923+)

say See WHAT DO YOU SAY

say a mouthful v phr To say something true, important, etc • Usual conversational response: *He is stupid? You said a mouthful* (1918+)

See someone SAID A MOUTHFUL

say boo v phr To make an innocuous threat • Often in the negative: *No politician will say boo to the tobacco industry* (1932+)

say cheese interj Please smile for the camera

say-so n One's word, report, recommendation, etc: *No jury'll convict Manny on your say-so alone* (1637+)

says which question What did you say?: *Says which? I don't believe what I heard* (1920s+ Students)

says you or says who interj (Variations: **sez** or **sezz** may replace **says**) An exclamation of defiance, disbelief, mere pugnacity, etc; **IZZATSO**: *I'm in the wrong seat? Says who?* (1926+)

say that again See YOU CAN SAY THAT AGAIN

say uncle v phr To surrender; give up; **KNUCKLE UNDER** (1918+)

say what interj A request for more information; excuse me? • Sometimes with the sense of not believing what one has heard: *Marvella put her apple down. "Say whuuut?"* (1970s+ Black)

scab *n* A nonunion worker, esp one who attempts to break a strike;
FINK (1777+)

scads *n* 1 A large quantity of money (1890+) 2 A large quantity of anything; BAGS, OODLES: *I have scads of studying to do* (1809+) [origin unknown; perhaps fr British dialect, “shed,” and hence semantically akin to a *shithouse full*]

scag *See* SKAG

scag jones *n phr* A heroin addiction: *sell them to janitors for a quarter to support their “scag jones”* (1960+ *Narcotics*)

scairdy cat *See* SCAREDY CAT

scale *n* The regular rate of pay for a union worker: *paid scale for the day*

scalp *v* To sell tickets at a higher than normal or legal price (1883+)

scalper *n* 1 A person who scalps tickets (1869+) 2 A person who places bets and backs bets in such a way that he will win whether the horse wins or loses (1960s+ *Gambling*)

scam *n* 1 (also **scambo**) A swindle; confidence game; fraud; CON: *It was a full scam/ Looking for a good scambo for April Fool’s Day* (1963+) 2 The information; the LOW-DOWN, the SCOOP: *Here’s the scam. We’re holing in for the night* (1964+) *v* 1 (also **scam on**): *You guys are scamming me* 2 To fool around and waste time: *scamming in the back room* [origin unknown; perhaps related to early 1800s British *scamp*, “cheater, swindler”] *See* WHAT’S THE SCAM

scammer *n* A swindler or hustler

scandal sheet *n phr* A sensationalistic and vulgar newspaper, magazine, etc; cheap tabloid; RAG (1939+) **See** SWINDLE SHEET

◁**scank**▷ *n* An unattractive girl (1970s+ *Black teenagers*)

scankie *adj* Disheveled; sloppy (1970s+ *Black teenagers*)

scare, the *n phr* Extortion based on menaces: *We build the sap for the scare* (1930s+ *Underworld*)

◁**scared shitless**▷ *adj phr* Very frightened; terrified: *And the producer is scared shitless of the sponsor* [1936+; based on the expression *scare the shit out of someone*]

scared spitless (or witless) *adj phr* Very frightened; terrified; SCARED SHITLESS: *They were scared spitless at the prospect of appearing in a play* [1930s+; two plausible euphemisms for *scared shitless*]

scared stiff *adj phr* Very frightened; paralyzed by terror [1900+; fr the notion of being *scared to death*]

scaredy (or scairdy) cat *n phr* FRAIDY CAT (1933+)

scarehead *n* A very large and conspicuous headline; SCREAMER (1900+ *Newspaper office*)

◁**scare someone shitless**▷ (or **spitless** or **witless**) *v phr* To frighten very much; terrify: *It scared me shitless, but that didn't stop me from watching it again and again* (1936+)

◁**scare the shit out of someone**▷ *v phr* (Variations: **living shit** or **bejesus** or **daylights** may replace **shit**) To frighten very much; terrify: *Their strategy was to maximize the threat of bloodshed, to scare the shit out of the KGB/ It scares the living shit out of them/ These*

complexities would scare the bejesus out of David Cronenberg (entry form 1930s + , others perhaps earlier)

scare up v phr To find and produce; RUSTLE: *was among the goodies scared up at a flea market* [1853 + ; fr the rising or starting of wildlife, which sense is found by 1846]

scarf n Food; a meal; CHOW, SCOFF (1930s + *Teenagers fr black*) **v 1** (also **scarf down** or **scarf up**) To eat or drink, esp voraciously; consume: *puffing on his morning joint, eating cereal, and scarfing up a beer/ People scarf up food after truck overturns/ scarfed down Milky Ways flambe* (1950 +) ◀2▶ To do cunnilingus: *Scarf her a few times: eat her box, in other words* (1960s +)

scarf out n phr: *eat all I wanted in the cafeteria, really a scarf out v phr*
To eat very heartily; overeat; PIG OUT: *I took the band there and we scarfed out* (1970s +)

scary adj Very good; first-rate: *And there are some pretty scary community players out there; it's not as if just anyone can come in and play* (1990s + *Musicians*)

scat¹ modifier: *precise "scat" singing n* Pattering staccato gibberish sung to songs, esp jazz songs: *Then I'd carry on some of my scat v: Scatting has almost always been used by jazz singers as an interlude* [1926 + Jazz musicians; origin unknown; probably one of the nonsense syllables used]

scat² v To drive or otherwise move very fast [1950s + *Teenagers*; fr early 1800s *ss cat*, a hissing address designed to drive away a cat; the earliest occurrence is in the expression *quicker than ss'cat*]

scatback *n* A very fast and agile backfield runner (1946 + Football)

scatterbrain *n* A silly or stupid person, esp one who cannot attend properly to a subject or get simple things done; DITZ, RATTLEBRAIN: *He's such a scatterbrain I don't look for a plausible theory from him* (1790 +)

scatterbrained *adj* Silly or stupid; mentally unstable; DITZY (1804 +)

scattergun *modifier* Broadly and imprecisely directed; crudely comprehensive; SHOTGUN: *the scattergun memo* (1952 +) *n* **1** A shotgun (1836 +) **2** A machine gun, submachine gun, or machine pistol; BURP GUN (WWII Army)

scatter market *n phr*: *The time that is not sold up front will be sold later in smaller blocks and presumably at higher rates, on the so-called scatter market* (1990s + Television advertising)

scatty *adj* Irrational; crazy; GOOFY, SCATTERBRAINED: *the ferociously ambitious, slightly scatty Louise Bryant* [1911 + British; probably fr *scatterbrained*; said to be a Cockney use]

scenario *n* A reasoned or imagined pattern of events in the future; a possible plan: *According to one scenario we only kill 87 percent of the population* (1962 +) *See* WORST-CASE SCENARIO

scene *n* **1** The setting or milieu of a specific activity or group; specialized venue: *the rock "scene"/ It is really quite difficult to understand their scene* **2** One's particular preference, activity, etc; BAG, THING: *I mean that's not my own scene or anything* (1960s + *Counterculture*) *See* ALL-ORIGINALS SCENE, BAD SCENE, LAY A TRIP ON someone, MAKE A SCENE, MAKE THE SCENE, MOB SCENE, SPLIT THE SCENE

scenery *See* CHEW UP THE SCENERY

scenester *n* A person who is often seen at a particular scene; a publicity monger: *the new Hollywood club is going to make some local bands, as well as local scenesters, happy (1990s +)*

scenic route *n* The long route or way, often due to one's losing one's way: *missed the Garden State Parkway and ended up taking the scenic route*

schizo (SKITSO, SKIH zoh) **adj** **1**: a schizo drug addict **2** (also **schizy** or **schizy** or **schizie**) Crazy; demented, esp in a self-contradictory way; psychotic; **NUTTY**: *People in democracies are a little schizy about authority/ this same schizy little brain (1920s + fr hospital)* **n** (also **schiz**) A schizophrenic: *Docs find he's a schizo (1945 +, variant 1955 +)* [fr *schizophrenic, schizophrenia*]

schiz out *v phr* To go crazy; become schizophrenic; **FLIP**: *She thought he'd schizzed out completely/ on the perpetual verge of schizing out (1980s + Students)*

schlang *See* SCHLONG

shlemazel or **schlimazel** or **schlemasel** or **shlemozzle** (shlə MAH zəl) **n** An awkward, unfortunate, maladjusted person; **SAD SACK** [1940s +, but probably earlier; fr Yiddish *shlimazel* fr *shlim mazel*, "rotten luck"; British slang *shemozzle, shlemozzle*, "a muddle, an unhappy plight," is found by 1889 and is probably related]

schlemiel or **schlemihl** or **shlemiel** (shlə MEEL) **n** A stupid person; fool; oaf; esp, a naive person often victimized: *Don't talk like a schlemiel, you schlemiel/ playing the lovable schlemiel to Brooklyn*

Jews [1892+; fr Yiddish *shlemiel*, probably fr the name of the main character in A von Chamisso's German fable *The Wonderful History of Peter Schlemihl*, 1813]

schlep or **schlepp** or **shlep** *n* 1: *even with the four-flight schlep to the editorial office* (1964+) 2 (also **schlepper** or **shlepper**) A stupid person; oaf; LOSER, KLUTZ, SLOB: *dead schleps playing behind him/ Poor John was a schlepper of the first order* (1939+) **v** 1 To carry; drag along: *schlepping the male's genetic material so his baby inherits half its genes from each parent* (1922+) 2 To move or advance with difficulty; drag: *Then I'd have to schlep around to the Quarter Note* (1922+) [fr Yiddish *shleppen*]

schleppable *adj* Portable: *The Canon BJ-20 portable printer at 6.6 pounds is certainly more schleppable than its main competitor* (1990s+)

schleppy or **shleppy** *adj* Awkward; stupid; KLUTZY (1940s+)

schlock *adj*: *unlike all those schlock films* *n* (also **schlack** or **schlag** or **shlock**) Inferior merchandise; an inferior product; CRAP, JUNK: *That "Macbird" is a piece of schlock/ are bringing out schlock so they can pay for the books they care about* (1915+) [fr Yiddish fr German *schlag*, "a blow," perhaps because the merchandise has been knocked around, or knocked down, or perhaps because, as Eric I Bromberg wrote in *American Speech* in 1938, "to schlach is to cut or raise a price according to a customer"; the *New York Times* speculated in 1922 that the underworld use *schlock*, "a broken lot of loot," was adopted because *junk* had recently come to mean "narcotics, dope"]

schlockmeister *n* A successful maker or seller of schlock: *Low-budget, high-profit exploitation has solidified their position as Hollywood's premier schlockmeisters* [1965 +; fr *schlock* plus German *Meister*, “master”]

schlock shop (or **joint**) *n phr* A store that sells inferior merchandise, esp a junk shop, thrift store, etc [1940s +; in the 1930s, a store that varies its prices according to the customer]

schlockudrama *n* An inferior and exploitive movie or television play: *Fox's schlockudrama “Madonna: Innocence Lost” (1990s +)*

schlocky or **shlocky** *adj* Inferior; shoddy; cheap and gaudy; JUNKIE (1968 +)

◁**schlong**▷ *n* (also **schlang** or **shlang** or **shlong**) The penis; PRICK: *you know with his schlong hanging out there* [1969 +; fr Yiddish *shlang*, literally “snake”]

◁**schlontz** or **shlontz**▷ *n* The penis [1970s +; perhaps a blend of Yiddish *shlong* and *shwants*]

schloomp (SHLŌŌMP) (also **schlump** or **shloomp** or **shlump**) *n* A stupid person; KLUTZ: *For openers, he looks like a shlump* **v** (also **shalump** or **schloomp around**) To loaf; idle about; GOOF OFF: *She shalumps around the Ritz in her loose clothes and sneakers* [1930s +; fr Yiddish *shlump*, related to German *Schlumpe*, “a slovenly woman”]

schlub *See* ZHLUB

schmaltz or **shmaltz** (SHMAWLTS) *n* Blatant sentimentality, esp

musical or theatrical material of a cloyingly sweet and maudlin sort; CORN: *happy combination of good theater and good pathos known as schmaltz* [1935 + Swing musicians; fr Yiddish *shmalts*, literally “rendered fat”]

schmaltzy or **schmalzy** or **shmaltzy** *adj* Sentimental; sweetly melancholy; CORNY, ICKY: *this schmaltzy king of schlock and roll* (1935 +)

schmancy *See* FANCY-SCHMANCY

schmatte (SHMAH tə) *n* (also **schmattah** or **schmatteh** or **shmatte** or **shmotte**) A shabby or unstylish garment: *She had on a tired old schmattah* [1970 +; fr Yiddish *shmatte*, literally “rag”]

schmear¹ or **shmear** or **shmeer** *n* A bribe: *Since the rest of the tables were all unoccupied, it would seem to call for a bit of a schmear* **v** **1** To bribe; GREASE someone’s PALM: *see this here Rabbi and schmear him a thousand dollars* (1909 +) **2** To flatter and cajole someone; SOFT SOAP (1930 +) [fr Yiddish *shmeer*, literally “grease”]

schmear² *n* An accusation or innuendo meant to harm someone’s reputation; a slander **v** To treat someone very roughly; CLOBBER, CREAM, SMEAR [1950s +; fr a humorous mispronunciation of *smear*]

schmear, the *n phr* the WHOLE SCHMEAR [1940s +; fr Yiddish *shmeer*]

schmeck or **shmeck** *n* **1** A taste; a bite: *How about a little schmeck?* (1968 +) **2** Heroin; SMACK: *She’s hustling right now, schmeck, tail, abortion, the whole bit* (1930s + Narcotics) [fr Yiddish *shmek*, “a smell, sniff,” related to German *schmecken*]

schmegeggy or **shmegeggy** or **schmegegge** (shmə GEG gee) **n** **1** A stupid person; oaf; SCHLEMIEL: *the shmegeggy she lives with/ a new story about some gringo schmegegge exchanging his dollars for a worthless mess of Batista money* **2** Nonsense; foolishness; BALONEY [1964 + ; fr Yiddish *shmegegi*, of unknown origin, perhaps coined in American Yiddish]

schmendrick or **shmendrick** **n** A stupid person, esp an awkward and inept nonentity; SCHLEMIEL: *a schmendrick with a noodle for a brain* [1951 + ; fr Yiddish *shmendrik*, fr the name of a character in an operetta by A Goldfaden]

schmo (also **schmoe** or **shmo** or **shmoe**) **n** **1** A naive and hapless person; fool; GOOF: *I've been standing here like a schmoe for 20 minutes* **2** A person; man; GUY: *Them big-time schmoes was stockholders* [1947 + ; perhaps a euphemistic alteration of Yiddish *shmok*, “penis”; perhaps a quasi-Yiddish coinage for amusing effect; the term has been adopted into American Yiddish] **See** JOE SCHMO

schmooz (SHMOOS or SHMOOZ) (also **schmoo** or **schmooze** or **schmoos** or **schmoose** or **schmoozl** or **schmoozle** or **schmoosl** or **schmoosle** or **schmuss** or any of these spelled with **sh-**) **n**: *Two buddies enjoying a quiet schmooz* **v** **1** To converse, esp lengthily and cozily: *stop and chat (Schmoos, he calls it)/ lawyers schmoozing in the halls* (1897 +) **2** To seduce with flattery; SOFT SOAP: *What he does is he hooks up with these dumb women whom he schmoozes and lives off* (1990s +) [fr Yiddish fr Hebrew *schmuos*, “things heard”]

schmoozefest **n** A meeting, conference, etc, where people chat; GABFEST: *where they're on their way to yet another promotional*

schmoozefest (1990s +)

schmoozer *n* A person who schmoozes, esp as an aspect of personality: *He has none of the small coin of politics. He's not a schmoozer* (1909 +)

schmoozisie *n* A set of persons who are habitually and professionally garrulous; CHATTERING CLASSES: *the drag-orientals throwaway zine leaves behind outraged member of the gay schmoozisie* [1990s +; fr *schmooze* plus *bourgeoisie*]

schmuck or **shmuck** *n* A detestable person; an obnoxious man; BASTARD, PRICK: *You must be a real schmuck* [1892 +; fr Yiddish *shmok*, “penis,” literally “ornament”]

schmucky *adj* Detestable; obnoxious: *The fact that this kid might be schmucky hurt his chances* (1975 +)

schmutter or **shmutter** *n* A garment (1970 +; Yiddish)

schmutz or **shmutz** *n* Filth; smut [1967 +; fr Yiddish]

schneider or **schneid** *n*: *The Yanks took four straight, a schneider/ The AFC might have teams capable of breaking the Super Bowl schneid* **v** **1** To win before one's opponent has scored; SHUT OUT **2** To defeat decisively; trounce; CLOBBER [fr German, literally “tailor,” probably by way of Yiddish; the term is used in various card games for a clean sweep]

schnockered or **snockered** *adj* Drunk: *Better quit before you get schnockered/ while all the male guests get snockered* [1955 +; origin uncertain; perhaps fr Irish *snagaireact*, pronounced with initial *sh-*,

“tippling, stammering”]

schnook or **shnook** (SHNŌŌK) *n* An ineffectual person; a naive person often victimized; PATSY • A more affectionate and compassionate way of designating a schlemiel: *Don't be such an apologetic schnook* [1940s +; fr American-Yiddish *shnook*, said to be fr German *Schnucke*, “small sheep”; probably related to the pet names *snooks*, *snookums*, etc]

schnorrer or **shnorrer** *n* 1 A beggar, esp one who counts parasitically on a family or community; MOOCHER, SPONGER: “*Hooray for Captain Spaulding, the African explorer!*” “*Did someone call me schnorrer?*” (1892 +) 2 A person who habitually haggles; niggard [fr Yiddish *shnorrer*]

schnozz *n* (also **schnoz** or **schnozzle** or **schnozzola** or any of these spelled with **sh-** or **snozzle**) The nose, esp a large one; BUGLE: *the rep of not havin' a big schnozz/ Five players broke their schnozzolas* [entry form 1942 +, *schnozzle* 1934 +, *schnozzola* and *snozzle* 1930 +; fr Yiddish *shnoz* fr *shnoitsl* fr German *Schnauze*, “snout”]

school *n* A state penitentiary; the BIG HOUSE (1950s + *Underworld*) *v* To teach someone as an expert **See** PREP SCHOOL

schpritz **See** SHPRITZ

schtarker **See** SHTARKER

schtick **See** SHTICK

schtoonk (SHTŌŌNK) *n* (also **schtunk** or **shtoonk** or **shtunk**) A person one detests or despises; JERK, STINKER [1968 +; fr Yiddish

shtunk, “stink, scandal”]

schtup *See* SHTUP

schussboom (SHÖÖ bööm) **v** To ski very fast downhill [1959 + ; fr German *Schuss*, literally “shot,” plus American English *boom*, “speed”]

schvantz or **schvontz** *See* SHVANTZ

◀**schvartze**▶ (SHVAHR tsə) **n** (also **shvartzeh** or **shvartze** or **schwartz** or **schwartz** or **shvartzer** or **schwartz**) A black person: *irons even better than the schvartze/ A shvartze. Some wife killer who’d faked it* [1961 + ; fr Yiddish fr *shvartz*, “black”]

schwing interj An exclamation of delight, esp sexual; HUBBA-HUBBA: *As a child, he found cartoon characters (in particular Bugs Bunny) arousing. Schwing!* [1990s + ; popularized by the 1992 movie *Wayne’s World*]

science *See* HARD SCIENCE

sci-fi or **sciffy modifier**: *sci-fi fans secretly crave n* Science fiction (1955 +)

scillion *See* SKILLION

scoff n Food: *Beef heart is their favorite scoff* (1846 +) **v** **1** To eat or drink, esp voraciously; SCARF: *I’ll take you over so you can scoff* (1846 +) **2** To steal; seize; plunder; SWIPE: *Who scoffed my butts?* (1893 +) [origin uncertain; perhaps fr Afrikaans *schoft*, defined in a 1600s dictionary as “eating time for labourers or workmen four times a day”; perhaps fr British dialect *scaff*; South African use in current senses is attested in late 1700s]

scoffings *n* Food; meals: *A hard town for “scoffings” (1892 + Hoboes)*

scooch *v* To move or push in a direction by a small amount • Also as a noun: *Scooch your leg forward with your hand if you can’t get there*

See SCRUNCH

scoop *n* **1:** *The paper scored a major scoop with that revelation (1874 + Newspaper office)* **2** A standard hemispherical portion of ice cream, mashed potatoes, etc; *DIP (1950s + Lunch counter)* **3** A fund-raising event that allows many contributions to be given at once; *DUMP (1990s + Politics)* **4** A designer drug, gamma hydroxybutyrate; *GHB, GRIEVOUS BODILY HARM (1990s + Narcotics)* *v* **1** To publish or file a news story before another newspaper or another reporter: *I was afraid of being scooped, because I knew a lot of reporters were on the same story (1884 + Newspaper office)* **2** In singing, to attain a desired note by beginning lower and sliding up to pitch: *In the video Forza del Destino, Renata Tebaldi sometimes scoops and has occasional bouts of flatness (1927 +)* **3** To steal; pilfer (*1960s + Students*)

scoop, the *n phr* News or data, esp when anxiously awaited, heretofore secret, etc; *POOP: Oh, come on. What’s the scoop? (1940s + Students & armed forces)*

scooper **See** POOPER SCOOPER

scoop on someone *v phr* To make sexual advance; *HIT ON* someone: *I saw him trying to scoop on Nancy at the party (1980s + Students)*

scoot *n* **1** A dollar: *Greg could have the sixty scoots, the guns, everything (1970s +)* **2** A motorcycle; *Bike, IRON (1960s + Students)* *v* **1** To

move rapidly, esp in fleeing or escaping: *When they saw the cops they scooted right out of there* (1841 +) **2** To slide, esp suddenly as on a slippery surface: *Let's scoot this thing into the corner* (1838 +) [origin unknown; perhaps ultimately fr a Scandinavian cognate of *shoot*, by way of Scottish dialect; British naval *scout*, in the first verb sense, is found by 1758; the first noun sense may have an entirely different derivation than the two verb senses]

scope a vic *See* VIC

scope out (or on) v phr To look at; examine; CHECK OUT, DIG: *scoping on the foxy sisters/ I'd scoped him out pretty well* [1980s + Teenagers fr black; probably fr *periscope*]

scorch v 1 To travel very fast; BARREL: *I proceed to scorch to make up for lost time* (1891 +) **2** To throw the ball very fast and hard; BURN: *You had to love how he scorched Buddy Ryan* (1940s + Baseball)

scorched earth n phr: *Scorched Earth: a self-destructive strategy in which a company seeks to discourage a takeover by making itself less attractive* [1990s + Business; translation of Chinese *jiaotu*, describing the 1930s strategy adopted in defense against the invasion by Japan, under which retreating troops destroyed everything useful]

scorcher n 1 A very harsh remark, review, etc; ZINGER (1842 +) **2** A very hot day (1874 +) **3** A very hard-hit ball (1900 + Baseball)

score n 1 A success or coup: *This was the big score for him, the chance he'd been waiting for all his life* (1970s +) **2** The loot or proceeds from a robbery, swindle, gamble, etc; also, the amount of such

loot; HAUL (1914+ *Underworld*) **3** A share of loot; CUT (1930s+ *Underworld*) **4** Accomplishment; payoff: *He was always looking for an easy score* (1960+) **5** The client of a prostitute: *The little hooker got only five scores all evening* (1960s+ *Prostitutes*) **6** A planned murder; HIT (1970s+ *Underworld*) **7** A buy of narcotics: *He's out looking for a score* (1950s+ *Narcotics*) **8**: *The Mollen Commission focused on clusters of officers who profited from scores, a code word for stealing and extorting narcotics and cash from drug dealers* (1990s+ *New York City police*) **9** A summary or conclusion: *Bartender, what's the score?* **v 1** To succeed, esp to please an audience, interviewer, or others who judge; RATE: *The show didn't score with the TV critics* (1884+) <**2**> To do the sex act with or to someone; MAKE IT WITH someone (1960+) **3** To find a client for prostitution (1960s+ *Prostitutes*) **4** To buy or get narcotics: *You go score what you need for the trip* (1950s+ *Narcotics*) **5** To get; acquire: *Most of them score their clothes as gifts from parents* (1970s+ *Students*) **See** EVEN THE SCORE, MAKE A SCORE

score, the *n* The main point; crux; the BOTTOM LINE: *I heard the facts, now what's the score?* (1938+) **See** KNOW THE SCORE

scosh **See** SKOSH

scow *n* A large truck (1940s+ *Truckers*)

scrag¹ **v 1** To kill; murder: *overshoot or undershoot and scrag some scared civilian* (1930+) **2** To destroy or severely damage; ruin: *The beet sugar people try to scrag the cane sugar people* (1835+) <**3**> To do the sex act with or to; SCREW, SCROG: *the middle-American hobby of scragging the random housewife at any opportunity* (1970s+) [fr

earlier slang, “hang by the neck”]

◁**scrag**²▷ **n** An unattractive woman; DOG [1940s + Students; probably fr *hag* reinforced by the name of the ugly *Scraggs* family in the comic strip “Li'l Abner” and possibly by earlier slang, “a raw-bones; a skinny person,” found by 1542]

scraggy adj Gaunt and wasted; lean; bony: *snapshot of a scraggy Sindona as an apparent captive (1611 +)*

scram n: *I got ready for a sudden scam* **v** To leave quickly; flee; BEAT IT: *Customers scrambled screaming when the trailer went on/ Scram, you kids (1928 +)* [fr *scramble*]

scramble v: *Some girls I know “scramble,” which means sell drugs, to get it (1980s + Teenagers)*

scrambled eggs n 1 Gold braid, embroidery, etc, on the uniform of a senior officer, esp on the bill of a hat **2** Senior officers; BRASS, the TOP BRASS (*WWII armed forces*)

scrambler n A motorcycle used for mountain or hill riding (*1970s + Motorcyclists*)

scrap n A fight; quarrel; DUSTUP (*1846 +*) **v:** *They scrapped for days over the appointment* [origin uncertain; probably fr *scrape*]

scrape along (or by) v phr To survive; carry on; GET BY, MAKE OUT: *I'm not flourishing, but I'm scraping along, barely (1884 +)*

scrape the bottom of the barrel v phr To use one's last and worst resources; be forced to desperate measures: *He scraped the bottom of the barrel when he proposed that topic for his paper (1942 +)*

scrape (or scratch) up v phr To get, esp laboriously and bit by bit:

Dollar by dollar they scraped up a million/ even if you can't scratch up all of that cash now (first form 1617+, variant 1922+)

scrap iron n phr Inferior whiskey; ROTGUT (1942+)

scrappy adj Inclined to fight; pugnacious (1895+)

scratch adj Hastily arranged; impromptu; spur of the moment; PICKUP:

a scratch jazz ensemble (1851+) **n 1** Money; BREAD, DOUGH: *If the mayor*

doesn't come up with the scratch (1914+) **2** A loan; an act of

borrowing money: *where they are going to make a scratch for*

tomorrow's operations (1930s+) **3:** *two scratches in the third race* **4:**

She had found one "scratch," a ticket bet on a horse that had not

started (1970s+ Horse racing) **5 (also itch):** *He made a scratch at a*

crucial juncture/ And when the cue ball goes into the pocket, you call

that an itch (Billiards 1909+) **6** A mention of one's name in the

news media, esp when this is useful publicity (*late 1930s+*) **v 1** To

cancel a horse from a race (*1902+ Horse racing*) **2** To cancel a

plan, an entrant, someone on a list, etc; SCRUB: *Looks like our tête-à-*

tête will have to be scratched (1685+) **3 (also itch)** To put the cue

ball into a pocket inadvertently (*Billiards 1909+*) **See** FROM SCRATCH,

START FROM SCRATCH, UP TO SCRATCH, YOU SCRATCH MY BACK I SCRATCH YOURS

scratcher n A forger (1859+ *Underworld*)

scratch (or scratch around) for something v phr To acquire

something, esp something hard to find or get: *I was scratching*

around for whatever work I could get [1509+; fr the food-seeking

action of chickens]

scratch hit *n phr* A lucky base hit that is nearly an out (1876 +
Baseball)

scratch sheet *n phr* A daily publication giving betting data,
including the cancellations, on races to be run that day: *The first
scratch sheet that ever appeared was in 1917 (1939 + Horse racing)*

scrawny *adj* Lean; bony; SCRAGGY, SKINNY (1833 +)

scream, a *n phr* Someone or something that is hilariously funny; a
HOOT, a RIOT: *Isn't this decor a scream? (1903 +)*

scream (or yell) bloody murder *v phr* To make a raucous outcry;
complain noisily: *They'll scream bloody murder if we even suggest that
(entry form 1882 +, variant 1931 +)*

screamer *n* **1** An exclamation point; BANG, SHRIEK (1895 + *Print shop*) **2**
A murder mystery, horror show, or thriller (1920s + *Show business*)
3 A very conspicuous advertising plaque or banner (1940s +) **4**
SCAREHEAD (1926 + *Newspaper office*)

screaming *See* DRAG someone KICKING AND SCREAMING INTO THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

screaming meemie *modifier* Resembling or causing a state of
nervous hysteria: *rather than endure another minute of screaming-
meemie loneliness (1927 +)* *n phr* A small rocket launched from a
jeep or truck (*WWII Army*)

screaming meemies, the, or the meemies *n phr* A state of nervous
hysteria; the HEEBIE-JEEBIES, the JITTERS: *a town that would give the
ordinary thrillseeker the screaming meemies/ Knowing (a chimpanzee)
was on the loose gave him the meemies* [fr WWI Army; apparently fr

the soldier's echoic name for a very loud and terrifying German artillery shell, and then the battle fatigue caused by exposure to such matériel; the name may reflect a soldier's pattern of giving feminine names, here the French *Mimi*, to projectiles and weapons, such as *Betsy*, *Big Bertha*, *Moaning Minnie*, etc]

screech *n* Inferior whiskey; PANTHER PISS (1902+), ROTGUT

screeching halt, a *n phr* A sudden and definitive stop: *I'll know when it's coming to a screeching halt/ Let's bring this conversation to a screeching halt* (1970s+)

screenager *n*: *Did you hear about Bobby? He downloaded Windows 95 from his counselor's computer and then sold it to his Dad's accounting firm. What a screenager* (1990s+)

◁**screw**¹▷ *n* **1**: *She loves a good screw* (1929+) **2** A person regarded merely as a sex object: *She's only a medium screw* (1937+) **v** **1** To do the sex act with or to someone; FUCK • Felt by many to be excusable when *fuck* is the term really intended, and used as an attenuated form in nearly the whole range of *fuck* senses and compounds: *At last people are screwing like minks* (1785+) **2** To take advantage of; swindle; maltreat; FUCK • Rapidly losing all offensive impact: *The city's taxpayers get screwed* (1900+) [*screw*, "strumpet, prostitute," is found by 1725] **See** GOAT FUCK, PUT THE SCREWS TO someone, THROW A FUCK INTO someone

screw² *n* A prison guard or warden; turnkey: *a hardboiled screw* [1812+ Underworld; fr 1700s underworld, "a skeleton key," then *turnkey*, the bearer of such a key]

screw³ or screw out v To leave hastily; flee; SCRAM: *Now go on. Screw* [entry 1896 +, variant 1908 +; perhaps imitative of *scram*; perhaps semantically derived fr *fuck off*, “leave, depart,” by way of less taboo *screw off*]

screw around v phr 1 To pass one’s time idly and pleasantly; potter about; GOOF AROUND **2** To joke and play when one should be serious; FUCK AROUND: *Quit screwing around and take this call* **3** To flirt or dally, esp promiscuously; SWING: *After he met Janet, he stopped screwing around* (1939 +)

screw around with something v phr To play or tinker with; MESS AROUND WITH: *I told her to stop screwing around with the TV dial* (1970s +)

screwball¹ or screwhead adj: screwball antics n 1 An eccentric person; FREAK, ODDBALL: *a catchall for screwballs and semi-screwballs from all over/ He’s just another screwhead too big for his britches* (1933 +) **2** Inferior, commercial jazz played for indifferent faddists (1936 + *Jazz musicians*) [fr *screwy* and probably based on *screwball²*; the -ball of this term is the source of the very productive combining word that yields *oddball*, *nutball*, etc]

screwball² n A pitched ball that moves to the right from a right-handed pitcher and the left from a left-handed pitcher, unlike a curve ball [1928 + Baseball; said to have been coined by the pitcher Carl Hubbell]

screwed adj Drunk (*British & 1980s + students*) *See* HALF-STEWED

screwed, blued, and tattooed adj phr 1 Thoroughly cheated;

victimized; maltreated **2:** *In the Pacific Fleet, screwed, blued, and tattooed means that you've hit a foreign port and have done everything of importance in that port—you have gotten laid, had a new set of dress blues hand made, and added to your already prodigious collection of tattoos (Navy) [1940s + ; in the first sense, blued is probably fr earlier blewed, “robbed”; tattooed has the standard sense “struck rapidly and repeatedly”]*

screwed up *adj phr* **1** Confused; tangled; spoiled, esp by bungling;

BALLED UP, FUCKED UP: *He screwed up the punch line* **2** Mentally and emotionally disturbed; neurotic; FUCKED UP: *Hamlet was a sad, screwed-up type guy (WWII armed forces)*

◁**screwee**▷ *n* A sex partner; a person being screwed: *My screwee was so angry that nothing would distract her (1970s +)*

screw-loose *n* An eccentric person; NUT, SCREWBALL (1940s +)

screw loose, a *See* HAVE A SCREW LOOSE

screw-off *n* A person who evades work; idler; loafer; FUCK-OFF (WWII Army)

◁**screw off**▷ *v phr* **1** To masturbate; JACK OFF (1950s +) **2** FUCK OFF (WWII Army)

screw someone over *v phr* To take advantage of; swindle and victimize; FUCK OVER: *Don't trust the Government. They feel it screwed them over (1960s +)*

screws *See* PUT THE SCREWS TO someone

◁**screw the pooch**▷ *v phr* FUCK THE DOG

screw-up *n* **1** A chronic bungler; a consistently inept person; FUCK-UP (WWII Army) **2** A confused situation; a botch; FUCK-UP: *The program's a total screw-up* (1950s +)

screw up *v phr* **1** To fail by blundering; ruin one's prospects, life, etc; FUCK UP: *I screwed up and got canned* (WWII Army) **2** To confuse; tangle; spoil by bungling; BALL UP, FUCK UP: *It really screws up my sex life* (1938 +)

screwy *adj* Very eccentric; crazy; NUTTY, SCREWBALL: *Newspaper guys are mostly screwy* [1887 +; fr the gait of a drunk person suggested by the twistiness of a *screw* thread, whence the various senses of deviation; influenced by the notion of having a *screw loose* in one's head]

◁**screw you**▷ *interj* An exclamation of strong defiance and contempt; FUCK YOU: *Screw you all* (1940s +)

script *n* **1** A doctor's prescription, often a forged or stolen one (1960s + *Narcotics*) **2** Any note written on paper **3** A manuscript (*Theater* 1897 +, also *publishing*)

◁**scrog**▷ *modifier*: *All that scroggin' material out there* *v* To do the sex act with or to; SCRAG, SCREW: *You guys gotta scrog the sociable cervix* (1970s +) [origin uncertain; perhaps fr *scrag*]

scrooch or scrooge or scrouge *See* SCRUNCH

scrooched *adj* Drunk (1925 +)

Scrooge *n* **1** A miser; PINCHPENNY, TIGHTWAD **2** A spoiler of Christmas; GRINCH [1940 +; fr the Dickens character in the 1843 story *A Christmas*

Carol]

scrooge up *v phr* To tense and narrow one's eyelids: *I find myself scrooging up my eyes* (1909 +)

scroogie or screwgie, a (SKR^{oo} jee) *n* An unconventional pitch, esp a screwball thrown with a change of pace: *It was some sort of a scroogie ... a changeup screwball* [1953 + Baseball; said to have been coined by Mickey Mantle, probably fr *screwball* and *screwy*]

scrounge or scrounge up *n* (also **scrounger**) A person who acquires by begging, borrowing, or pilfering; CADGER, MOOCHER, SCHNORRER *v* **1** (also **scrounge up**) To acquire by such dubious ways as habitual borrowing, begging, foraging, scavenging, pilfering, etc; CADGE, MOOCH
• Popularized by military use during World War I: *eating what little he could scrounge* **2** (also **scrounge up**) To seek and collect; SCRAPE UP: *Let's see what we can scrounge up for supper* [1909 +; probably fr British dialect *scrunge*, "squeeze," hence "steal," semantically parallel with *pinch*]

scroungy or scrounging or scrungy *adj* Inferior; WRETCHED; CRUMMY, GRUNGY: *I'd tell my own children to wear something scroungy/ The musical has a scroungy book/ could have bundled all this scrungy stuff into my car* [1950s +; probably fr the notion of inferior things scavenged and scrounged, with the form now influenced by *grungy*]

scrub¹ *v* To cancel or eliminate: *They were forced to scrub the whole plan* [1828 +; popularized by military use during World War II]

scrub² *n* **1** A contemptible person; BUM: *Ed is a scrub* (1589 +) **2** An athlete who is not on the first or varsity team; a lowly substitute

(1892 +) [ultimately fr *scrub*, “shrub, a low, stunted tree”; the quoted 1990s teenager use is an interesting survival or perhaps a revival based on the second sense]

scrubs *n* Loose-fitting garments, slippers, etc, worn by surgeons, nurses, and others in a sterile environment: *Finally, Bill emerged from the delivery room in green scrubs, cradling a seven-pound baby, saying he was “bonding” with his new daughter (1970s + Medical)*

scrud or double scrud *n* or *n phr* **1** Any disease, esp something quite serious and painful; CRUD **2** Any venereal disease; CRUD (1930s + *Army*)

scruff¹ or **scruff along** *v* or *v phr* To make a bare living; SCRAPE ALONG (1940s +)

scruff² *adj* SCRUFFY [1970s + Teenagers; fr *scruffy*]

scruffy *adj* Dirty and unkempt; shabby; slovenly: *The scruffy little city, Knoxville, did it/ one bearded, sad-eyed, scruffy-looking lad* [1871 +; fr obsolete British *scruff*, “valueless, contemptible,” probably an alteration of *scurf*, “scabbiness of the skin,” hence related to *scurvy*]

◁**scrump or scromp**▷ *v* To do the sex act; BOFF, JAZZ [1980s + Students; perhaps a blend of *screw* and *hump*]

scrumptious *adj* Excellent; superior; luxurious: *What a scrumptious dessert!* [1836 +; perhaps a humorous alteration of *sumptuous*]

scrunch (also **ooch** or **oonch** or **scooch** or **scrooch** or **scrooge** or **scrouge**) *v* **1** To squeeze oneself into a tighter space: *I scrunched*

*into the corner and covered my ears/ She scooped over and patted the sofa beside her. Ooch over (entry form 1844 +) 2 To squeeze: He scrunched the paper into a ball (1880 +) [ultimately fr late 16th-century *scruze*, “squeeze,” perhaps a blend of *screw* and *squeeze*]*

scrunge *n* Dirt; filth; a nasty substance; GRUNGE: *Wipe the scrunge off your shoe* [1970s + Students; probably fr *grunge*]

scrungy *adj* Dirty; SCUZZY: *and being with a bunch of scrungy addicts* (1974 +)

scuffle or **scuffle along** *v* or *v phr* **1** To make one’s modest living the best one can; struggle along; GET BY, SCRAPE ALONG, SCRUFF (1939 + *Jazz musicians*) **2** To dance (1950s + *Jive talk*)

◁**scum**▷ *n* **1** Semen; COME (1960s +) **2** A despicable person

◁**scumbag**▷ *modifier*: *accused us of practicing scumbag journalism* *n* **1** A condom; RUBBER **2** (also **scumbucket** or **scummer** or **scumsack** or **scumster** or **scumwad**) A despicable person; ASSHOLE, BASTARD, SLEAZEBAG: *calls Charlton Heston a scumbag/ Everybody says he was a scumbucket/ The scummers were dressed sleeveless now/ And another opportunistic scumsack limps straight to a lawyer* [1960s + ; fr *scum*, “semen”]

◁**scumsucker**▷ *n* **1** A person who does fellatio; COCKSUCKER: *strumpet called Tony a scumsucker* **2** A despicable person; SCUMBAG (1970s +)

◁**scumsucking**▷ *adj* Despicable; disgusting: *You scumsucking dog, you think everybody in town doesn’t know you keep this whore up here?* (1970s +)

scunge *n* A dirty or despicable person or place: *a bit of a scunge* (1912+)

scunner *n* Extreme dislike; hostility: *had taken a scunner against the main competitor* [1500+; fr Scots dialect]

scunnion *See* BRING SCUNNION

scupper *n* A prostitute [WWII Navy; probably fr the sewerish connotations of *scupper*, “deck drain on a ship”]

scurve *n* A despicable person; CRUMB, DIRTBAG, SCUMBAG: *A beer-bottle-in-pocket, fast-talking scurve pushes through the crowd/ The scurves are on the street again tonight* [1951+ Teenagers; fr *scurvy*] *See* SCRUFFY

scurvy *adj* Gross; repulsive (*College students*)

scut *n* **1** A detestable or contemptible person; CRUMB, LOUSE: *You bloody scut!* (1873+) **2** A novice; recruit; neophyte: *The fraternity was famous for treating scuts very roughly* (1950s+) **3** (also **scud** or **scut work**) Menial work such as would be given to a novice: *a detention company doing scut work around the fort* (1950s+) **4** (also **scut dog** or **scut monkey** or **scut puppy**) A junior intern or physician (1940s+ *Medical*) **5** (also **scut work**) Routine and tedious medical procedures usually relegated to the least senior members of the staff (1940s+ *Medical*) [the 1500s slang use, “vulva, cunt,” and the standard use “tail of a hare or deer,” suggest a core sense “tail, buttocks, ass,” reinforced by British dialect *skut*, “crouch down,” and perhaps related to Old Norse *skutr*, “stern of a ship”; *scut* meant “little boy,” perhaps fr Scots *scudler*, “scullion, kitchen boy,” among Scotch-Irish settlers in Pennsylvania]

scuttlebutt *n* Rumors; gossip; presumed confidential information:
worry about a slump, according to business scuttlebutt [1901 + Navy;
fr the chitchat around the *scuttlebutt*, “drinking fountain, water
cask,” on naval vessels]

scuzz *n* 1 (also **scuzzo**) Dirt; filth; a nasty substance; GRUNGE, MUNG,
SCRUNGE: *He has scuzz all over his pants and in his mind* <2> An
unattractive young woman; SCANK, SKAG [1960s + Teenagers; origin
unknown; a blend of *scum* with *fuzzy* has been suggested, but most
such suggestions are mere ingenuity]

scuzzbag *n* (also **scuzzball** or **scuzzbucket**) A despicable person;
CRUMB, SCURVE, SLEAZEBAG: *He calls a minister a “scuzzbag”/ As other West
Coast scuzzballs are proving* (1983 +)

scuzz someone **out** *v phr* To disgust mightily; nauseate; GROSS
someone **OUT**: *With-it slanguists are scuzzed out at the squared-out
weirdos who still use grossed out* (1970s + Teenagers)

scuzzy or **scuz** *adj* Dirty; filthy; repellent; GRUNGY: *a bunch of scuzzy
Moroccan A-rabs* [1960s + Teenagers; origin unknown] **See** SCUZZ

sea cow *n phr* Milk, esp canned milk (WWII Navy)

seagoing bellhop *n phr* A US Marine [1940s + Navy; fr the colorful
and elaborate dress uniform]

sealed (up) *adj* Settled; secured: *contract was sealed in January*

seal the deal *v phr* To come to an agreement or reach the point
where an agreement is almost certain, often used in reference to
sexual relations: *The company sealed the deal with the content*

provider. / *Taking her to a fancy dinner sealed the deal*

seams *See* COME APART AT THE SEAMS

seam squirrel *n phr* A body louse; COOTIE (1899+)

search me *interj* An exclamation or acknowledgment of ignorance;

BEATS ME: *Who said it? Search me, I couldn't say* (1900+)

season *See* SILLY SEASON

seas over *See* HALF SEAS OVER

seat *n* The buttocks; ASS (1607+) *See* BUDDY SEAT, CATBIRD SEAT, the HOT SEAT, SMOKY SEAT, TAKE A BACK SEAT

seat-of-the-pants *adj* Inclined to work by instinct, feel, impulse, etc, rather than by precise rules; practical: *The news had seat-of-the-pants editors who knew their audience* (1970s+) *See* FLY BY THE SEAT OF one's PANTS

sec¹ *n* A second of time: *Come here a sec, Billy* (1860+)

sec² *n* A secretary: *His femme secs open the mail* (1934+)

second banana *n phr* A supporting comedian: *Who was second banana, Laurel or Hardy?* (1940s+ *Show business*) *See* TOP BANANA

second fiddle *adj*: *a sort of second-fiddle appointment *n* A person or thing that is not the most favored, the best, the leader, etc: *definitely second fiddle before the Convention started* (1809+) *See* PLAY SECOND FIDDLE*

seconds *n* **1** A second helping **2** Merchandise that has imperfections (1792+)

second sacker *n phr* A second baseman (1911+ *Baseball*)

second-story man *n phr* A cat burglar (1886 +)

second thought *See* DON'T GIVE IT A SECOND THOUGHT

secret *See* DIRTY LITTLE SECRET

section eight or **section 8** *n phr* **1** A military discharge given for emotional or psychological disability, defective character, or military inaptitude **2** A crazy or eccentric person; a neurotic; NUT [WWII Army; fr *Section VIII*, Army Regulation 615--360]

security blanket *n phr* A thing or person that provides someone with a sense of safety and emotional comfort: *Zeigler instead is Mr Nixon's "security blanket"* [1971 + ; fr the *blanket* or token fragment of blanket that some small children carry about as a source of comforting familiarity; Charles M Schulz, creator of the comic strip "Peanuts," popularized and may have coined the term]

see *n* **1** Recognition; complimentary notice by a superior: *He was a good cop ten years, but never got a see (1950s + Police)* **2** A visit of inspection: *numerous "sees" or visits from the sergeant (1930 + Police)* *v* **1** To pay protection money or graft: *doing business without "seeing the cops" (1930 + Police)* **2** To equal a bet or a raise rather than dropping out of the game (1599 + *Gambling*) [first noun sense perhaps an abbreviation of *commendation*] *See* LONG TIME NO SEE, a LOOK-SEE, LOOK SEE

see a man about a horse (or **dog**) *v phr* To take one's leave for some urgent purpose, esp to go to the bathroom or in earlier times to go have a drink or to meet one's bootlegger • Usu a smiling apology for one's departure; a bland euphemism to conceal one's

true purpose (1927+)

seed *n* ROACH (1960s+ Narcotics) **See** HAYSEED

see eye to eye *v phr* To hold the same opinion or belief as another person(s): *We see eye to eye on child-raising*

seen better days *v phr* To be exhausted or worn out; also, to have experienced better times: *skis have seen better days*

see pink elephants *v phr* To have hallucinations from alcoholism [1940+; said to have been originated by P G Wodehouse]

see red *v phr* To become very angry: *Politics make him see red* (1897+)

see stars *v phr* To be knocked unconscious: *boxer seeing stars*

see the light at the end of the tunnel *v phr* To see at last the beginning of the end of a difficult struggle, period, etc: *The Flower People of Saigon invite you to see the light at the end of the tunnel* (Vietnam War period)

see things *v phr* To hallucinate (1922+)

see-through *adj* Transparent; made of a very sheer fabric; PEEKABOO: *a see-through blouse* (1950+) *n*: *While empty office buildings (colorfully called “see-throughs”) cluttered the skylines, investors did manage to cut their overall tax bills* (1990s+)

see someone’s wheels turning *v phr* To observe that someone is thinking, analyzing, etc: *When my dog is in obedience class, I can see his wheels turning* (1990s+)

see-you *n* A customer who always asks to be waited on by a certain person (1920s + *Salespersons*)

see you *interj* A casual farewell; SO LONG • Often with *around, soon, later,* or another modifier: *the careless “see you’s” that people say* (1891 +)

see you later, alligator *sentence* See you later • Jocular [1956; first recorded as the title of a song by R C Guidry, which was popularized by Bill Haley and the Comets]

segue or **seg** (SEHG way or SEHG) *n* **1** Transition from one piece of music, record, etc, to the next without an obvious break (1937 + *Musicians*) **2** A sequel; something that follows or follows up (1970s + *College students*) *v* **1** To make a “segue”: *Then they segued to “Body and Soul”* (1958 + *Musicians*) **2** To go smoothly from one thing to another: *His features seg rapidly from fascination to fear* (1972 +) [fr Italian, “now follows,” an instruction on musical scores, found by 1740]

seg unit *n phr*: *Expand segregation space. Inmates who habitually break rules or assault staff are sent to “seg” units* (1990s + *Prison*)

sell *n* A hoax or swindle; a deception: *The Cardiff Giant was a “sell”* (1838 +) *v* **1** To cheat; swindle; hoax: *I’ve tunneled, hydraulicked, and cradled, and I have been frequently sold* (1597 +) **2** To convince someone of the value of something: *But would it sell anybody else? I doubt it* (1916 +) [first verb sense said in an article of 1810 to be derived from *sell a bargain*, “the dexterous transfer of any unmarketable commodity for a high price to an unwary customer”]

See HARD SELL, SOFT SELL, **be** SOLD ON

sell oneself v phr To make oneself appealing and successful with an audience, a potential employer, etc (1920s +)

sell someone down the river v phr To betray someone; take victimizing advantage [1927 +; fr slavery days, when a black person or escaped slave *sold down the river* was sent to or returned to the South, a use found by 1851]

selling plater n phr An inferior race horse: *these selling platers with a shot of dope in them* (1940s + Horse racing)

sell like hot cakes v phr To enjoy very brisk sales: *The General's book sold like hot cakes* (1839 +)

sell-out n An act or instance of selling out, in either sense: *He disappointed us, but he was honest enough and it was no sell-out/ The new bathing suits should be a quick sell-out* (1862 + for betrayal, 1859 + for disposition of tickets, etc)

sell out¹ v phr To become a traitor, esp to prostitute one's ideals, talents, etc, for money or other comforts: *are often labeled Toms and mummies who sold out/ accuse them of selling out Chiang Kai-shek* (1888 +)

sell out² v phr To dispose of entirely by sale: *You can't get that here, we sold out* (1796 +)

send v To arouse keen admiration, esp as an ecstatic response; excite;
TURN someone ON: *Bessie Smith really sent him* (1932 + Jazz talk)

send down v phr To send or be sent to prison (1840 +)

send-off *n* A funeral: *Give a man a classy send-off* (1872 +)

send someone packing *v phr* To dismiss, get rid of (1594 +)

send (or take) someone to the cleaners *v phr* To defraud of all or most of someone's money (1907 +)

send someone to the showers *v phr* **1** To remove or eject a player, esp a pitcher, from a game (1940s + *Baseball*) **2** To dismiss or reject someone (1940s +)

send-up *n* A mocking, teasing parody; lampoon; SPOOF: *just another stupid soap send-up/ a relentless send-up of attitudes and gestures* (1958 + *fr British*)

send up *v phr* **1** (also **send up the river**) To send someone to prison: *He got sent up for grand theft* (1901 +) **2** To ridicule, esp by parody; mock; lampoon; SPOOF: *cracking jokes, sending up everyone and everything in sight* (1950s +) [first sense fr or influenced by the course from New York City *up* the Hudson River to Sing Sing Prison at Ossining]

send someone up the wall *v phr* To make someone furious: *Mention of Picasso sends her up the wall* (1966 +)

senior moment *n* A momentary lapse of memory, esp in older people; an incident of forgetfulness blamed on aging

sensaysh (sen SAYSH) *adj* Sensational: *I had a sensaysh time* (1951 +)

separate the men from the boys *v phr* To show who is effective and who is not; separate the sheep from the goats: *Every mayor knows snow can separate the men from the boys, or the two-termers from the*

one-termers (1962 +)

sergeant *See* BUCK SERGEANT

serious *adj* **1** Very commendable; excellent; superb (1940s + *Black*)

2 Intended to make a good and sober impression; overtly conformistic; sincere: *in a serious suit and striped tie* **3** Impressive; imposing; HEAVY, IMPORTANT: *He pushed a button activating some serious chimes* (1980s +) *See* FOR SERIOUS

seriously *adv* Very; extremely (1981 +)

server *n*: As many as 10 “servers,” slang for dealers, worked out of the Keefe house (1990s + *Narcotics*)

serve someone **right** *v phr* To be what someone deserves: *serves him right for being mean to her*

serve up grapefruits *v phr* To pitch balls that are easy to hit: *Garner was asked why his pitching staff continued to serve up grapefruits* [1990s + *Baseball*; because the ball seems as big as a grapefruit; *serve* and *serve up*, “to pitch,” are found by 1913 and are possibly from tennis]

session *modifier*: *He used to do a lot of session playing but hardly ever worked for an audience* **n** **1** A dance or party; HOP (1950s + *Teenagers*) **2** The period of intoxication from a dose of narcotics, esp of LSD; TRIP (1960s + *Narcotics*) **3** An occasion at which a recording is made in a studio; a studio rehearsal or performance: *Horn is from an earlier session* (1927 + *Musicians*) *See* BITCH SESSION, BULL SESSION, GRIPE SESSION, HASH SESSION, JAM SESSION, RAP SESSION, SKULL SESSION

set *adj* Ready; prepared: *We were all set to go* (1844 +) **n** **1** The group

of pieces musicians perform during about a 45-minute period at a club, show, etc: *Clarinetist Scott opened his set (1590+)* **2** An improvisatory musical interchange of about half an hour (1960s+ *Jazz musicians*) **3** A small party or friendly conversational gathering; SCENE: *Don't stop belly rubbing just because we showed on the set (1960s+ Black & jazz talk)* **4** A discussion; RAP: *He never said get those Panthers out all through the whole set (1960s+ Black)* **5** A narcotic dose of two Seconals™ and one amphetamine (1960s+ *Narcotics*) **6** A gang or subgang: *Mr Shakur was initiated into the Eight Trays, a "set" of the Crip gang based in his neighborhood (1990s+ Street gang)* [first noun sense in modern use since about 1925] **See** the BUBBLEGUM SET, the JET SET

setaside n: *Taking advantage of government setasides that are designed to benefit small businesses, those owned by women and minorities, and historically black colleges and universities and minority institutions (1990s+)*

set someone back v phr *To cost: How much will it set me back if I order a plain steak?/ set us back what was then an astonishing \$18 a person (1900+)*

set in concrete See NOT CARVED IN STONE

set of pipes See PIPES

set of threads (or drapes) n phr *A suit of clothing, esp a new and stylish one: the smart set of threads (1926+)*

set of wheels n phr *A car: if you're feverish for a great set of wheels (1940s+)*

set someone over v phr To kill; murder; RUB OUT: *They have to set a guy over (1920s + Underworld)*

set someone or something straight v phr To determine or specify the truth: *Let me set you straight on that allegation/ I've come to set the whole thing straight (1849 +)*

settle v To imprison, esp for a life sentence: *Foley was "pinched" and "settled" in San Quentin (1899 +)*

settle (or fix) someone's hash v phr 1 To injure or ruin someone definitively; FINISH, COOK someone's GOOSE: *I'll check you out after I settle his hash 2* To deflate; humiliate; defeat; FIX someone's WAGON [1803 + British universities & schools; origin unknown; semantically related to such similar and ironic expressions as *clean someone's clock*, *cook someone's goose*, and *fix someone's wagon*]

set-to n A contention; fight; bout: *Another venomous set-to among the politicians (1743 + Boxing)*

setup n 1 A person who is easily duped, tricked, etc; PATSY, SUCKER: *a set-up, a tout's dream come true (1926 +)* **2** A one-day jail sentence (1920s + Underworld) **3** A glass, ice, soda, etc, to be mixed with liquor: *They supplied the set-ups (1930 +)* **4** Dishes, utensils, etc, constituting a place setting for a meal (1934 + *Lunch counter & restaurant*) **5** Arrangement; organization; situation; mode of operation: *except its size and its co-op set-up (1890 +)* **6** A house, office, apartment, etc: *He has a very comfy setup in a rehabbed brownstone (1940s +)* [most senses apparently fr the *setting up* of billiard or pool balls to ensure a special or a trick shot]

set up¹ *adj* Gratified; elated; braced: *He looks real set up now that they've published his book* (1930+)

set up² *v phr* To arrange; prepare for: *set up a meet with the crook* (1865+)

set someone up *v phr* **1** To prepare and maneuver someone for swindling, tricking, etc; BUILD: *He was so vain it was easy to set him up* (1875+) **2** To gratify and encourage; brace: *Finishing first for a change really set me up* (1526+) **3** To treat someone; provide food or drink (1880+)

set-up pitcher *n phr* A relief pitcher who usually works fairly late in the game and prepares the situation for another relief pitcher known as a “closer” (1980s+ *Baseball*)

Seventh Avenue *n phr* The garment and fashion industry; the RAG TRADE [1960s+; fr the fact that New York City's *Seventh Avenue* is the traditional center of the garment industry]

seven-year itch *n* A time of serious dissatisfaction in a relationship or marriage, purportedly after the seventh year

sewer *n* A vein or artery: *if I had put it right in the sewer instead of skin popping* (1960s+ *Narcotics*)

sewermouth *n* A person who uses a lot of foul language

sew something up *v phr* **1** To finish; put the finishing touches on: *They sewed up the contract today* (1904+) **2** To ensure a victory; make a conclusive score, stroke, etc; CLINCH, ICE: *The last-period goal sewed it up for the Drew Rangers* (1960+)

sex *See* UNISEX

sex bomb *n phr* A sensationally sexy person, esp a woman (1962 +)

sexcapade *n* A sexual escapade (1965 +)

sexed up *adj phr* **1** Made sexually more attractive; made more attractive or interesting **2** Sexually aroused

sex goddess *n phr* A woman, usu a movie star, who is a provocative and famous sexual object (1970s +)

sex someone in *v phr* To initiate a woman into a gang by enjoying her sexually: *Given the choice of being “beat in” or “sexed in” she chooses the former but insists that both are merely ways of showing “love” (1990s + Street gang)*

sex job *n phr* A sexually attractive, provocative, or available person (1940s +)

sex kitten (or **bunny** or **doll**) *n phr* A young woman who is highly attractive, provocative, and seemingly available sexually (*entry form 1958 +, variants 1970s +*)

sexpert *n* A sex expert, esp a therapist who treats persons complaining of sexual dysfunction: *The behavioristic sexpert would call this situation homosexuality (1924 +)*

sexploitation modifier: a camp sexploitation horror musical *n*
Commercial exploitation of sex: *Female chauvinist sexploitation will reach a new level (1940s +)*

sexpot *n* A person, esp a woman, who is especially attractive and provocative sexually: *How pitiful the American who cannot command*

the smile of a sexpot (1954 +)

sex up v phr To make more sexy (1942 +)

sex wagon n phr PIMPMOBILE (1970s +)

sexy adj Very appealing; exciting; desirable; stimulating: *Acid rain is politically sexy, but it hasn't half the allure of jobs (1970 +)*

-sey See -IE

sez (or sezz) you See SAYS YOU

shack n 1 The caboose of a freight train (1899+ *Railroad, hoboes & circus*) **2** A railroad brake operator, who rode in the caboose (1899+ *Railroad, hoboes & circus*) **3** SHACK JOB (1940s +) **v** SHACK UP (1940s +) [fr *shack*, "hut, shanty," found by 1878, probably fr earlier *shackle* fr American Spanish *jacal* fr Aztec *xacalli*]

◁**shack job**▷ **n phr** A woman one lives with adulterously; common-law wife; mistress: *This was an early shack-job, not the girl mentioned above (WWII Army)*

shack man (or rat) n phr A man who lives with or does the sex act with a woman who is not his wife; a man who keeps a mistress (WWII Army)

shack up v phr 1 To live with, do the sex act with, and support a woman who is not one's wife; keep a mistress: *The medicine man had shacked up with a half-breed cook/ When I was 13 I shacked up with a Puerto Rican chick of 38 (1935 +)* **2** To do the sex act; esp, to lead a promiscuous sex life; SLEEP AROUND: *If you drink and shack up with strangers you get old at thirty (1940s +)* **3** To live; reside, esp in

a nonpermanent place: *got rid of his home and shacked up in a hotel* (1950+)

shade *n* ◀1▶ A black person (1865+) 2 A receiver of stolen goods; FENCE: *It is sold to a “fence” or “shade”* (1925+ *Underworld*) **v** To defeat by a narrow margin: *Michigan shaded Iowa. The final score was 98 to 96* (1865+)

shades *n* Sunglasses (1950s+ *Bop musicians*)

shadow *n*: *They put a shadow on the suspect* **v** To follow a person secretly; do physical surveillance; TAIL (1872+) [verb sense found by 1602 in an isolated instance]

shaft **v** To treat unfairly or cruelly; victimize: *When do you shaft a pal, when do you hand him the poison cup?/ The oil companies you leased the land to shafted you out of an estimated \$650 million* [1950s+; fr the notion of sodomizing a victim]

shaft, the, or a **shafting** *n phr* Unfair or cruel treatment: *Jamaicans have learned from past experience to expect the shaft from foreign journalists* (1950s+) **See** GET THE SHAFT, GIVE SOMEONE THE SHAFT

shafted *modifier* Screwed over; cheated: *shafted again by the same airline*

shag *adj* 1 With a date or escort: *Did you go to the party stag or shag?* (1940s+) 2 Excellent; wonderful (1950s+ *Teenagers*) **n** 1 A party or session where boys and girls experiment sexually (1930s+ *Teenagers*) 2 A person's date or escort; DRAG: *He didn't have a shag for the prom* (1950s+) **v** 1 To do the sex act; BOFF, SCREW (1788+) 2 To depart; leave, esp quickly; SHAG ASS: *You'd best shag now* (1851+) 3

To chase: *I was allowed to “shag” foul balls/ shagging rabbits*
(1912 +) **4** To tease and harass; HASSLE, HOUND (1930s + *Teenagers*)
[origin unknown; perhaps fr *shake* by way of *shack*] **See** GANG BANG

◁**shag ass**▷ **v phr** To depart; leave, esp hurriedly; HAUL ASS, SCRAM
(1940s +)

shagger n A person who follows another secretly; SHADOW, TAIL
[1940s +; fr *shag*, “chase”]

shake n 1 RENT PARTY: *charge a few coins and have a shake* (1940s +) **2** A moment; SEC: *Be ready in two shakes* (1839 +) **3** Blackmail or extortion; SHAKEDOWN: *This isn’t any kind of a shake* (1930 +) **4:** *We’d better give the entire house a shake; I know it’s here somewhere* **v 1** To come to an agreement; shake hands: *Let’s shake and call it done* (1873 +) **2:** *tried to shake one of the big boys* (1930 +) **3** To search a person or place thoroughly; SHAKE DOWN (1960s +) **4** GIVE someone THE SHAKE (1883 +) **See** a FAIR SHAKE, HALF A SHAKE, ON THE SHAKE, SKIN-SEARCH, TWO SHAKES

shake a leg v phr To hurry; speed up (1904 +)

shake and bake v phr To go very fast: *But we gotta shake and bake through Pennsylvania, down 95, and you can’t make time back here/ Roffe-Steinrotter, first among 56 skiers in a giant slalom course, told herself “whoever shakes and bakes the best is going to get the gold”*
[1990s +; fr the trademark name of a brand of prebaking crumb coating for meats, used by putting the meat and the coating into a bag and shaking; probably referring to the quickness of the operation]

shake a wicked calf v phr (Variations: **mean** may replace **wicked**;

hoof or leg may replace **calf**) To dance well, impressively, or joyfully: *Phoebe and I are going to shake a wicked calf* (1920 +)

shakedown *n* **1** A night's lodging; an impromptu bed: *I'll get a shakedown on the couch* (1730 +) **2** An instance of or a demand for blackmail, extortion, etc; victimization by the protection racket: *Listen, I know this is a shakedown* (1902 + *Underworld*) **3** A thorough search of a person or place; SHAKE: *We gave the room a first-class shakedown* (1914 +) **4** A trying-out or first tentative use, esp of a machine, ship, process, etc: *Let's give this new idea a shakedown and see if it works* (1930s +) [final sense fr *shakedown cruise*; all senses fr the notion of a vigorous *shaking* of a person or place to reveal something hidden, a flaw, etc]

shake down *v phr* **1** To blackmail or extort; demand protection money: *shaking down poor peddlers, newsboys* (1872 +) **2** To search a person or place thoroughly; SHAKE: *a couple of policemen to shake down the neighborhood* (1915 +)

shakedown cruise *n phr* A cruise or sea trial for a new or a newly repaired ship (1927 + *Navy*)

shake in one's shoes *v phr* To be terrified; fear greatly: *The mere thought has me shaking in my shoes* (1818 +)

shake it or shake it up *v phr* To hurry; SHAKE A LEG: *We've got to shake it* (1871 +)

shakeout *n* A business upheaval, esp a reduction in the number of competitors in a field; a spate of failures and bankruptcies: *The central event was a major shakeout and contraction of the Eurodollar*

market/ The recorded-music business is going through a significant shakeout (1895 +)

shake out *v phr* To develop; come to fruition; eventuate; COME OUT:
Let's just wait and see how it shakes out (1990s +)

shaker *See* BONE-SHAKER

shakes, the *n phr* An attack of trembling, esp one due to alcoholism or drug abuse; the CLANKS (1837 +)

shake one's tree *v phr* To engage and please one; TURN someone ON: *I have no problem with prostitution. If it shakes your tree, go for it (1980s +)*

shake-up *n* The reorganization of a working group, its methods, etc, usu including some dismissals: *The remedy is a shake-up in the Bureau of the Budget (1899 +)*

shaking *See* WHAT'S SHAKING

shaky cam *n* A realistic, lower-quality camera effect used originally in advertisements and documentaries to simulate a sense of urgency or excitement: *shaky cam on "NYPD Blue"*

shalump *See* SCHLOOMP

shame *See* a DIRTY SHAME

shamus (SHAH məs, SHAY-) (also **shammus** or **shamos** or **shommus**) *n* 1 A police officer, private detective, security guard, etc; COP: *a British-accented burlesque of the tough American shamus/ Soon a character began to develop: a shamus named Marlowe (1925 +)* 2 A police informer; STOOL PIGEON (1940s +) [fr Yiddish,

“sexton of a synagogue,” fr Hebrew *shamash*, “servant”; perhaps influenced by the Celtic name *Seamus*, “James,” as a typical name of an Irish police officer]

shanghai *v* To put someone into an awkward situation by trickery; to force someone into a situation (1871 +)

Shangri La *n phr* An ideal place of leisure and secure remoteness; an earthly paradise [1930s +; fr the fictional Himalayan country in James Hilton’s 1933 novel *Lost Horizon*]

shank *n* 1 A stiletto-like weapon: *We’d yoke him with a shank/ looks like a large screwdriver and is known in prison parlance as a shank* (1950s + *Prison & street gang*) 2 The end or last part of a period of time, esp of the evening • Also interpreted as the early or chief part of a period of time: *Let’s have one for the road, my friends; it’s the shank of the evening* (1828 +) *v* 1 To stab: *that dude the dicks want for shanking his old lady* 2 To kick: *is shanking punts all over the lot* (1970s + *Football*) [all senses reflect the basic notion of something long and thin, like a leg bone]

shank it *v phr* To walk; hike (1862 +)

shanty *n* 1 A rickety hut; a hovel; a shack (1820 +) 2 A caboose (*Railroad*) [origin uncertain; perhaps fr Irish *sean-tig*, “old house”; perhaps fr Canadian French *chantier*, although this is more probably a borrowing of *shanty*]

shantytown *n* 1 A poor, dilapidated neighborhood 2 A cluster of makeshift dwellings, often on the edge of a town and inhabited by the vagrant or the very poor; HOOVERVILLE (1876 +)

shape *n* Condition; state of fitness: *I have to find out what shape they're in* (1865 +) **See** BENT OUT OF SHAPE

shape up *v phr* **1** To progress; go along: *How are your plans shaping up?* (1865 +) **2** (also **shape up or ship out**) To correct one's behavior; conform and perform • Often a firm command or admonition: *From this day on you're going to shape up or ship out. Is that understood?* (WWII armed forces, but 1938 +)

shape someone up *v phr* To cause someone to conform and perform; correct someone's behavior: *praying for a good depression that could shape these kids up* (WWII armed forces)

shark *n* **1** A confidence man or swindler; HUSTLER, SHARP (1599 +) **2** A very able student, esp one who does not seem to work hard (1895 + *Students*) **3** An expert, esp a somewhat exploitive or unscrupulous one • Usually preceded by a modifier showing the field of skill: *the gun-shark's report* (1920s +) **4** A lawyer (1806 +) [all senses fr the predaceous fish, except that the oldest sense may originally have been fr German *schurke*, "rascal"] **See** CARDSHARP, LOAN SHARK

shark-bait *n* A lone or daring swimmer far from the shoreline (1920 +)

sharp *adj* **1** Stylish; of the latest and most sophisticated sort: *He wore bow ties and sharp suits* (1940 + *Jive talk*) **2** Good; excellent; admirable; COOL: *I sound like everything was sharp* (1940 + *Jive talk*) **n** **1** An expert, esp at card games; PRO: *Hurstwood's a regular sharp* (1840 +) **2** (also **sharper**) A confidence trickster; a swindler, esp a dishonest card player; CARDSHARP (1688 +)

sharp as a tack *adj phr* Very intelligent and perceptive (1922+) *modifier: Becker is a Hollywood type: a driven, sharp-as-a-tack intelligence devoted to a completely second-rate subject [sharp as tacks is found by 1912]*

sharpie *modifier: an incredible sharpie opulence of leather pockets and hand-wrought belt loops* **n 1** A devotee of swing music, esp one who dances well to swing (1940s+ *Jive talk*) **2** A stylish dresser in the flashy modes: *and not just among the sharpies* (1925+ *Jazz musicians*) **3** A shrewd person watchful of his or her profit: *an open invitation for a sharpie to have the free use of a new car for 30 days* (1940s+) **4** A confidence trickster; a swindler; SHARP, SHARK: *They were outwitted by three “sharpies”* (1942+) **5** Something desirable; DOOZIE: *He got himself a new bike, a real sharpie* (1970+)

◁**shat on**▷ *v phr* Maltreated; victimized; SHAFTED: *Because women have been shat on for centuries* [1960s+; fr a humorous past-tense form of *shit*, found in the 1700s]

shatting on one's uppers *adj phr* Entirely out of money; BROKE: *She has to blow and she's shatting on her uppers* [1894+; fr *shat*, humorous past-tense form of *shit*, and *uppers*, “shoes so worn they have no soles”]

shave *v* To reduce: *They've shaved the estimate a little* (1898+)

shaved *adj 1* Drunk (1851+) **2** Having the ornamental and other nonfunctional parts removed; STRIPPED DOWN (1950s+ *Hot rodders*)

shave points or **shave** *v phr* or *v* To get a gambling or money advantage by failing to score as much as one could; fraudulently

lose a game: *Did they think I liked shaving the points? (1971 + Sports & gambling)*

shaver *See* LITTLE SHAVER

shavetail *n* A second lieutenant, esp a newly commissioned one [1891 + Army; perhaps fr an early 1800s sense, “unbroken Army mule”; perhaps also fr the fact that a newly commissioned officer might have shoulder straps made with material cut off the shirttail]

shaving *See* POINT-SHAVING

shay *See* GANG BANG

shazam (shə ZAM) *interj* An exclamation of triumphant and delighted announcement, emphasis, etc: *SHAZAM! He was up on the table/ Go ahead and say it, Shazam!, juice it up* [1940 +; fr the operative or command word of a magician, similar to *presto change-o*]

shebang, the (shə BANG, shee-) *n* Everything; the WHOLE SHEBANG: *You can have the shebang* [1869 +; fr *shebang*, “shanty, hut,” found by 1862, of obscure origin; perhaps fr an approximate pronunciation of French *char-à-banc*, “buslike wagon with many seats,” in which case the semantics of *the whole shebang* would depend upon the hiring of the whole vehicle rather than one or two seats]

◀**she can sit on my face anytime**▶ *sentence* She attracts me very powerfully in a basic sexual way (1970s +)

shed *See* WOODSHED

she-devil *n* A wicked and difficult woman; harridan; harpie: *Hell, I*

practically had the she-devil cornered (1840 +)

◁**shee-it**▷ (SHEE ət) **interj** SHIT [1960s +; humorous imitation of a drawled Southern pronunciation]

◀**sheeny or sheenie**▶ **adj**: *one of those Sheeny employment bureaus* **n**
1 A Jew **2** A pawnbroker, tailor, junkman, or member of another traditionally Jewish occupation [1816 +; origin unknown; perhaps fr non-Jewish hearing of Yiddish *miesse meshina*, a curse; perhaps fr Yiddish *shayn* or *sheen*, “beautiful,” because this is the way a merchant would praise his wares]

sheepskin **n** A college or university diploma [1804 +; fr the fact that diplomas were once made of *sheepskin*]

sheesh¹ **interj** An exclamation of disgust, frustration, etc: *Sheesh! I mean, really! You know?* [1970s +; a euphemism for *shit*]

sheesh² **n** Hashish (1960s + *Narcotics*)

sheet **n** **1** A newspaper: *Both morning sheets have written it up* (1749 +) **2** RAP SHEET: *He’s a con man with a sheet as long as your arm* (*Police*) **See** DOPE SHEET, POOP SHEET, RAP SHEET, SCRATCH SHEET, SWINDLE SHEET, THREE SHEETS TO THE WIND

sheik (SHEEK) **n** A handsome, sleek, romantic male lover; a ladies’ man **v** To attempt to captivate; charm; seduce: *Are you sheiking me, Ralph?* [1924 +; fr the 1921 movie *The Sheikh*, starring Rudolph Valentino]

sheisty **adj** Like a shyster; unscrupulous: *a sheisty thing to do*

sheive **See** SHIV

shekels (SHEK əls) **n** Money; wealth [1871 +; fr the Hebrew name of a unit of weight and money]

shelf *See* ON THE SHELF

shell v To pay; SHELL OUT: *to shell at least a buck* (1948 +) *See* HARD-SHELL

shellac or **shellack v** To defeat decisively; trounce; CLOBBER: *The Giants were shellacked again Monday* [1930 + Sports; perhaps fr the use of *shellac* as a finish]

shellacked adj Drunk: *One of the boys got beautifully shellacked* (1922 +)

shellacking n **1** A beating: *“Shellacking” and numerous other phrases are employed by the police as euphemisms* **2** A decisive defeat; a drubbing; an utter rout: *Should Black take a shellacking, the National Leaguers are in bad trouble* (1931 +)

shell game n phr A swindle; confidence game; SCAM: *I’m afraid this proposed merger looks like a shell game* [1890 +; fr a version of three-card monte played with a pea or other token under walnut shells]

shell out v phr To pay; put out; contribute; FORK OVER: *get ready to shell out again/ or shell out the enormous amounts of money it takes to market software* (1801 +)

shells *See* CLAM SHELLS

shemale or **shemale n** **1** A female (1854 +) **2** A tough woman or aggressive lesbian; BULLDYKE (1972 +) **n** **3** A passive male homosexual **4** A transvestite (1983 +)

shemozzle (also **shimozzle** or **shlamozzle** or **shlemozzle**) *n* A difficult and confused situation; an uproar; melee; MESS, RHUBARB: *It became clear that the whole shlamozzle, introns and exons, are transcribed into RNA (1899 +)* **v** To depart; POWDER, SCRAM (1903 +) [ultimately probably fr Yiddish *shlim mazel*, “rotten luck,” hence “a difficulty or misfortune,” and related to *shlemazel*]

shenanigan or **shenanigans** *n* A trick or bit of foolery; a mild cheat or deception [1855 +; origin unknown; perhaps fr Irish *sionnachuighim*, “play tricks, be foxy”]

Sherlock *n* A clever and perceptive person • Often sarcastic: *no shit, Sherlock*

sherm or **Sherman** *n* Phencyclidine, an animal tranquilizer smoked as a narcotic; ANGEL DUST, PCP (1960s + *Narcotics*) **v** To use phencyclidine: *He felt his heart bound, his stomach lunged, like the time he shermed at Venice Beach* [said to be a prison term for Sherman cigarettes soaked in phencyclidine]

Sherpa or **sherpa** *n* A high-ranking assistant of a head of state, esp one who makes the arrangements for a summit meeting: *high-level civil servants known in the diplomatic community as Sherpas* [1980 +; fr the Himalayan tribe that specializes in guiding and assisting mountain climbers to summits]

she-she *n* A young woman; CHICK [WWII armed forces; based on Pidgin English; the term originated in the Pacific area]

shet or **shed** *adj* Free of; unencumbered by: *There it was again: “risk.” I wondered if I’d ever be shed of it (1871 +)*

shield *n* A police officer's badge

shift *See* GRAVEYARD SHIFT, LOBSTER SHIFT, SWING SHIFT

shift (or move) into high gear *v phr* To begin to work at top speed; become serious: *although the Senate hearings are just shifting into high gear (1970+)*

shift the goal posts *v phr* To change the rules or conditions disingenuously in order to win (1970s+)

shikker or **shicker** *adj* Drunk: *We'll eat good, then we'll get shikker* [1898+ Australia & New Zealand; fr Yiddish fr Hebrew *shikkur*]

shill *n* **1** (also **shillaber**) An associate of an auctioneer, gambler, hawker, etc, who pretends to be a member of the audience and stimulates it to desired action: *The shill is innocuous-looking (1916+ Circus)* **2** A barker, hawker, advertising or public relations person, or anyone else whose job is to stimulate business; FLACK (1940s+) *v*: *That summer he shilled for a sidewalk hawker (1914+)* [origin unknown; perhaps, since it is a shortening of *shillaber*, ultimately fr *Shillibeer*, the name of an early 1800s British owner of a large bus company, the reference being to persons hired as decoys to sit in buses and attract passengers]

shilly-shally *v* To vacillate; be irresolute: *For god sake, stop shilly-shallying and make up your mind* [1782+; found by 1700 in form *shill I shall I*]

shim *n* A person not appreciative of rock and roll; CLYDE (1950s+ *Rock and roll*)

shimmy¹ *n* (also **shimmy shirt**) A woman's chemise: *to persuade the young matron to doff her wet shimmy* [1837 +; fr *chemise*]

shimmy² *n* **1** A very energetic vibrational dance and dancing style **2** A flick or flirting of the buttocks: *She calls to the owner, with a little shimmy* *v*: *I wish that I could shimmy like my sister Kate* (1918 +)

shimmy³ *n* Chemin de fer: a "shimmy" (*chemin de fer*) table (1960s + *Gambling*)

shimozzle *See* SHEMOZZLE

shindig *n* A party, reception, festival, etc, esp a noisy dancing party; CLAMBAKE [1871 +; probably fr *shin dig*, "a blow on the shin incurred while dancing," found by 1859; perhaps by folk etymology fr the older *shindy*]

shindy *n* An uproar; a confused struggle; DONNYBROOK [1821 + Nautical; origin unknown; perhaps fr Irish *sinteag*, "skip, caper"; perhaps fr *shinny*, the name of a rough hockeylike schoolboy game; perhaps fr Romany *chindi*, "a cut, a cutting up"]

shine *modifier* ◀**1**▶: *another shine killing* *n* ◀**1**▶ A black person (1908 +) **2** Bootleg whiskey; MOONSHINE: *non-blinding shine sold in fruit jars* (1929 +) *v* To reject; disregard; avoid; SKIP: *But I always end up shining the rad guys who like me* (1970s + *Teenagers*) [the racial sense may have originated among blacks, may refer to the glossiness of a very black skin, and hence may reflect the caste system based upon color; among white speakers, this sense was surely influenced by the fact that *most shoeshine* persons were black; the teenager sense has a black parallel, *shine on*, and the

origin may be the poetic notion that when one turns one's back on something, one is letting his "moon (that is, buttocks) *shine on*" it]

See MONKEY-SHINES, STICK IT, TAKE A SHINE TO someone or something, WHERE THE SUN DOESN'T SHINE

◀**shine box**▶ *n phr* A black bar, nightclub, etc (1940s +)

shine someone on v phr 1 To reject and ignore someone; abandon someone: *I gotta cut this maniac loose. I gotta shine him on* 2 To deceive someone; beguile; BAMBOOZLE, SCAM: *Don't shine me on, buddy boy. I've been yessed by the best* (1970s +) **See** SHINE

shiner n 1 A bruise near the eye; BLACK EYE, MOUSE: *a pip of a shiner* (1904 +) 2 A shiny table top or other mirrorlike surface a dealer can use to see the faces of the cards he deals (1909 + *Gambling*)

shine up to someone v phr To court and flatter someone; curry favor; SUCK UP TO someone (1891 +)

shingle n A signboard, esp one designating professional services: *He got him a shingle and started practice last year* (1847 +) **See** HANG UP one's SHINGLE, SHIT ON A SHINGLE

shinny or shinny up v To climb a rope, pole, wall, etc [1888 +; fr the use of *shins* and ankles in climbing a rope or pole]

Shinola See NO SHINOLA, NOT KNOW SHIT FROM SHINOLA

ship See PUMP SHIP, SHAPE UP

shirt See BET YOUR BOOTS, BOILED SHIRT, GIVE someone THE SHIRT OFF one's BACK, KEEP one's SHIRT ON, LOSE ONE'S SHIRT, SHIMMY, SKIVVY, STUFFED SHIRT

shirtsleeve adj Simple and unpretentious; down-to-earth: *Here's what*

that means in shirtsleeve English (1908 +)

shirrtail *adj* Impoverished; mean; paltry: *My brother and I had a pretty shirrtail existence as kids (1929 +)* *n* An editorial column: *The boss blurbed the story in his shirrtail (1944 + Newspaper office)* [both senses depend on the *shirrtail* being a short appendage to a shirt; the first sense derives fr the shortness, hence meagerness; the second fr the appendedness, the editor's personal addition]

shirty *adj* Angry; very upset; HUFFY, PISSED OFF • Chiefly British: *He was a little ashamed of himself for getting shirty with Ivar [1846 + ; said to be fr the dishevelment resulting when one is actively angry, since a verb variant was get someone's shirt out, found by 1859]*

◁**shit**▷ *interj* An exclamation of disbelief, disgust, disappointment, emphasis, etc: *Oh, shit, I missed the bus! (1920 +)* *modifier: as well as shit loans to companies like Massey-Ferguson and Turbo Resources n*
1 Feces; excrement; CRAP, POO (by 800s or earlier) **2** Nonsense; pretentious talk; bold and deceitful absurdities; BULLSHIT: *Neighborhood watch, public vigil, shit like that (1940s +)* **3** Offensive and contemptuous treatment; disrespect; insults: *She don't take no shit from nobody (1903 +)* **4** Anything of shoddy and inferior quality; pretentious and meretricious trash; CRAP, DRECK: *that ricegrinding piece of shit (1930 +)* **5** One's possessions; one's personal effects: *Get your shit, both of you are moving (1970s +)* **6** An obnoxious, disgusting, or contemptible person; a despicable wretch; PRICK, SHITHEEL (1508 +) **7** Heroin or marijuana; also, other drugs: *insisted on retaining the word "shit" as junkie slang for heroin (1940s + Narcotics)* **8** Nothing; the least quantity; DIDDLY: *of whom I*

hadn't seen shit/ Engine's froze up, frame's out of line, not worth shit (1922 +) **9** Misfortune; hardship; GRIEF: *If you can keep those fucking maggots quiet, you're not going to get any shit from us* (1937 +) **v 1**: *They diurnally shit, shave, and shower* (1308 +) **2** To lie; exaggerate; try to deceive: *"Don't shit me," said Dina/ "You're shitting me, baby," he said/ The sky's the limit, Wilson, I shit you not* (1934 +) **3** To respond powerfully, esp with alarm, anger, or panic; SHIT A BRICK: *He'll shit when we tell him about this* (1960s +) **See** ACT LIKE **one's** SHIT DOESN'T

STINK, ALL THAT KIND OF CRAP, BAD SHIT, BLAZES, BULLSHIT, CHICKEN SHIT, CLEAN UP **one's** ACT, CROCK, DIDDLY, DOES A BEAR SHIT IN THE WOODS, DOODLESHIT, EAT SHIT, FULL OF SHIT, GOOD SHIT, HAVE SHIT FOR BRAINS, HOLY COW, HORSESHIT, HOT SHIT, I'LL BE DAMNED, LIKE HELL, LIKE PIGS IN CLOVER, LIKE SHIT THROUGH A TIN HORN, NO SHIT, NOT GIVE A DAMN, NOT KNOW BEANS, NOT KNOW SHIT FROM SHINOLA, PIECE OF SHIT, PILE OF SHIT, SCARE THE SHIT OUT OF **someone**, SHOOT THE BULL, SHOVEL THE SHIT, TAKE A DUMP, TAKE SHIT, THINK **one's** SHIT DOESN'T STINK, TICKLE THE SHIT OUT OF **someone**, TOUGH SHIT, TREAT **someone** LIKE A DOORMAT

◁**shit a brick** (or **bricks**)▷ **v phr** To be very upset and angry; have an emotional crisis; SWEAT BULLETS: *At Cheri's, Mott was shitting a brick/ I had a few scenes where I was really shittin' bricks* (1961 +)

◁**shit-all**▷ **adj** Not any; none at all;: *Monica, we have shit-all evidence of what the killer looks like* [1970s + ; related to and perhaps derived from 1930s British *bugger-all* and *fuck-all* in the same sense, used as intensives and based on *not at all*; Dylan Thomas's mythical Welsh village *Llareggub* has a pseudo-Welsh name, which is *bugger-all* spelled backwards]

◁**shit a shitter**▷ **See** DON'T SHIT A SHITTER

◁**shitass**▷ **n 1** An insignificant, contemptible person; JERK, POOTBUTT **2** SHITHEEL **v** To behave like a despicable or contemptible person, esp

by betrayal of a duty or promise: *I don't want anybody shitassing out of it (1940s +)*

⟨**shitbag**⟩ *n* A completely despised, contemptible person or thing:
Outta my way, shitbag

⟨**shitbox**⟩ *n* A worthless, contemptible person: *Get your own candy, shitbox*

⟨**shit bullets**⟩ *See* SWEAT BULLETS

⟨**shitbum**⟩ *n* SHITHEEL: *Mooney was a shitbum (1980s +)*

⟨**shitcan**⟩ *v* To discard; throw away; abandon: *If it rained before he entered the tunnel, he would have toshitcan his plans/ I'd already kind of shitcanned the idea [1970s +; fr shitcan, "refuse can"]*

⟨**shit creek**⟩ *See* UP SHIT CREEK

⟨**shit doesn't stink, one's**⟩ *See* THINK ONE'S SHIT DOESN'T STINK

⟨**shiteater**⟩ *n* A contemptible person; DILDO, JERK, PECKERHEAD: *Those shiteaters accepted the deal. The Communist Party of Cuba was now demanding dues in dollars (1940s +)*

⟨**shiteating**⟩ *adj* Stupid; self-satisfied: *He has eased himself into a series of chuckling, expansive, shiteating parts (1960s +)*

⟨**shiteating (or turd-eating) grin**⟩ *n phr* An expression of smug satisfaction; a stupid gloating look: *Go ahead sit there with that shiteating grin on your face/ stood with them, a stupid turd-eating grin on my face (1960s +)*

⟨**shitfaced**⟩ *adj* Drunk: *We'd get totally shitfaced (1960s + Students)*

◁**shit fit**▷ **See** HAVE A SHIT FIT

◁**shit-for-brains**▷ **n** A very stupid person: *What's old Shit-for-brains trying to say? (1950s +)* **See** HAVE SHIT FOR BRAINS

◁**shit happens**▷ **sentence** Bad things come to pass in this sad world: *Another shrug. "Shit happens" (1980s +)*

◁**shithead or shitface**▷ **n** **1** A stupid, confused, and blundering person; **FUCK-UP**: *And you'll look like a shithead for backing him in the first place* **2** **SHITHEEL**: *And this shithead comes sneaking around asking questions (1940s +)*

◁**shitheel**▷ **n** A despicable person; a scoundrel and blackguard; **BASTARD, PRICK** [1935 +; probably an intensive form of *heel*; in a tradition of scorn for people who have excrement on their shoes, for example, *shit-shoe*, found by 1903, and *shitkicker*, by the 1960s]

◁**shit hits the fan, the**▷ **sentence** Trouble breaks out; a fearful crisis ensues; things turn nasty • Often part of a time clause beginning with when or then: *The shit is going to hit the fan, buddy/ The shit didn't hit the fan till this guy, Eddie Jaffe, takes the pad* [1930s +; fr the classical joke about the man who, finding no toilet, defecated into a hole in the floor; back downstairs, finding the barroom emptied of its celebrants, he inquired why, and was asked, "Where were you when the shit hit the fan?"]

◁**shithole**▷ **n** **1** The anus; **ASSHOLE, POOP CHUTE** (1903 +) **2** A disgusting place; **SHITHOUSE**: *You must move out of this shithole (1960s +)*

◁**shithook**▷ **n** **SHITHEEL** (1960s +)

◁**shit-hot**▷ **adj** Very effective; supremely confident: *The band was shit-hot last night* **n** An especially gifted and effective person; a notably successful person; BALL OF FIRE, HOT SHOT, WINNER: *The greatest of the greats, the makers of legends, the “shit-hots”* [1918 + ; fr *hot shit*]

◁**shithouse**▷ **n** **1** A toilet: *This ain't no shithouse, man* **2** A filthy, sloppy place; a shambles: *The kid's room was always a shithouse* (1795 +) **See** BUILT LIKE A BRICK SHITHOUSE

◁**shithouse full, a**▷ **n phr** A very large number or amount; OODLES: *He had to wade through a shithouse full of people to get here* (1960s +)

◁**shit in high cotton**▷ **v phr** To live well and opulently; enjoy prosperity, esp newly; EAT HIGH ON THE HOG, PISS ON ICE [1950s + ; fr the notion that well-grown *cotton* means wealth]

◁**shit (or go shit) in your hat**▷ **sentence** GO TO HELL, GO FUCK oneself: *It's unfair, but say so and people tell you to go shit in your hat* [1950s + ; the similar *shit in your teeth* is found by 1903]

◁**shitkicker or turd-kicker**▷ **adj** Rural; country; country and western: *the old shitkicker country guitarist* **n** **1** A farmer or other rural person; HICK, RUBE: *looked like he'd just come off the farm and was nothing but a Midwest shitkicker/ Why should she waste time with a turd-kicker like him* **2** A cowboy movie; HORSE OPERA (1966 +)

◁**shitkickers or shit stompers**▷ **n** or **n phr** Heavy boots such as farm, cowboy, or hiking boots: *I never see you in anything but those old shitkickers* (1960s +)

◁**shitkicking**▷ **adj** Rough and rural; crude; stupid: *It's down-home, shit-kickin', ball-scratchin' country/ gets to carry a piece and wear that*

shitkicking grin

◁**shitless**▷ **See** SCARED SHITLESS, SCARE **someone** SHITLESS

◁**shit (or crap) list**▷ **n phr** One's fancied or real list of persons who are hated, not trusted, to be avoided, etc: *You're going to be on Professor What's-Her-Face's shit list when she finds you (1942 +)*

◁**shitload, a (or shitpot)**▷ **n** A very large number or amount; a SHITHOUSE FULL: *They sure sell a shitload of them/ make a shitload of noise/ a whole shitpot of that stuff (1970s +)*

◁**shit money**▷ **v phr** To be extremely lucrative: *Well, he owns that bakery, which just shits money (1980s +)*

◁**shit on someone or something**▷ **interj** An exclamation of powerful disgust, contempt, rejection, etc: *Shit on his suggestions!*

◁**shit on a shingle**▷ **n phr** Creamed chipped beef on toast, or some similar delicacy (*WWII Army*)

◁**shit on wheels**▷ **n phr** HOT SHIT

◁**shit or get off the pot**▷ **modifier**: *It's shit-or-get-off-the-pot time sentence* (Variation: **piss** may replace **shit**) FISH OR CUT BAIT (1950s +)

◁**shit out of luck**▷ **adv phr** Having no chance of success; already too late for what one wants; very ill-starred; OUT OF LUCK, SOL: *I guess I'm shit out of luck on this one (WWI armed forces)*

◁**shit one's pants (or in one's pants)**▷ **v phr** (Variations: **drawers** may replace **pants**) To become frightened; be scared; panic: *Don't shit your pants, it's only the cat/ Michael was shitting in his drawers (1940s +)*

- ⟨**shits, the**⟩ **n phr** Diarrhea; the TROTS (1930+) **See** the GIS
- ⟨**shitsky**⟩ **interj** Oh, shit!: *Shitsky, the cops are coming* **n** A despicable person or thing: *ya little shitsky*
- ⟨**shitstick**⟩ **n** A contemptible, stupid person; SHITASS [1903+; the dated form is *shitsticks*]
- ⟨**shitstorm**⟩ **n** A very confused situation or affair; a crazy jumble: *an artist trying to turn the shitstorm of his life into music/ Nothing like a shit storm to improve his mood* [1970s+; perhaps modeled on *firestorm*]
- ⟨**shitsure**⟩ **adv** Very certainly; definitely: *Shitsure it's gonna be a rough winter* [probably modeled on *sure as shit*]
- ⟨**shitter**⟩ **n** A toilet: *Know where the movie of the week went? Right in the old shitter* (1960s+)
- ⟨**shit through a tin horn**⟩ **See** LIKE SHIT THROUGH A TIN HORN
- ⟨**shitty**⟩ **adj** **1** Mean; malicious; nasty: *accepted what he characterized as his "shitty offer"* **2** Tedious and unpleasant; futile; wearing: *a real shitty day* **3** Unwell; ill: *Ralph, I feel shitty tonight* (1920s+)
- ⟨**shitty-britches**⟩ **n** An infant or child; FOOTBUTT: *So what has little shitty-britches been up to?* [1930s+; *shit-brich*, a translation from Dutch, is found by 1648]
- ⟨**shitty (or shit) end of the stick, the**⟩ **See** GET THE SHITTY END OF THE STICK
- ⟨**shitwork**⟩ **modifier**: *something better than shitwork jobs* **n** Menial and tedious work; degrading routine work; scut work: *the boredom, the shitwork, the perpetual deadlines* (1960s+)

shiv (Variations: **chev** or **chib** or **chiv** or **chive** or **sheive** or **shive**) *n*
1 A knife, esp a clasp knife or similar weapon: *She gets this anonymous letter sticking the shiv in my back/ The big knife called the chib* 2 A razor; anything with a sharp cutting edge *v*: *being shivved by Johnny Mizzoo* [1912 +; fr Romany *chiv*, “blade,” by way of British underworld slang]

shlamozzle *See* SHEMOZZLE

shlang or **shlong** *See* SCHLONG

shlemiel *See* SCHLEMIEL

shlemozzle *See* SCHLEMAZEL, SHEMOZZLE

shlep *See* SCHLEP

shleppy *See* SCHLEPPY

shlock *See* SCHLOCK

shlocky *See* SCHLOCKY

shlontz *See* SCHLONTZ

shloomp or **shlump** *See* SCHLOOMP

shlub or **shlubbo** *See* ZHLUB

shlunk *v* To cover in a viscid and repellent way: *He dumped the bucket of slime and let it shlunk all over me* [1970s +; apparently a quasi-Yiddish echoism]

shmaltz *See* SCHMALTZ

shmaltzy *See* SCHMALTZY

shmatte *See* SCHMATTE

shmear or **shmeer** *See* SCHMEAR¹, the WHOLE SCHMEAR

shmeck or **shmack** *See* SCHMECK, SMACK

shmee *n* Heroin [1960s + Narcotics; perhaps a shortening of *shmeck*]

shmegeggy *See* SCHMEGEGGY

shmendrick *See* SCHMENDRICK

shmo or **shmoe** *See* SCHMO

shmooz *See* SCHMOOZ

shmotte *See* SCHMATTE

shmuck *See* SCHMUCK

shnook *See* SCHNOOK

shnorrer *See* SCHNORRER

shnozz *See* SCHNOZZ

shock jock *n phr* A radio entertainer who uses vulgar and sensational language: *The Federal Communications Commission is warning “shock jocks” that they will be fined if they broadcast indecent material during daylight hours (late 1980s +)*

shoe *See* GUMSHOE, WHITE SHOE

shoehorn *v* To insinuate by effort; force or fit in: *Attorney General Griffin Bell managed to shoehorn an energy pitch into a speech*

shoestring *adj* Tight; low-cost: *shoestring budget*

shoestring catch *n phr* A catch made near the ground, usu by an outfielder while running, stooping, and lunging (1912+ *Baseball*)

shommus *See* SHAMUS

sho-nuff *adv* Surely; certainly: *but Tip (a peaceful Nubian sho-nuff) settled his beef [1880 + ; presumed black pronunciation of sure enough]*

shoofly *n* A police officer, often in plainclothes, set to watch other police officers: *Fuck the shooflies. I never took a nickel from anybody [1877+ Police; fr a common admonition to a fly or other pest, popularized by a Dan Bryant minstrel song about 1870, and which, according to H L Mencken, “afflicted the American people for at least two years” as a catch phrase]*

shoo-in or **shoe-in** *modifier: to be a shoe-in candidate* **n** **1** A horse that wins a race by prearrangement (1928+ *Horse racing*) **2** A person, team, candidate, etc, certain to win; CINCH, SURE THING: *The big, powerful Trojans were the shoo-ins (1939 +) [shoe-in may simply be*

a misspelling, but it is probably based on a misunderstanding of the origin of the term; it is a sort of folk etymology]

shoo in v phr To cause a particular horse, esp an inferior one, to win a race [1908+ Horse racing; fr the notion that the beast, not caring to run and not needing to, can be shooed over the finish line and win]

shook up (also **shook** or **all shook** or **all shook up**) **adj phr** or **adj 1**
In a state of high excitement or extreme disturbance; very much upset: *So Woody kept his voice down, but he was all shook up* (entry form 1897+, first variant 1891+) **2** Very happy; exhilarated; HIGH: *I expected years in prison; they let me go free, boy was I shook up* (1950s+ Teenagers & rock and roll) [revived and popularized in 1950s by Elvis Presley]

shooper **See** SHUPER

shoot interj 1 An invitation to speak, explain, etc: *Just a minute. Okay. Shoot* (1915+) **2** A mild exclamation of disgust, disappointment, distress, etc • A euphemism for *shit*: *Shoot, it's just the whiskey* (late 1800s+) **n 1** A photographic or movie-making session: *It was not an easy shoot* (1970s+) **2** SHOOT THE BREEZE (1940s+)
v 1 To photograph, esp to make a movie: *They were shooting over in Jersey* (1890+) **2** SHOOT UP (1914+ Narcotics) <3> (also **shoot off**) To ejaculate semen; COME (1922+) **4** To play certain games: *watch the flamingos, shoot a little golf, grow a little garden* (1926+) [fourth verb sense by 1891 in the case of *craps*] **See** TURKEY-SHOOT

shoot someone a line v phr To boast; speak pretentiously; PUT ON AN ACT:

Don't trust that guy; he's always shooting you a line (1938+)

shoot (or fire) blanks v phr To do the sex act without causing pregnancy; suffer male infertility: *This guy was shooting blanks. This guy's wad's all dead*

shoot bricks v phr To throw the ball ineptly: *Especially the free throws. I mean, we were shooting some bricks out there tonight (1990s+ Basketball)*

shoot one's cookies v phr (Variations: **breakfast** or **dinner** or **lunch** or **supper** may replace **cookies**; **toss** or **lose** may replace **shoot**)
To vomit; BARF, RALPH: *If I'm any judge of color, you're going to shoot your cookies/ smelled like someone just tossed his cookies (entry form 1920s+)*

shoot someone down (or down in flames) v phr To defeat someone; thwart or ruin someone's efforts; BLOW SOMEONE OUT OF THE WATER:
Woody, who had been flying along, level and smooth, was shot down in flames (1940s+)

shoot-'em-up modifier: *an exaggerated reaction to the male-oriented "shoot-'em-up games"* **n** A movie or TV program with much gunplay and violence: *gambled for cigarettes, slurped Tang or watched shoot-'em-ups on TV (1953+)*

shooter See BEAVER-SHOOTER, HIP SHOOTER, PEASHOOTER, SIX-SHOOTER, SQUARE SHOOTER

shoot from the hip v phr To act or respond impulsively and aggressively; be recklessly impetuous; HAVE A SHORT FUSE: *A politician should seldom shoot from the hip [1970s+; fr the image of a gunfighter who fires his weapon without aiming, as just drawn*

from the holster]

shoot hoops v phr To play impromptu basketball; try for baskets:

The Boys shoot hoops and zip around on skateboards (1980s +)

shooting gallery n phr **1** A place where a narcotics user can get a dose or injection **2** A party or gathering where narcotics users take injections: *in a fellow musician's hotel room during a "shooting gallery" (dope party) (1950s + Narcotics)*

shooting iron n phr A firearm, esp a pistol (1775 +)

shooting match *See* the WHOLE SHOOTING MATCH

shooting war n phr HOT WAR (1941 +)

shoot oneself in the foot v phr To wound or injure oneself by ineptitude; attack wildly and hurt oneself: *Ted Turner has taken to shooting himself in the foot/ a situation, Vance writes, "where we were shooting ourselves in the foot" (1970s +)*

◁**shoot one's load**▷ **v phr** To ejaculate semen; have an orgasm; COME (1920s +)

shoot off one's mouth v phr (Variations: **bazoo** or **face** or **gab** or **yap** may replace **mouth**) To talk irresponsibly and inappropriately, esp to bluster and brag; TALK BIG: *You come busting in here and shoot off your bazoo at me (entry form 1864 +)*

shoot-out n **1** (also **shoot-up**) A gunfight: *the justly famous shoot-out between the Earps and the Clantons in the O-K Corral/ The shoot-up may have been a skirmish between Mafia factions (1950s +)* **2** Any fight or violent confrontation; a hotly contested game or issue: *the*

simple corporate shoot-out reported by the newspapers/ another sociological shoot-out, with men as the heroes this time (1970s+) **3** A form of tiebreaker used in the North American Soccer League, in which five players from each team have five seconds each to attempt goals one-on-one against the goalkeeper (1978+ Soccer) **4** An invitational basketball tournament (1990s+ Basketball)

shoot the breeze (or the fat) v phr To chat amiably and casually; CHEW THE FAT: *making transatlantic calls just to shoot the breeze/ enjoying ourselves and shooting the breeze/ sit down on a bench and shoot the fat (1941+)*

◁**shoot the bull (or crap or shit)**▷ **v phr 1** To lie and exaggerate; talk grandly but emptily; BULLSHIT: *And they weren't just shooting the crap* **2** To chat amiably; SHOOT THE BREEZE: *stand on a corner, shoot the bull/ The basketball guys shoot the shit during timeouts (1928+)*

shoot the lights out v phr To excel; perform superbly: *These kids will jump right up and shoot the lights out on you/ He shoots the lights out in physics, calculus, biology [1970s+ Sports; perhaps fr the accuracy of marksmanship implied if one is to hit a small target like a lightbulb; certainly influenced by the notion of knocking the daylight, or earlier the liver and lights, "liver and lungs, innards," out of someone or something]*

shoot the works v phr To act, give, spend, etc, without limit; GO FOR BROKE: *In whatever pertains to comfort, shoot the works [1922+; fr the shooting of dice in craps, with its extended sense of betting or gambling all one has]*

shoot-up *n* A narcotics injection (1920s + *Narcotics*) **See** SHOOT-OUT

shoot up *v phr* To take an injection of narcotics; JAB A VEIN, MAINLINE
(1920s + *Narcotics*)

shoot one's wad *v phr* **1** To commit or bet everything one has; GO FOR BROKE, SHOOT THE WORKS **2** To say everything one can on a subject; have one's say **3** To exhaust one's resources; be unable to persist <4>
SHOOT one's LOAD [1914 + ; fr the *wad* of cloth formerly stuffed into a gun barrel to keep the shot and powder in place]

shop *v* To sell; promote; merchandise: *Sid says I need a lawyer to shop me to the non-paying media/ Jacoby has shopped this event around since the day he got here (1980s +)* **See** BUCKET SHOP, CHOP SHOP, GUZZLE SHOP, HEAD SHOP, HOCKSHOP, JUNK SHOP, SCHLOCK SHOP, SMOKE SHOP

shopaholic *n* A person addicted to shopping: *He accuses me of being a shopaholic. I admit that sometimes I spend more than I should (1990s +)*

shop around *v phr* **1** To search for something or someone: *I heard he was shopping around for a new Secretary of the Interior* **2** To compare prices, services, etc: *I really wish I had more time to shop around before buying that yacht (1922 +)*

shopping bag lady **See** BAG LADY

shopping list **See** LAUNDRY LIST

short *n* **1** A prisoner, soldier, etc, near the end of his term (1925 +) **2** A car; WHEELS (1932 +) **3** A small drink, esp of hard liquor, or small potent beer *v* **1** To inhale a narcotic in crystal or powder form; SNORT (1960s + *Narcotics*) **2** To give someone less of something than

what was agreed upon: *shorted her on fortune cookies* [automobile sense apparently fr *hot short*, “a stolen car,” *short* having come to mean “streetcar” and then “car”; *streetcar* because its runs were *short* compared with those of a train]

short-change artist *n phr* A ticket seller skillful at returning less change than is due (1940s + *Circus & carnival*)

short dog *n phr* A bottle of cheap wine: *staggering down Broadway sucking on a short dog* (1960s +)

short end of the stick *See* GET THE SHITTY END OF THE STICK

short eyes *n phr* A sexual molester of children: *end up in the punk tank with the free-world queers and the short eyes* (1970s + *Prison*)

short fuse *See* HAVE A SHORT FUSE

short hairs *See* HAVE SOMEONE BY THE SHORT HAIRS

short heist *n phr* Petty theft, shoplifting, purse-snatching, etc (1970s + *Underworld*)

short on modifier Having less than desirable (1922 +)

short one, a *n phr* A single shot of whiskey, often drunk quickly; a small drink (1859 +)

shorts, the *n phr* Lack of money; a shortage of funds: *He is troubled with the shorts with regard to dough* (1932 +)

short-sheet *v* To play a nasty trick; maltreat: *headed for big things until the Reagan crowd short-sheeted you/ England's favorite recreational activity, short-sheeting the royals* [fr a student and

barracks practical joke in which a *bedsheet* is folded in half and made to appear as an upper and lower sheet, so when the victim gets into bed the stretching legs and toes are painfully arrested]

shortstop *v* **1** To take food being passed to someone else at the table
2 To wait on another salesperson's customer (1940s +)

short strokes, the *v phr* The detailed end of a process: *a book tells you all about that thing, gets into all the short strokes* [1980s + ; origin uncertain; perhaps the opposite of *broad strokes, broad brush*; perhaps a reference to the percussive end of the male orgasm, described in one source in 1916 as *the short jerks*]

shorty or **shortie** *n* A very short person; DUSTY BUTT (1888 +)

shot *adj* **1** Drunk (1864 +) **2** (also **shot to hell**) Worn out or out of repair: *This old machine is shot* (1930 +) **3** Exhausted; ill; in bad shape: *Say, am I shot?* (1939 +) *n* **1** A drink of straight liquor (1676 +) **2** A glass or other serving of Coca-Cola™ (1950s + *Southern & Western lunch counter*) **3** An injection of narcotics; FIX (1920s + *Narcotics*) **4** An atomic explosion, a rocket or missile launching, or some other complex sort of military and technological blasting (1950s +) **5** A person's particular preference, style, etc; BAG, THING: *That's our shot. That's who we are* (1960s +) **6** A try; an attempt, esp at something rather difficult: *He didn't make it, but he gave it a hell of a shot* (1840 +) **7** A very hard-hit ball, usu a line drive, and often a home run (1880 + *Baseball*) **8** A television appearance: *But it was the exposure on television that seemed to count most ... with a shot on "Good Morning America" believed to be worth its weight in votes* (1980s +) **9** Interpretation; understanding;

opinion; guess; TAKE: *Gimme your shot on Leon. You know, tell me about him (1980s +)* [the drinking senses are shortenings of an early 1800s expression *shot in the neck*, meaning both “a drink” and “drunk”; *shoot*, “to guess,” is found by 1864] **See** BEAVER SHOT, CALL THE SHOTS, CHEAP SHOT, DROP CASE, GIVE **something** A SHOT, GIVE **something one’s** BEST SHOT, GRAB SHOT, HALF-SHOT, HAVE A CRACK AT **something**, HOT SHOT, LONG SHOT, MUG SHOT, NOT BY A LONG SHOT, ONE-SHOT

shot across the bow, a *n phr* A warning or admonition: *White House dithering led the Republican whip to fire a warning shot across the Administration’s bow* [1990s +; fr an old naval practice]

shotgun¹ *interj* I am going to ride in the front passenger seat!: *yelled Shotgun for the test drive* **modifier** (also **blunderbuss**) Very diffuse and general; indiscriminate; done in haste; SCATTERGUN: *I hate it when the administrators make shotgun accusations/ But this is a blunderbuss technique (1930s +)* **n 1** A machine gun or other rapid-fire gun (WWII Army) **2** A type of pipe used for smoking marijuana; BONG (1960s + Narcotics) **3** An offensive formation in which the quarterback lines up well behind instead of immediately behind the center (1966 + Football) **See** RIDE SHOTGUN, SIT SHOTGUN

shotgun² **n** A matchmaker; a marriage broker [1950s +; fr Yiddish *shadchen*, which is pronounced something like *shotgun*; perhaps reinforced by the notion of a *shotgun wedding*]

shotgun approach *n phr* A very broad and indiscriminating judgment or action: *It’s no good taking a shotgun approach to this matter of addiction* [1960s +; similarly, *shotgun prescription* is found by 1903]

shotgun house *n phr* A house of connected rooms without a corridor: *He grew up in a tarpaper “shotgun” house, built on tree stumps (1930s +)*

shotgun quiz *See* POP QUIZ

shotgun wedding (or marriage) *n phr* A wedding under duress, esp when the bride is pregnant; a forced marriage; MILITARY WEDDING (1927 +)

shot in the arm, a *n phr* Something that stimulates and enlivens; an invigorating influence or event: *has given his campaign for the Democratic presidential nomination a shot in the arm (1922 +)*

shot in the dark *n* A wild guess or try; an attempt that has little chance of success

shoulda coulda woulda *sentence* One ought to have and would have done something • An expression of regret: *“Shoulda, coulda, woulda,” the First Lady replied. “We didn’t” (1970s +)*

shoulder *See* COLD SHOULDER, STRAIGHT FROM THE SHOULDER

shoulder surfer *n phr* A person who peers over the shoulder of someone using an automatic teller machine in order to steal a PIN (personal identification number) (1990s +)

should have stood in bed, one *sentence* This has been a complete disaster or a waste of time, and one should not have bothered to get up in the morning (1940s +)

shouldn’t happen to a dog *See* IT SHOULDN’T HAPPEN TO A DOG

shout *n 1* A hymn or traditional blues song, esp when sung with a

heavily accented beat (1930s + Jazz musicians) 2 An exclamation point (1950s + Print shop) 3 A call, esp on the telephone: *Stradazzi wants you to give him a shout* (1980s +) [in the musical sense, *shout*, “a black religious song and dance,” is found by 1862]

shout-out *n* A mentioning of a person verbally or in writing, esp to show respect; an acknowledgment given a person during a radio or television show: *The Beatles gave a shout-out to their manager*

shove *v* 1 To pass counterfeit money (1850 +) 2 To kill; HIT: *Who shoved her?* (1940s + Underworld) 3 SHOVE OFF (1856 +) **See** KNOW WHAT ONE CAN DO WITH something, PUSH COMES TO SHOVE, TELL someone WHAT TO DO WITH something

shove it **See** STICK IT

◁**shovel shit** (or **the shit**)▷ *v phr* To lie and exaggerate; BULLSHIT, SHOOT THE BULL: *I was just fooling, shoveling the shit a little/ no varsity letters for shoveling shit* (1930s +)

shove off *v phr* 1 To leave; depart; SCRAM: *when we shoved off* (1844 +) 2 To kill; murder: *People got shoved off for their money* (1939 + Underworld) [fr the boating term for pushing the craft away from a dock, ship’s side, etc]

shover **See** PENCIL-PUSHER

show *v* To arrive; appear; SHOW UP: *You suppose he’ll show?* (1300 +)

See CATTLE SHOW, GRIND SHOW, KID SHOW, LET’S GET THE SHOW ON THE ROAD, NO-SHOW, ONE-MAN SHOW, PEEP SHOW

show-and-tell *n* An elaborate display, usu for selling or other persuasion; DOG AND PONY ACT: *There just hasn’t been time to arrange the*

kind of show-and-tell that attracts media attention/ No one seems to have been impressed by the show-and-tell [1970s + ; fr the name of an elementary-school teaching technique of the late 1940s where pupils exhibit and explain things]

show biz *n phr* The entertainment industry; show business (1940s +)

showboat *n* (also **showboater**): *even your most hardassed right wingers had some showboat in them/ Jesse is a showboater, privately* (1953 +) **v** **1** To behave in a showy, flamboyant way; GRANDSTAND, HOT DOG: *And, please, no showboating, fist-pounding, breast-beating, or blame-casting* (1951 +) **2** PULL RANK (1960s +)

show business *See* THAT'S SHOW BUSINESS

showdown *modifier*: *the opening game of the showdown Yankee--Red Sox series* **n** **1** A hand where the cards are dealt face up and the best hand wins at once (1901 + *Poker*) **2** A confrontation, esp a last one (1904 +)

shower *See* GOLDEN SHOWER, SEND someone TO THE SHOWERS

shower scum *n phr* A completely despised person: *shower scum down the street*

show-off *n* A person who habitually shows off; HOT DOG, SHOWBOAT: *Speedo swimsuit and a globe tied to his shoulder. Show-off*

show off *v phr* To behave in an ostentatiously skilled and assured way in order to impress others; GRANDSTAND, HOT DOG: *He ran a quick eight miles, just showing off* (1793 +)

show someone the door *v phr* To dismiss someone summarily; eject

someone (1778 +)

showtime, (it's) interj It is time to start (esp an exciting activity)

show up v phr To arrive; be present; appear: *I had to show up to make a touch* (1888 +)

show someone or something up v phr To reveal; expose: *That slip showed him up for a fraud* (1826 +)

shpos (SHPAHS) n An obnoxious patient [1970s + Medical; fr *subhuman piece of shit*]

shpritz n A bit or touch; a dose: *each a free-associational shpritz of surreal hi-de-ho* [1970s +; fr Yiddish, literally, "a squirt"]

shrapnel n A meager tip of coins

shriek n 1 An exclamation point; BANG, SHOUT (1864 + *Print shop*) **2** Distilled and concentrated heroin; BLACK TAR (mid-1980s +)

shrimp n A very short or small person; PEANUT (1386 +)

shrink n A psychiatrist, psychoanalyst, or other psychotherapist; HEADSHRINKER (1960 +)

shrinking violet n phr A self-effacing person: *Theodore Roosevelt was no shrinking violet* [1915 +; fr the presumed shyness of the violet]

shroom or 'shroom n 1 A hallucinogenic mushroom, *Psilocybe mexicana*: *Shroom seekers have bumper crop* (1980s + *Narcotics*) **2** Any mushrooms: *shrooms on the pizza*

shtarker or schtarker or starker (SHTAHR kə, -kər, or STAHR kər) **n** A strong person; TOUGH GUY: *I went from dealing with shtarkers to*

intellectual bullies [1908 + ; fr Yiddish]

shtick or **schtick** or **shtik** *n* **1** A small theatrical role or part of a role; a piece of theatrical “business”; BIT: *It turned out to be a nice little “shtick”* (1961 + *Show business*) **2** A characteristic trait of performance or behavior; a typical personal feature: *To each his own schtick. Chapman performs his with gusto* (1968 + *Show business*) **3** A clever device; GADGET, GIMMICK: *The “shtick” is that the taped remarks of a number of political figures are tacked onto questions dreamed up by writers* (1966 +) **4** One’s special area of interest or activity; BAG, SCENE: *Post-post literary theory is not my shtick* (1968 +) [fr Yiddish, literally, “piece, bit”]

shtoonk or **shtunk** *See* SCHTOONK

◁**shtup** or **schtup** or **stup**▷ (SHTOOP) *n* **1** A person regarded merely as a sex partner; ASS (1967 +) **2** The sex act; copulation *v* **1** To annoy; pressure (1952 +) **2** To do the sex act with or to; FUCK: *Why of course he was shtupping her* (1967 +) [fr Yiddish, literally, “push, shove”]

shuck modifier Deceptive; fake: *All he has to sell is a shuck and jive caricature of Blackness* *n* A theft or fraud; RIPOFF: *Linear thinking was a total shuck* (1950s + *Black*) *v* **1** To undress; strip oneself (1848 +) **2** (also **shuck and jive**) To joke; tease; FOOL AROUND: *Twenty-two percent of each trash-truck crew’s workday is spent shucking and jiving and shadowboxing/ We ain’t got no time for shuckin’* (1966 + *Black*) **3** (also **shuck and jive**) To swindle; cheat; deceive; esp to bluff verbally and counterfeit total sincerity (1959 + *Black & student*) **4** To improvise chords, esp to a piece of music one does not know;

FAKE IT, VAMP (1957+ *Cool musicians*) [black senses probably fr the fact that black slaves sang and shouted gleefully during *corn-shucking* season, and this behavior, along with lying and teasing, became a part of the protective and evasive behavior normally adopted toward white people in “traditional” race relations; the sense of “swindle” is perhaps related to the mid-1800s term *to be shucked out*, “be defeated, be denied victory,” which suggests that the notion of stripping someone as an ear of corn is stripped may be basic in the semantics]

shucks *See* AW SHUCKS

shuffle **v** 1 To have a gang fight; RUMBLE (1960s+ *Street gang*) 2 To behave in the stereotypical obsequious way of a black person in “traditional” race relations; TOM: *A lot of brothers and sisters died. So are we just going to shuffle and jive?* (1880+ *Black*) *See* DOUBLE SHUFFLE

shuffler **n** A confidence trickster, hawker, etc; GRIFTER [1950s+ Underworld; fr older *shuffle*, “deceive, defraud,” probably fr the shuffling of cards cheatingly by a professional gambler] *See* PAPER-PUSHER

shunt **n** An accident; a collision (1959+ *Car racing*)

shuper or **shooper** or **shupper** (SHŪŪ pər) **n** A large glass or stein for beer: *spent for “shupers” of beer* [1907+; perhaps fr German *Shuppe*, “scoop”]

shush **v** To tell someone to be quiet and stop talking • Very often a command: *“Shush!” he shouted, uselessly, to the large noisy hound* [1905+; the dated form is spelled *sush*]

shut down v phr To defeat; outdo; BEAT: *Gore shut down Perot in the debate/ We're gonna shut 'em down (1950s +)*

shut-eye n Sleep: *I'll give Betsy the first crack at some shut-eye (1899 +)*

shut one's face (or trap or mouth or head) v phr To stop talking; SHUT UP • Often an irritated command (1899 +)

shut it interj Enough! Remain silent: *Shut it; you know nothing (1886 +)*

shutout n A game in which one side is held scoreless (1940s + *Sports*)

shut out v phr To hold an opponent scoreless; BLANK, SCHNEIDER, SKUNK: *The last time Princeton was shut out, Penn did it (1881 + Sports)*

shutterbug n A photographer, esp an enthusiastic amateur: *Two of the more prominent Senate-shutterbugs are Sens. Patrick J Leahy and John C Danforth (1940 +)*

shut one's trap v phr SHUT one's FACE (1776 +)

shut up v phr To be quiet; stop talking • Very often a stern or angry command (1860 +)

shut someone's water off v phr To defeat or incapacitate someone: *Harry just shut his water right off (1940s +)*

◁**shvantz**▷ (SHVAHN^TS) **n** (also **schvantz** or **schvanz** or **schwantz** or **schwanz** or **schvontz** or **shvonce** or **shvuntz**) The penis; SCHLONG [1970s +; fr Yiddish, literally “tail”; hence semantically analogous with *penis*, literally “tail”] **See** STEP ON IT

◀shvartze or shvartzer▶ **See** SCHVARTZE

shy *n* A usu criminal usurer; LOAN SHARK, SHYLOCK: *a shy on East Houston who lent money/ I don't know who's got the markers. It's some shy (1970s +)*

shylock or **Shylock** *modifier*: *that were into them for shylock money and couldn't make the payments (1980s +)* *n* A usurer; LOAN SHARK, SHY: *In Toronto and Hamilton both, loan sharks ("shylocks") appeared in the gambling clubs (1786 +)* *v*: *the shylocking that went with it as hot dogs go with baseball/ numbers games, shylocking, and other illegal operations (1930 +)* [fr the character in Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice*]

shy of a load **See** THREE BRICKS SHY OF A LOAD

shyster *n* 1 A dishonest and contemptible lawyer, politician, or businessperson: *You lousy little shyster bastard (1844 +)* ◀2▶ Any lawyer [origin unknown and hotly disputed; perhaps fr the name of a Mr Sheuster, a New York City lawyer of the early 1800s; perhaps fr German *Scheisse*, "shit," or *Scheisser*, "shitter," by way of anglicized forms *shice* and *shicer* attested fr the mid-1800s, with the addition of the agentive suffix *-ster*; perhaps because prisoners were said and advised to *fight shy of*, "avoid," lawyers who frequented jails, esp the Tombs in New York City; perhaps fr earlier sense of *shy*, "disreputable, not quite honest," and *-ster*]

Siberian Express, the *n phr* A spell of very cold weather (1980s +)

sick *adj* 1 (also **sicko** or **sicksicksick**) Mentally twisted; psychopathic, esp in a sadistic vein: *a rapist or a sicko father who*

abuses his teenage daughters (1551 +) **2** Disgusted; surfeited; FED UP:
Sick to the gills of the Simpson trial? (1853 +) **3** (also **sicko** or
sicksicksick) Gruesome; morbid; mentally and spiritually
unhealthy: *Label it S for Sicko/ He is even better at establishing a
sicksicksick atmosphere* (1955 +) **4** Needing a dose of narcotics
(1940s + *Narcotics*) **n** The craving and misery of an addict in need
of a narcotic dose (1940s + *Narcotics*) [modern use of first sense
from about 1955 is probably not a survival]

sick him or **sic 'em** *sentence* Attack that person or animal • A
command [1845 +; fr a dialect pronunciation of *seek*]

sickie or **sicko** **n** A mentally unhealthy person; a psychopath: *It was
not considered very kosher to toss out the sickies once they had taken
their final vows/ Only sickies get involved with married women*
(1973 +)

sick joke **n phr** A joke with a grimly morbid tone or point; a nasty
sort of jape: *Wouldn't it be a sick joke if I got something without
understanding the financial underpinnings* (1959 +)

sick someone on someone or something **v phr** To incite someone
against someone or something: *They've decided to sick the voters on
the whole government* (1845 +) **See** SICK HIM

sick-out **n** A form of job action in which employees declare
themselves ill and unable to work; BLUE FLU (1970 +)

sickroom **adj** Unhealthy; repellent; SICK: *I have something to tell you.
It's kind of sickroom* (1970s +)

side **n 1** A sheet containing the lines and cues for one performer

(1933+ *Theater*) **2** A phonograph record (1936+) **3** The music on one side of a phonograph record, one band of a long-playing record, one segment of a cassette or other tape, etc • Usu plural: *He had never heard these classic sides until recently (1936+)* **See** ON THE SIDE, STATESIDE, SUNNY SIDE UP, TOPSIDE, **the** WRONG SIDE OF THE TRACKS

sidearms *n* Salt and pepper, cream and sugar, or other regular adjuncts to a meal (1925+ *Armed forces*)

sidebar *adj* Auxiliary; supplementary: *Now he has a sidebar job, hustling beer or sports equipment (1950s+)* **n 1** A news or feature story serving as a supplement or background to a main story: *Banner headlines and sidebar after sidebar flashed in front of our eyes/ the wandering sidebars and frivolous frolicking of the Post (1948+ News media)* **2** A conference held between lawyers and a judge unheard by the jury: *Some judges hold these meetings, known as sidebars, in the courtroom at the side of the bench away from the jury (1980s+ Courtroom)* [adjective and first noun senses probably fr the late 1800s use of *sidebar buggy* or *wagon* for a vehicle having longitudinal reinforcements along the *sides*; perhaps fr *sidebar*, “an auxiliary toll-gate on a road leading into a main toll-road”; second noun sense fr auxiliary *bars*, legal or courtroom sites and barriers, formerly found in the Scottish and English parliaments, and so noted by 1708]

sidekick *n 1* A close friend, partner, associate, etc: *Wayne and his sidekick James Arness (1906+)* **2** A side pocket (1916+ *Pickpockets*) [origin uncertain; *side-pal* in the first sense is found by 1886]

side of a barn, the *See* someone CAN'T HIT THE SIDE OF A BARN

side of one's face *See* LAUGH ON THE OTHER SIDE OF one's FACE

sider *See* PORTSIDER

sides of the street *See* WORK BOTH SIDES OF THE STREET

sideswipe *n* A critical observation, esp an oblique one: *took a sideswipe at "restrictive court decisions" [1924+; fr sideswipe, "a glancing blow," found by 1917]*

sidewalk hostess *n phr* A prostitute • An arch euphemism: *a leather miniskirt and black hose, you know, the typical accoutrements of the typical sidewalk hostess (1980s+)*

sidewalks *See* POUND THE PAVEMENTS

sidewalk superintendent *n phr* **1** A person who watches excavation or other construction work, usu through a hole in the surrounding fence **2** Any amateur critic or observer (1930s+)

sidewalk surfing *n phr* Skateboarding: *sidewalk surfing not allowed*

side-wheeler *n* **1** A left-handed pitcher; SOUTHPAW (1910+ Baseball) **2** (also **sidewinder**) A pacing horse; a pacer (1940s+ Horse racing) [fr the *side-wheel* steamboat]

sidewinder¹ *n* **1** A wide, looping blow with the fist; ROUNDHOUSE (1840+) **2** A tree that does not fall where it was intended to (1940s+ Loggers) [both senses literally from a *winding* at or to a *side*, and the second sense probably influenced by *sidewinder*²]

sidewinder² *n* **1** A dangerous and pugnacious man (1940s+) **2** A

gangster's bodyguard; GORILLA: *Eddy Prue, Mornny's sidewinder*
(1940s + *Underworld*) [fr the dangerous *sidewinder* rattlesnake, so
called fr its lateral locomotion, and presumed to be treacherous]

-sie *See* -IE

sieve *n* **1** A leaky boat or ship: *That frog-eating sieve* **2** One who
cannot keep a secret *See* HAVE A MIND LIKE A SIEVE

◁**siff** or **the siff**▷ *See* SYPH

sight gag *n phr* A joke or comic turn that depends entirely on what is
seen (1957 +)

sign *See* the HIGH SIGN

signify *v* To make provocative comments in a gamelike manner; SNAP,
SOUND: *any black kid who has stood in a school yard or on a street
corner engaging in the mock-hostile banter that blacks call "signifying"/
In Chicago you still get people doing the old-style rhyming; that's called
signifying* (1932 + *Black*)

sign off *v phr* To stop talking; SHUT UP [1928 + ; fr radio broadcasting,
"to end transmission and go off the air"]

sign off on something *v phr* To agree to or approve of a proposal, a
legislative bill, etc, esp without actual formal endorsement: *When
enough Senators had signed off on the treaty, the President announced
it* [1970s + ; *sign off* "to relinquish a right or claim," is found by
1859]

sign on *v phr* To agree to do: *signed on to teach part-time*

sign up *v phr* To join; enroll; enlist: *They signed up for a course in*

hands-on interpersonal relations (1903 +)

silent but deadly or **SBD** *n* A stinky but silent instance of flatulence:
SBDs from the kids

Silicon Valley *n phr* The Santa Clara Valley south of San Francisco in California: *smack in the middle of Silicon Valley* [1974 + ; fr the concentration of manufacturers of *silicon* chips for computers, watches, etc, in the Santa Clara Valley]

silk *n* A white person: *So did the silks on the Knapp Commission ever ask about the rate of drug busts? (1960s + Black)* **See** HIT THE SILK

silk-stocking *adj* Wealthy; affluent: *a silk-stocking neighborhood* (1812 +)

silly season *n phr* Any period when people do silly things, esp when these are reported in the news media [1861 + ; fr a term designating the months of August and September, when Parliament was not sitting and valid and useful news was scarce, and the newspapers resorted to reporting frivolities and trivialities]

silver *n* Money: *silver under the mattress*

silver (or magic) bullet *n phr* A very effective, quasi-magical agent, remedy, etc: *Stokovich looked on Kennedy as his “silver bullet,” his absolute best man/ No single silver bullet is going to do the job* [1808 + ; reflecting an ancient belief that silver weapons can conquer any foe, found, for example, in the Delphic Oracle’s advice to Philip of Macedon, “With silver weapons you may conquer the world”]

simmer down v phr To become calm and quiet, esp after anger; COOL IT, LIGHTEN UP • Often a command or a bit of advice (1871 +)

simoleon or samoleon (sɪh MOH lee ən) **n** A dollar [1895 +; origin unknown; found in form *sambolio* by 1886]

Simon Legree n phr A cruel, unsympathetic person, esp a tyrannical superior; a slave driver [1849 +; fr the character in *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, somewhat unfairly]

simon-pure adj Genuine; unadulterated [1840 +; the name of a virtuous Quaker in Susanna Centlivre's 1717 play *A Bold Stroke for a Wife*]

simp n A simpleton; a stupid person; KLUTZ: *Simps with mustaches are a menace to society/ I really thought it would be till death do us part. I was such a simp* (1903 +)

simpatico adj Nice; pleasant; sympathetic and congenial **n** Sympathy; affinity: *Alan Keyes has as much simpatico with the Christian right as I do* [1864 +; fr Italian or Spanish]

simple See STIR-CRAZY

since the year one adv phr For a very long time: *They've known each other since the year one/ This is Mozab. I've known him since the Year One* (1970s +)

sin city n A city or region of a city with attractions that are sinful, such as gambling, prostitution, etc: *Las Vegas, the Sin City* (1973 +)

sing v To inform; incriminate oneself and others; SQUEAL: *Vice Prisoners Ready To Sing* [1710 + Underworld; perhaps related to the

expression *a little bird told me*; a variant, *chant*, is found by 1883]

See HEAR THE BIRDIES SING, **the** OPERA AIN'T OVER TILL THE FAT LADY SINGS

singer *n* CANARY, STOOL PIGEON (1935 + *Underworld*)

single *n* **1** A dollar bill (1936 +) **2** A person, esp a criminal, who works alone: *Dillinger now becomes a single* (1940s + *Underworld*) **3** A solo performer; a one-person act (1940s + *Show business*) **4** An unmarried person: *The place tried to attract singles* (1964 +) **5** A phonograph record having only one piece of music on each side: *The single sold about three million* (1949 +) **See** SWINGING SINGLE

single-o *adj* **1** Unmarried; single (1932 +) **2** Working alone; unpartnered: *There are "single-o" heist-men* (1930 + *Underworld*) **adv** Alone; solo: *instead of working single-o as was the custom* (1948 +) *n* A person, esp a criminal, who works alone; SINGLE (1930 + *Underworld*)

singles *modifier* For unmarried persons: *a singles bar/ a singles party* (1960s +)

sing out *v phr* **1** To speak up; make oneself known and heard; PIPE UP: *If anybody doesn't like it, just sing out* (1813 +) **2** To inform; SQUEAL: *and get him to sing out* (1815 +)

sink *v* To destroy; ruin; TORPEDO: *I'm afraid we're sunk this time* (1613 +)

sinker¹ *n* A biscuit or doughnut [1870 +; fr the lead weight used by fishermen to *sink* line and bait, probably an ironic reference to the weight of the biscuit or doughnut] **See** HOOK, LINE, AND SINKER

sinker² or **sinkerball** *n* **1** A pitch that dips downward as it nears home plate **2** A line drive or other batted ball that sinks suddenly toward the ground (1920s+ *Baseball*)

sink-or-swim *adj* Risky; succeed-or-be-ruined: *Playing cornerback in the National Football League, particularly for a young player, is a sink-or-swim proposition* (1668+)

sin tax *n phr* A tax on some activity or product regarded as immoral: *Then there are the always popular so-called sin taxes, which could be slapped on cigarettes and liquor* (1963+)

sis *n* **1** A sister: *That's his sis with him* (1656+) **2** Woman; girl; CHICK • Used in direct address: *What's up, sis?* (1835+) [a shortening of *sister*]

sissified *adj* Timorous; weak and effeminate; CHICK-ENHEARTED, PANSIFIED (1905+)

sissy *adj*: *wearing sissy clothes* (1891+) *n* **1** A timorous, weak, and effeminate male; DAISY, LILY, PANSY (1887+) **2** A male homosexual; PANSY: *No more sissies for Jimmy Smith* (1970s+) [fr *sis* fr *sister*]

sissy bar *n phr* A high metal projection at the back of a bicycle to prevent it from rolling over backwards [1969+; fr the fact that someone adopting such a device is timorous]

sister *n* **1** Woman; girl • Used in direct address: *Hey, sister, you'd better leave* (1906+) **2** A black woman (1926+ *Black*) **3** A fellow feminist (1912+) **See** SOB SISTER, WEAK SISTER

sister act *n phr* The sex act between a homosexual man and a

heterosexual woman (1972+ *Homosexuals*)

sit *v* To take care of; attend and watch over: *Who'll sit your house while you're gone?* (1945+) **See** BABY-SIT, HOUSE-SIT

sitcom *n* A situation comedy series on television: *the new family of sitcoms* (1964+)

sit-down *n* **1** A meal, usu a free one, eaten at a table (1919+ *Hoboes*) **2** A settling for a chat; meeting; **SCHMOOZE**: *The voice suggested that we have a little "sit-down" over lunch at Chianti/ Zilber was supposed to go to a sit-down with Pagano in Brooklyn* (1861+) **3** (also **sit-down strike**) A strike in which the workers occupy their job sites but do not work (1936+)

sit-in *n* An illegal occupation of a place in order to make a political or philosophical statement [1960s+; the term was popularized during the movement for black civil rights and has many offspring: *be-in, love-in, puke-in, etc*]

sit in *v phr* **1** To join and play with other musicians, esp on one occasion or temporarily: *had the very good fortune of sitting in with him* (1936+ *Musicians*) **2** To occupy a place as a participant in a sit-in (1960s+) [found by 1599 in the first sense "to participate in a game"]

sit in the catbird seat *v phr* To be in the position of advantage; be **SITTING PRETTY**: *willing to give us a hundred seventy million in preferred notes. We're sitting in the catbird seat* [1930s+; fr a term used by a poker opponent of the late sportscaster Red Barber to explain his situation with two aces in the hole at stud poker; Mr Barber

adopted the term, which was afterwards used by James Thurber in a story called “The Catbird Seat” with attribution to Red Barber; probably a Southern dialect term based on a folk notion of the cleverness and masterfulness of *catbirds* and/or their high and superior perch]

sit on v phr To fail to act for a long time, usu purposefully; to postpone: *sat on the nomination (1906 +)*

sit on someone v phr To suppress or squelch someone: *When I opened my mouth they all sat on me (1865 +)*

sit on one’s ass v phr To remain inactive; esp, to fail to cope or deal with a responsibility: *The congressman sat on his ass while the neighborhood hospital deteriorated (1940s +)*

sit on one’s hands v phr 1 To refrain from applauding; be an unresponsive or adverse audience: *They sat on their hands until he started waving the flag (1926 +)* **2** To do nothing; be passive; **SIT ON one’s ASS:** *Even when the thing fell down they just sat on their hands (1950s +)*

sit on my face See SHE CAN SIT ON MY FACE ANYTIME

sit on threes v phr To make three-point scores: *But he’s out there sitting on threes, and that’s all she wrote (1990s + Basketball)*

sitrep n A situation report: *That seems to be the sitrep, Beau (1943 +)*

sit shotgun v phr To sit in the passenger seat of a car; **RIDE SHOTGUN:** *I sat shotgun in my pop’s flower truck (1960s +)*

sit (or stand) still for something v phr To accept or condone;

tolerate something provocative: *The nation will simply not sit still for the years of slow growth (1940s +)*

sitter *n* A person who baby-sits, house-sits, etc (1945 +)

sit the pines *v phr* To sit on the bench rather than play: *Of course I'm disappointed. I'm not used to sitting the pines (1980s + Sports)*

◁**sit there with one's finger (or thumb) up one's ass**▷ *v phr* To be passive and unresponsive; fail to cope; be useless: *I suppose you think I'm just sitting around every day with my thumb up my ass (1040s +)*

sit tight *v phr* **1** To keep one's present position, stance, convictions, etc; refuse to be moved; STAND PAT (1890 +) **2** To wait patiently: *Be up as quickly as I can, Vicky. Sit tight (1903 +)*

sitting duck *n phr* An easy target; a totally defenseless person (1944 +)

sitting pretty, be *v phr* To be in a superior and very pleasant position: *He's just the same genial idiot whether he is out of luck or sitting pretty (1921 +)*

situash (sit y^{oo} AYSH) *n* Situation (1934 +)

situation *n* A bad or suspicious event or happening; a potential crime: *We may have a situation here, Bob (Police)* **See** ON TOP OF

sit up and take notice *v phr* To pay attention; become aware; WAKE UP AND SMELL THE COFFEE: *Let's do something that'll make him sit up and take notice (1889 +)*

Siwash (S^ī wahsh) *n* or *n phr* Any small college; the archetypical

small college; East Jesus State: *collegians (from Harvard to Siwash) and their professors (1910+)*

six *See* DEEP SIX, EIGHTY-SIX, FIFTY-SIX, HIT ON ALL SIX

six-bit modifier Worth or costing seventy-five cents: *a six-bit sandwich (1840+)*

six bits *n phr* Seventy-five cents (1840+)

sixer *n* A six-month prison sentence (1950s+ *Underworld*)

six feet under *adj phr* Dead (1940s+)

six-hundred-pound gorilla *n phr* (also **eight-hundred-pound gorilla** or **nine-hundred-pound gorilla**) A powerful force; a virtually irresistible influence: *She is a 600-pound gorilla. She can intimidate anybody/ likens Spielberg to an “800-pound gorilla,” which can be defined as a high-priced Hollywood species that makes its own decisions/ There were no obvious 900-pound gorillas like Forrest Gump or Schindler’s List [1970s+ ; fr a joke in which the question “Where does a six-hundred-pound gorilla sleep?” is answered “Anywhere it wants”]*

six-pack *n* **1** Three performances a day for two days: *Fridays and Saturdays he has three [shows], the two days’ stint known as a six-pack (1970s+ Circus)* **2** A set of six photographs from which a witness is asked to identify a suspect (1990s+ *Police*) **3** Any set of six (1970s+) *v*: *elevates in a spray of sand, and “six-packs” her opponents, spiking the ball so savagely that it knocks the defender down (1990s+ Beach volleyball)* [fr a set of cans or bottles of beverage, most notably of beer, sold as a unit; the term is found by 1952] *See*

JOE SIX-PACK

six-shooter or **six-gun** *n* A revolver with a cylinder holding six cartridges (1844 +)

sixty *See* LIKE SIXTY

sixty-four dollar question, the *n phr* The crucial question or issue • The dollar amount has increased over the years: *To flee or not to flee, that's the sixty-four dollar question/ "What will the European Community do?" "Well, that's really the sixty-four-thousand dollar question"/ Are baby boomers going to want a smaller car? That's the \$64 million question for Ford* [1942 + ; fr a radio quiz show where the top prize was \$64]

◁**sixty-nine** or **69**▷ *n* Simultaneous oral sex between two persons, whose reciprocally inverse positions suggest the numeral 69 (1888 +)

six ways to Sunday *See* FORTY WAYS TO SUNDAY

size *See* KING-SIZE

◁**size queen**▷ *n phr* A homosexual who is particularly and nearly exclusively concerned with the length of penises (1972 + *Homosexuals*)

size up *v phr* To estimate or assess: *How do you size up his chances?* (1847 +)

sizzle *n* Persuasive pressure; HEAT: *That's the sizzle* (1980s +) *v* FRY

sizzler *n* **1** A very hot day (1901 +) **2** A very fast pitch or hard-hit ground ball (1910 + *Baseball*) **3** A cook (1940s + *Loggers*)

sizzling *adj* Hot, in any sense: *sell some of the sizzling green at a discount* (1845 +)

ska (SKAH) *n* An early form of reggae music: *various musical trends, punk, New Wave, power-pop, ska* [1964 +; origin unknown]

skag or **scag** *n* **1** A cigarette or cigarette butt (1915 + *Armed forces*) **2** A despicable person or thing; JERK (1960s + *Teenagers fr black*) **3** An unattractive woman; BAT, SKANK (1920s + *Black*) **4** Cheap, low-quality heroin (1960s + *Narcotics*)

skaggy *adj* Ugly; unkempt; nasty; SKANKY: *She's too skaggy for your average john* (1960s +)

skank *n* **1** An unattractive woman; a malodorous woman; SKAG **2** A prostitute; HOOKER: *How long would it take for them to find them f— skanks (the hookers) again?* (1970s + *Black*) **3** Copulation; coition; ASS: *how 'bout witnessing some skank* (1980s +) **4** A despicable person; GRUNGE, SLEAZEBAG: *Julie gets used and humiliated by the lens-wielding skank* (1980s +) **5** A slovenly style of dress, possibly imitative of disheveled heroin addicts: *Some teenagers prefer a grungier, if equally tasteless, look known as "skank"* (1990s + *Teenagers*) **v** To do a sort of reggae dancing in which the body bends forward, the knees are raised, and the hands claw the air: *They move in sympathetic response to the music, skankin' from side to side/ They mosh. They slam. They skank and thrash, too* (1976 +)

skanky or **skank-o-rama** *adj* Nasty; repellent; GROTTY, SCUZZY, TRASHY: *The girls were somewhat skanky, with lank hair and rotten posture/ You moved, the earth moved. Skank-o-rama* (1980s + *Teenagers fr black*)

skate *n* An inferior horse: *They'd kill that bunch of skates for their hides* (1894+) **v** **1** To default a debt; avoid paying (1930s+ *Black*) **2** To leave; *SPLIT* (1915+) **3** To evade duty; *GOLDBRICK, GOOF OFF: The gunny accuses you of trying to skate (WWII armed forces)*

sked *See* ON SKED

skeddaddle **v** To run away; flee; fly; depart hastily: *the verb "to skeddaddle," which was revived during the war to suggest precipitous flight, and has held its own ever since* [1861+; origin unknown; perhaps fr an attested Scots dialect sense, "spill," which could suggest "scatter, disperse"; the example from 1884 supposes an earlier origin]

skeeter *n* A mosquito (1839+)

skeevy *adj* Nasty; repellent; *GROTTY, SCUZZY, TRASHY: How's your skeevy pal?* (1990s+ *Students*)

skeezer *n* A promiscuous woman; *SLUT: That skeezer has no self-respect/nice women, those who are neither sluts nor skeezers (women who use men for money), should take no offense* (1980s+ *Students fr black*)

skell *n* A street derelict who may be a villain: *Perp: also a mutt, a mope, a skid, or a skell* [1980s+ New York City police; ultimately fr Dutch *schelm*, "scoundrel, villain," found in English as *skelum* by 1611]

sketch *See* THUMBNAIL SKETCH

sketchy *adj* Offering little information: *sketchy details*

skewgee (SKOO jee) *adj* **1** Rattled and confused **2** Disorderly; *MESSY*

(1893 +)

ski bum *n phr* A person who frequents ski resorts habitually, often doing casual jobs, for the sake of skiing (1960 +)

ski bunny *See* SNOW BUNNY

skid *n* SKELL (1980s + *New York City police*)

skid lid *n phr* A motorcyclist's helmet: *suffered severe brain damage while wearing one of the company's skid lids* (1970s + *Motorcyclists*)

skid marks *n* Unsightly underwear from excrement: *no laundry wants to see skid marks*

skidoo or **skiddoo** *v* To depart hastily; SCRAM • Often a command or a bit of advice: *We heard the shooting and we skiddooed quick/ Skidoo, skidoo, and quit me* [1905 + ; perhaps fr *skedaddle*]

skid road or **skidroad** *modifier* Disreputable: *a tightwad with latent skidroad tendencies* *n phr* or **n 1** A forest track over which logs are dragged (1880 + *Loggers*) **2** (also **Skid Road** or **Skidroad**) A street or district of cheap shops and resorts; a relatively disreputable district: *I headed towards the Skidroad and its cheap eating joints/ no skid road for the professor* (1915 + *Lumberjacks, hoboes & underworld*) [fr the log-paved path on which the Seattle lumberman Henry Yesler skidded logs to his sawmill]

skid row or **Skid Row** *n* A street or district frequented by derelicts, hoboes, drifters, etc, such as the Bowery in New York City [1931 + ; fr *skid road*]

skids, the *See* HIT THE SKIDS, ON THE SKIDS, PUT THE SKIDS UNDER **someone** or

something

skillion or **scillion** *n* An indefinite very large number; BAZILLION, GAZILLION: *I have a scillion things to say (1970s +)* **See** JILLION

skim *n* Income not reported for tax purposes, esp from the gross earnings of a gambling casino or other such enterprise; BLACK MONEY: *allegedly “cleansed” in the neighborhood of \$2 million in “skim,” untaxed gambling profits/ Caltronics is in on the skim (1960 + Gambling)* *v*: *“appropriate, conceal, and skim” part of the winnings (1961 + Gambling)*

skimpies *n* Underwear panties: *Once again, Roseanne is pushing the envelope, not to mention the skimpies (1990s +)*

skin *modifier* Featuring nudity; indecently exposing; GIRLIE: *a skin flick (1960s +)* *n* **1** The hand as used in handshaking or hand-slapping as a salutation • Nearly always in the expression *some skin: My man! Gimme some skin!/ Slip me some skin (1942 + Black)* **2** An inferior racehorse; BEETLE: *They take the first bunch of skins out to gallop (1923 +)* **3** A pocketbook, wallet, etc (1790 +) **4** One dollar; a dollar bill; FROGSKIN: *One laid out 190 skins (1930 +)* **5** A condom; RUBBER (1935 +) **6** Drums or bongos (1938 + *Jazz musicians*) *v* **1** To defeat decisively; trounce; SKUNK: *They skinned the Wolverines 20-zip (1862 +)* **2** To cheat or swindle; victimize: *You got skinned in that deal (1819 +)* **3** To slip away; SKEDADDLE: *and then skin out the window (1876 +)* **See** FROGSKIN, GET UNDER **someone’s SKIN, GIVE SOME SKIN, NO SKIN OFF MY ASS, PIGSKIN, PRESS THE FLESH, SHEEPSKIN**

skin someone **alive** *v phr* To punish someone severely; castigate roundly: *She’ll skin me alive if I’m late again (1975 +)*

skin-beater *n* A drummer: *the reefer-smitten skin beater* (1925 + Jazz musicians)

skin (or flesh) flick *n phr* A movie featuring nudity and more or less patent sexual activity; BLUE MOVIE, FUCK FILM (1968 +)

◁**skin flute**▷ *n phr* The penis (1940s +) *See* PLAY THE SKIN FLUTE

skinful, a *n phr* One's intoxicating fill of liquor; a SNOOT FULL: *Dey bot' got a skinful* (1788 +)

skin game *n phr* A confidence game; SCAM (1868 +)

skinhead *n* 1 A bald person or person with a shaved or cropped head (1940s +) 2 A Marine recruit (1950s + *Marine Corps*) 3 A close-cropped person with neo-Nazi, racist, and other extreme right sentiments: *A mob enraged by the appearance of a nationally known racist chased and beat a group of teenage white supremacist "skinheads"* (1960s + *British*)

skin magazine (or mag) modifier: *Asked whether the skin-mag ban would apply to other magazines in which women are scantily clad or naked* *n phr* A magazine featuring nudity, more or less explicit sexual activity, etc; NUDIE (1960 +)

skinny, the *n phr* The truth; the LOWDOWN, the SCOOP: *Are you giving me the straight skinny?/ Here's the skinny: the show's an old-fashioned formula musical* [fr WWII armed forces; origin unknown; perhaps an alteration of *the naked truth*] *See* the STRAIGHT SKINNY

skinny-dip *v phr* To swim naked: *Andrew went skinny-dipping in rocky pools* (1950s +)

skinny something down v phr To reduce something, esp to a minimum: *We were told to skinny the budget down still more* (1970s +)

skinnymalink or **skinny marink n** or **n phr** A very thin person: *If a self-confessed skinny marink like Mayer dared have summer dreams, why not a muscular woman?* [entry form 1916 +; fr Scottish dialect]

skin pop v phr To inject narcotics into the skin or muscles, rather than into the circulatory system: *I'll have to skin pop* (1950s + *Narcotics*)

skins n 1 A set of drums (1938 + *Jazz musicians*) **2** Automotive tires: *Protect your present skins* (1950s + *Hot rodders & truckers*)

skin-search or **body-shake n** A thorough scrutiny of a naked person, esp for hypodermic needle marks, concealed narcotics, etc (1935 + *Police*) **v:** *They skin-searched both couples* (1970 +)

skint adj Lacking money; BROKE • Still chiefly British [1925 +; fr *skinned*]

skip n 1 A person who absconds, esp to avoid paying a bill: *The skip took off with a girl friend* (1915 +) **2** SKIPPER (1830 +) **v 1** To fail to attend; absent oneself; SHINE: *if I let you skip school this afternoon* (1905 +) **2** (also **skip out**) To depart hastily, escape, abscond, esp to avoid paying a bill, being arrested, etc: *They skipped out of the motel at 2 AM* (1590 +)

skip it v phr To drop or ignore some matter: *If you can't remember, let's skip it for now* (1934 +)

skipper *n* **1** The captain of a ship or boat (1390+ *Nautical*) **2** Any commanding officer; the OLD MAN (1906+ *Army*)

skip tracer *n phr* An investigator who tries to find persons who have absconded from debts, marriages, etc: *Stern hired some sort of skip tracer and he came back with a complete zip* (1950s+)

skirt *n* A woman, esp a young woman; BROAD, CHICK • Regarded by some women as offensive: *a real skirt/ never give any skirt a tumble* (1906+)

skirt-chaser *n* A ladies' man; LOVER-BOY (1942+)

skitch *v*: *some hanging on the sides of the Jeep, "skitching," or dragging their feet through the powder* (1990s+ *Students*)

ski-trip *n* The taking of cocaine; a dose of cocaine [1960s+ *Narcotics*; by extension fr *snow*, "cocaine"]

skitter *v* To move about rapidly; scamper: *where the poor skitter around the doll's house on the hill like so many rats among garbage* (1845+)

skitz *v* To go crazy; FLIP OUT, SCHIZ OUT: *No, I'm not driving you past Gary's house again. You are skitzin over this guy* [1990s+ *Teenagers*; see *schizo*]

skiv *n* SHIV

skive *v* To shirk duty: *skive off for a rest* [1919; originally armed forces]

skivvies *n* **1** Underwear; underpants and undershirt • Originally a nautical use: *stripped down to his skivvies and played his harmonica*

(1932 +) **2** A pair of sandal-like slippers (1945 +)

skivvy *n* **1** (also **skivvy shirt**) A man's undershirt, esp a T-shirt:
pants, sneakers, some skivvy shirts (1932 +) **2** A pair of men's
underpants, esp of the boxer type (1947 +)

skivvy-waver *n* A naval signal operator (*WWII Navy*)

skookum *adj* Effective; powerful [1847 +; fr Chinook jargon,
"powerful evil spirit," fr Chehalis *skukum*]

skosh or **scosh** (*SKOHS*) *n* A little bit; *SMIDGEN*: *You need a skosh more
room here for your desk* [Korean War armed forces; fr Japanese
sukoshi]

◁**skull**▷ *n* Fellatio; *BLOW JOB* (1970s + *Homosexuals*) *See* GO OUT OF one's
SKULL, OUT OF one's HEAD

skull-buster *n* **1** A police officer (1930s + *Black*) **2** A very difficult
course in school (1920s + *Students*)

skullcap *n* A helmet; *BRAIN DISH* (1980s + *Motorcyclists*)

skullduggery or **skulduggery** *n* Shady behavior; *DIRTY WORK, HANKY-PANKY*
[1867 +; a US alteration of Scots *sculduddery*, "bawdry, obscenity,"
which is attested from the early 18th century]

skull popper *n phr* Liquor; *BOOZE*, the *SAUCE*: *His vices are slow horses
and fast bookies, rather than 86-proof skull popper* (1980s +)

skull practice *n phr* The learning of plays, patterns, etc, esp in
football, by blackboard demonstrations (1930s + *Sports*)

skull session *n phr* An intensive learning and teaching period, esp a

briefing session: *two separate “skull sessions” with six members of the US negotiating team (1959+)*

skunk *n* **1** A despicable person; BASTARD, LOUSE (1840+) **2** Marijuana; POT, GRASS (1990s+ Narcotics) **v** **1** To defeat utterly, esp to hold the opponent scoreless in sports; trounce; CLOBBER: They’re saying I’m going to get skunked in the black community (1849+) **2** To learn by deduction the signals used by an opposing team telling the quarterback what play to call *(1980s+ Football)* **3** To lack wind for sailing: *We went to Baja last month, but got skunked every day (1990s+ Windsurfers)* **See** DRUNK AS A SKUNK

skunk someone out of something **v phr** To cheat someone out of something *(1890+ Students)*

sky **v** **1** To hit or kick or throw a ball very high: *See me skying out there?/ This time he skied the punt right over the end zone (1909+ Sports)* **2** To jump high in order to slam-dunk the ball; AIR (1980s+ Basketball) **See** PIE IN THE SKY

sky bear *n phr* BEAR IN THE AIR (1975+)

skycap *n* A porter at an air terminal [1950+; modeled on *redcap*, “a railroad terminal porter”]

skyhook *n* **1** An imaginary hook in the sky, which explains why some things stay up, which solves the problems of keeping some things up, etc: *How will I hold up the roof when I fix the wall? On a skyhook, of course (1915+)* **2** A high hook shot at the basket *(1980s+ Basketball)*

sky is the limit, the *sentence* No limits exist: *Yeltsin proudly proclaims*

that today in Russia the sky is the limit to what a person can earn

skyjack *n*: *the week's third skyjack to Cuba (1968 +)* **v** To take control of an aircraft illegally, usu by claiming to have a weapon or a bomb; commit air piracy (1961 +) [modeled on *hijack*]

sky-pilot *n* A member of the clergy; preacher (1883 +)

skyrocket **v** To increase rapidly: *Profits are expected to skyrocket after the announcement (1895 +)*

skyscraper *n* A very high fly ball, esp near home plate (1866 + *Baseball*)

skywest **See** KNOCK someone or something GALLEY WEST

slab *n* **1** A bed (1930s + *Jive talk*) **2** One dollar; a dollar bill: *Ten slabs for two days' work! (1950s +)* **3** The pitcher's "rubber" at the top of the mound, against which the pitcher braces his foot when throwing (1919 + *Baseball*) **See** SUPER SLAB

slack *n* A period of inertness or decreased activity: *He'd pulled his weight long enough to get some slack/ a channel surfer trapped in his own den of slack (1851 +)* **v**: *Witness the 40,000 or so Americans here now, a lot of them teaching English or just slacking, drinking 50-cent beers in the pubs, grooving to acid jazz at the Roxy*

slacker modifier: *this lame "slacker" attitude a la Jeff Spicoli from Fast Times at Ridgemont High* *n* An indolent and detached person; shirker; idler: *The epitome of the slang-slinging, wise-cracking slacker (1898 +)* [revived in the 1990s to describe a sort of cultural anomie]

slackmaster *n* Someone who is an expert at slacking off: *don't want to be called a slackmaster*

slag *n*: *its purposeful indie-rock slag at commerciality* *v* (also **slag off**)
To denigrate; BAD-MOUTH, PUT DOWN: *Everybody was getting slagged/ I don't mean to slag the girls at Douglas/ This time I can't give it to you, can't totally slag you off (1971 +)* [origin unknown; perhaps fr German *schlagen*, "beat, whip"]

slam *n* An uncomplimentary comment; a jibe; KNOCK: *took a slam at the male stars who dress like "ranch hands" (1884 +)* *v* **1**: *Thrifty Slams Riordan on Its Way Out of Town (1916 +)* **2** To hit; CLOBBER (1905 +)
◁**3**▷ To do the sex act with; BOFF, SCREW: *Did you slam her, Jon? (1980s + Students)* **4** (also **slam-dance**) To do a physically colliding and athletic sort of rock-and-roll dancing, esp in the vein of punk rock: *The music is hardcore, the dance is slamming (1980s +)* **5** To consume or use: *He slammed two beers and then went out on his date/ Did they ever slam heroin? (1980s + Students)* *See* GRAND SLAM

slam, the *n phr* the SLAMMER (1960 +)

slam-bang *adj* Raucous, violent, vigorous, etc: *in climaxes as slam-bang as a four-horse stretch drive/ a couple of slam-bang musical numbers (1823 +)* *adv* Violently: *They went at it slam-bang (1840 +)*
n A wild and vicious fight (1920s + *Prizefighting*) *See* SLAP

slam-book *n* A sort of notebook or autograph book into which one's friends would write genial insults (1922 +)

slam dunk *modifier*: *Welfare reform should have been a slam-dunk issue for the Republicans. But last week they allowed tax cuts to get in*

the way/ The bombing is not a slam-dunk case. It's going to require a really good presentation by the government to convince the jury **n phr 1**
A spectacular success; winner: *Both pro-and antimerger members have been equally taken with the new rabbi. "It's a slam dunk," enthuses Corwin (1990s +)* **2** (also **slam-dunk landing**): *The safety board said that Flight 2268 didn't need to dive abruptly toward the runway. It contended the pilot elected to quickly slow down the plane for a slam dunk landing by reversing the engines* **v phr** To score a field goal by leaping up and thrusting the ball violently down through the hoop (1976 + *Basketball*)

slammer **n** SLAM DUNK (1970s + *Basketball*) **See** GRAND SLAMMER

slammer, the **n phr 1** A door: *twister to the slammer (1930s + Jive talk)* **2** (also **the slams**) A jail, prison, etc: *Drunk drivers go to the slammer in this town (1952 + Black)*

slammin' **adj** Excellent; superb; COOL, FUNKY FRESH: *That food was slammin' / in my opinion the most slammin' song on the album [1990s + Teenagers; slamming is found in a similar sense, "large, exceptional," by about 1900]*

slamming **n**: *Federal regulators plan to adopt tougher rules against switching customers' long-distance companies without their knowledge, a practice known as "slamming" (1990s +)*

slam the door on someone or something **v phr** To put an end to something as if by slamming a dismissive door: *Ray Floyd slammed the door on any would-be challengers with a string of 14 consecutive pars (1786 +)*

slang *n* A style or register of language consisting of terms that can be substituted for standard terms of the same conceptual meaning but having stronger emotive impact than the standard terms, in order to express an attitude of self-assertion toward conventional order and moral authority and often an affinity with or membership in occupational, ethnic, or other social groups, and ranging in acceptability from sexual and scatological crudity to audacious wittiness (see *Preface*) [mid-1700s + British; origin unknown; probably related to *sling*, which has cognates in Norwegian that suggest the abusive nature of slang; the British dialect original term *slang* meant both “a kind of projectile-hurling weapon” and “the language of thieves and vagabonds,” reinforcing the connection with “sling”]

slanguage *n* The vocabulary of slang; language employing much slang [1879 + ; blend of *slang* and *language*]

slant *n* **1** An opinion or point of view; ANGLE: *something about his tone or his “slant” that irritated his contemporaries (1905 +)* **2** A look; an ocular inspection: *Take a slant at dat/ The prowler car takes a slant down now and then (1911 +)*

slap or **slap-bang** or **slam-bang** *adv* Precisely; directly: *Streets that ended slap in a courtyard/ The storm was pointed slam-bang at Tampa (first form 1829 +, second 1885 +, third 1940s +)*

slap and tickle *n phr* Amorous dalliance; playful fondling • Chiefly British: *a spot of slap and tickle (1928 +)*

slapdash *adj* Hasty and careless; heedless of the fine details; SLOPPY

(1792 +)

slap someone five *See* GIVE someone FIVE

slap-happy *adj* **1** Disoriented and stuporous, esp from being hit too often about the head: *a slap-happy bum* (1936 +) **2** Vertiginous; off balance: *designed to knock philologists slap-happy* **3** Euphoric; intoxicated; HIGH: *He was slap-happy a whole week after the baby came*

slap in the face, a *n phr* An insult or rebuke, esp when unexpected; a rebuff: *His not saying anything is a slap in the face* (1898 +)

slap something on v phr To add something, esp increase a price:
slapped on an extra tax

slap on the wrist, a *n phr* A very mild punishment • Usual when the punishment is felt to be unjustly lenient (1914 +) *See* GIVE someone A SLAP ON THE WRIST

slapper *See* KNEE-SLAPPER

slapstick *adj* Featuring rowdy humor, both physical and conceptual; low comedy: *The old burlesque loved slapstick routines* (1906 + *Show business*) *n*: *The Marx Brothers depended a lot on slapstick* (1926 + *Show business*) [fr the *slapstick*, two wooden slats joined at one end, which made a loud splatting noise when used as a comic weapon, the term found by 1907]

slap-up *adj* EXcellent; GREAT (1843 +)

slash-and-burn *adj* Crudely violent; irresponsibly vitriolic: *a few years of slash-and-burn expense cutting* [1980s +; fr a type of transitory cultivation in which a forest area is cleared and the

undergrowth burned for planting, the term found by 1939]

slasher *n* A gory thriller movie; Slice-and-Dice Film (1980s +)

slat *n* A ski (1960s + *Skiers*)

slathers *n* A large quantity; OODLES: *It cost the railroads slathers of money* [1857 +; ultimately fr Irish *sliotar*]

slave *n* A job: *You got a job, man. You got a slave* (1930s + *Black*)

slave away *v phr* To work very hard at something: *slaving away at Thanksgiving dinner*

slave market *n phr* An employment office or a place or occasion where jobs are sought and candidates present themselves: *Their annual convention is essentially a slave market* (1911 +)

slay *v* To impress someone powerfully, esp to provoke violent and often derisive laughter: *Pardon me, this will slay you/ The boys who slay me are the ones who have set pieces to recite when they answer the phone* (1593 +)

sleaze *modifier: the sleaze factor* **n 1** Anything shabby and disgusting; particularly revolting trash; CRAP, SCHLOCK, SHIT: *a paragon of Dorothy Malone low-fashion sleaze* (1976 +) **2** SLEAZEBAG (1976 +) **v 1** To be sexually promiscuous and disreputable (1976 +) **2** To scrounge; MOOCH (1970s + *Students*) [a back formation from *sleazy*; *sleaze*, “a sleazy quality or appearance,” is found by 1954]

sleazebag or **sleazeball** *n* A despicable person; DIRTBAG, SCUZZBAG:

Tartikoff calls the character “a total sleazebag”/ If you’re a sleazeball, you deserve a recall (1970s +)

sleaze-bucket *adj* Nasty; degradingly repellent: *sleaze-bucket movies* (1970s +)

sleazemonger *n* A producer or seller of nasty entertainment: *one of Hollywood's lowlier sleazemongers* (1970s +)

sleazy or **sleazo** or **sleazoid** *adj* Disgusting; filthy; nasty; GRUNGY, SCUZZY: *dirty buildings in sleazy sections/ a tremendous evocation of the sleazoid speed-freak scene/ who makes sleazo blood films* [entry form 1941 +, second 1972 +, third 1970s +; fr the late 1600s British *sleasie*, “thin, flimsy, threadbare,” of uncertain origin, whence it came to mean “of inferior workmanship, shoddy”; perhaps fr *Sleasie*, “Silesian,” used of linen cloth from that part of Germany]

sleep around *v phr* To be sexually promiscuous; PLAY AROUND (1928 +)

sleeper *modifier: a sleeper play* *n* **1** Anything, esp a low-budget movie, a show, or a book, which achieves or probably will achieve success after a time of obscurity; DARK HORSE: *My Name is Julia Ross is the first “sleeper” to come to Philadelphia in months/ whose Return of the Secaucus Seven ranked among the more astute sleepers of 1980* (1892 +) **2** A player who unexpectedly and cunningly gets the ball and runs (1953 + *Football*) **3** A sleeping pill or a sedative (1960s + *Narcotics*) [the first noun sense may be fr gambling term *sleeper*, found by 1856 and meaning both “an unexpected winning card” and “a pot whose owner has ignored it, and hence is free to anyone who takes it”]

sleep in *v phr* To remain in bed later than usual in the morning (1888 + *Nautical*)

sleep like a top *v phr* To sleep very soundly [1693 + ; fr the stasis of a spinning *top*]

sleep on something *v phr* To postpone a decision on something until the next day, with the implication that a night's sleep will facilitate judgment (1519 +)

sleepville or **Sleepville** *adj* Sleepy; comatose (1950s + *Cool talk*)

sleepwalk *n* Advancement without much effort; an easy task or accomplishment: *Getting the contract was a sleepwalk*

sleep with someone *v phr* To do the sex act with someone; GO TO BED WITH someone • A much-needed euphemism: *No girl could love a man unless she had slept with the man over a period of time* (1400 +)

sleeve *See* ACE UP one'S SLEEVE, PUT THE ARM ON someone

sleighride *n* Intoxication from cocaine *v* To use cocaine [1915 + Narcotics; fr the association of *sleighrides* with *snow*, "cocaine"]

sleighrider *n* A cocaine addict; also, a user of cocaine; COKEHEAD (1915 + *Narcotics*)

slew *n* A large quantity; OODLES, SLATHERS: *a slew of cops* [1839 + ; probably fr Irish *sluagh*, "host, multitude"]

slewed *adj* Drunk [1801 + ; fr *slew*, "veer, swing around, hence, walk erratically"]

slice *n* A portion or share; PIECE: *Five grand wouldn't get you a slice of her* (1550 +)

slice and dice *v phr* To reduce to smaller pieces, inferentially by

cutting up: *Congress is the single most unpopular American institution other than the income tax; slicing and dicing its committees will bring the GOP only high praise/ Derivatives allow people to transfer risk, to slice and dice it into little pieces and pass it on/ The Court decided that this broad requirement could be sliced and diced* [1970s + ; fr the preparation of cooking ingredients by *slicing and dicing* them]

sliced bread See the BEST THING SINCE SLICED BREAD

slick *adj* **1** Smooth and clever; smart: *She's a very slick talker* (1599 +) **2** Cunning; crafty: *more than a match for any slick city lawyer* (1807 +) **3** Excellent; NIFTY: *The soup was "simply slick"* (1843 +) **4** Glib and superficial; without real substance: *They turn out people with slick plastic personalities* (1920 +) **n** **1** A magazine printed on glossy paper and usu having some artistic or intellectual pretensions, as distinguished from pulp magazines: *magazines, from top slicks to minor pulps* (1934 +) **2** An automobile tire with a very smooth tread: *My Sting Ray is light, the slicks are startin' to spin* (1950s + *Hot rodders*) **3** A police bureaucrat regarded as self-serving by the rank and file: *But no way am I hanging around to talk to the slicks on this one* (1980s + *New York City police*) [earlier 1800s uses were in comparative phrases like *slick as bear's grease* and *slick as molasses*]

slick as a whistle *adv phr* Very adroitly; cleverly: *She played that horn slick as a whistle* (1830 +)

slick chick *n phr* An attractive young woman, esp one who is notably up-to-date and au courant: *the "slick chicks" at Sequoia Union High/ a slick chick, a pretty girl* (1930s + *Jive talk*)

slicker *n* 1 A clever and crafty person, esp a confidence trickster, a dishonest business executive, a shrewd and predatory lawyer, etc;

CROOK: *I don't admire slickers who peddle get-rich-quick bubbles*

(1900+) 2 A socially smooth and superficially attractive person;

SMOOTHIE: *The slicker was good-looking and clean-looking* (1920+) **v** To

cheat; CON, SCAM: *outsmarted and slickered by Moscow/ A fox tried to*

slicker him out of the cheese (1935+) **See** CITY SLICKER

slickster *n* A clever or glib person, esp one who swindles (1965+)

slickum *n* Hair oil; pomade (1940s+)

slick someone or something **up v phr** To make neat and more

attractive; furbish; GUSSY UP: *What are they all slicked up for?* (1828+)

slide *n* 1 A delay in collecting a debt: *How about a slide on my rent?*

(1990s+) 2 Something easily done; CINCH, PIECE OF CAKE **v** To depart; SPLIT

(1859+)

slim *n* A cigarette (1960s+ *Jazz musicians*)

slime *n* SLIMEBAG: *"I think he's a slime," Louise Hartley said* (1950s+) **v** 1

Denigrate harshly and often falsely; SMEAR: *James Earl Jones gets*

slimed (1990s+) 2 To speak in an unctuous and cajoling way: *"May*

I personally take your order, Mr Goodman," he slimed (1990s+)

◁**slimebag** or **slimeball** or **slimebucket**▷ *n* A despicable person; a

repugnant wretch; GEEK, SCUMBAG, SLEAZEBAG: *I'm a disgusting slime bag, but*

I don't grovel/ I remember when the slimeballs used to be packed in

there so solid/ If you chill out, those low-life slime buckets will sew your

fingers inside your mouth (1970s+)

slim pickings *n phr* Very little to be had or earned; extremely unprofitable returns: *You'll find it's slim pickings there, if you're looking for a fast buck (1940s +)*

sling *v* To sell narcotics; DEAL: *gang-bangers make careers of slingin' 'caine/ I caught my first case for slinging (selling) drugs (1990s + Narcotics)* **See** HAVE one'S ASS IN A SLING

sling beer *v phr* To be a bartender or waiter: *would look at home slinging beer at any tavern (1903 +)*

slinger *n* A waiter or waitress; a food server: *Anybody but a California Bar-B-Q slinger would know that [1934 + ; fr sling, "to pass something from one person to another," found by 1860]* **See** GRUB-SLINGER, GUN-SLINGER, HASH-SLINGER, INK-SLINGER

sling hash *v phr* To work as a waiter or waitress: *I used to sling their hash/ She slung hash for a couple of weeks (1906 +)*

slinging **See** MUDSLINGING

sling ink *v phr* To write, esp as a newspaper reporter or otherwise professionally (1864 +)

sling it or sling the bull *v phr* To exaggerate and lie; talk smoothly and persuasively; BULLSHIT, SHOOT THE BULL: *The chief reason for the conversational effectiveness of many individuals is their inherent ability to sling it (1940s +)*

slinky *adj* Sinuous and sexy: *one of those slinky glittering females (1921 +)*

slip *v* **1** To give; hand: *So I slip him a double Z (1841 +)* **2** To lose

one's competence or touch; decline: *Only six pages today? I must be slipping* (1914 +) **See** PINK SLIP

slip someone a **mickey** (or a **Mickey**) **v phr** To give knockout drops, esp chloral hydrate, secretly in a drink: *He passed out as if someone had slipped him a Mickey* (1951 +)

slip between the cracks **See** FALL BETWEEN THE CRACKS

slip (or **give**) **me five** **sentence** Shake hands with me: *Slip me five so I know you're alive* (1926 +)

slip something **over on** someone **v phr** To deceive someone; CON, FLIMFLAM: *You can't slip this fraud over on the whole town* [1912 + ; fr baseball, "to pitch the ball deceptively over the plate"]

slippery slope **n phr** A disastrous course; irrecoverable commitment: *Active euthanasia brings with it many dicey procedural questions, and, ultimately, a slippery slope* (1951 +)

slippy **adj** Quick; fast (1847 +)

slipstick **n** A slide rule (1920s + *Students*)

slip one's **trolley** **v phr** To lose one's rational composure; FLIP OUT, FREAK OUT: *She was going around babbling like she slipped her trolley* [1895 + ; fr the condition of a *trolley* car that has lost contact with the electrical cable]

slip-up **n** A miscalculation; an accident; GLITCH: *There must have been a hell of a slip-up somewhere along the line* (1874 +)

◁**slit**▷ **n** The vulva; CUNT (1648 +)

slob *n* **1** A pudgy, generally unattractive, and untidy person: *You great, fat slob! / a big slob with a chin that stuck out like a shelf* **2** A slovenly and disorderly person; a sloppy and disheveled person: *What a slob! You'd think his room was the town dump* **3** A mediocre person, esp one who is likely to fail or be victimized: *just another poor slob* [1861 + ; fr Anglo-Irish, used affectionately of a quiet, fat, slow child]

sloppy *adj* Like a slob; slovenly (1961 +)

slog *v* **1** To hit something hard, as a ball **2** To labor; work hard at something: *slogged through the piles of reports*

slo-mo *adj*: *She had a lot of things on her desk top, including a mondo-size slo-mo printer / chock-full of slo-mo sequences of hunks running along the water* *adv* In slow motion; slowly: *A man named Ahmed skated slo-mo* (1970s +)

slope¹ *v* **1** (also **slope out**) To run away; depart; LAM, SKEDADDLE (1830 +) **2** To escape from jail (1940s + *Underworld & hoboes*) [perhaps fr Dutch *sloop*, “sneaked away”]

◀**slope**² or **slopehead**▶ *n* An Asian; DINK, GOOK [Vietnam War armed forces; fr the apparent slanting of eyes caused by the typical epicanthic fold of Asian peoples]

slopped *adj* Drunk (1907 +)

sloppy *adj* **1** Slovenly; disorderly; MESSY **2** Careless; SLAPDASH (1825 +)

sloppy joe *n phr* **1** A long, loose pullover sweater worn by women (1940s + *Students*) **2** A dish made from ground meat cooked in a

barbecue sauce and spread on an open bun (1961 +) **3 A**
multidecked sandwich served in small thick triangles and filled
with meats, cheeses, and mayonnaise, such that it is difficult to eat
while keeping the fingers and face clean (1970s +)

sloppy Joe's *n phr* A cheap restaurant or lunch counter; GREASY SPOON
(1940s +)

sloppy seconds *n phr* <1< A sex act performed immediately after
someone else's act: *Victoria denies having sex in the same bed as
Heidi: "I like sex, but who wants sloppy seconds?"* **2** The inferior
position; SECOND FIDDLE: *Lowden and Wood argued about who would be
the top of the Chicago ticket and who would get sloppy seconds*
(1970s +)

slops *n* Beer or liquor, esp bad or inferior (1910 + Hoboes)

sloshed *adj* Drunk: *a youngish man in a bar, a little sloshed and pouring
out his troubles to the bartender/ You'll spend the night getting sloshed
on 3.2 salmon piss* [1900 +; fr *slosh*, "a drink," found by the 1880s]

slot *n* A slot machine; ONE-ARM BANDIT: *The slots are going day and night*
(1950 +)

slouch *See* NO SLOUCH

slough (or **sluff**) (**off**) *v* To waste time; to start to lose momentum or
interest in a project: *sloughing off on the homework*

slough in (or **up**) (SL^{oo}) *v phr* To arrest; imprison: *I've boozed around
this town for seven years, and I've not been sloughed up yet* (1894 +
Hoboes)

slow burn modifier: *Slow-burn resentment gave rise to a flinty local jargon n phr* A gradually increasing anger: *He remembered Edgar Kennedy and his slow burns (1930s +)* **See** DO A SLOW BURN

slow coach n phr A dull fellow; a stupid person (1837 +)

slowly in the wind See TWIST SLOWLY IN THE WIND

slow off the mark adj phr Late in starting; dilatory; behindhand: *If anything, the Clinton Administration has been a bit slow off the regulatory mark [1972 +; fr the mark from which foot-racers start]*

slow on the draw (or the uptake) adj phr Dull and dilatory; mentally sluggish [1940s +; fr the action of drawing one's pistol, in the classical cowboy context]

slowpoke n A slow, sluggish, slothful person: *an old slowpoke* [1848 +; fr *slow* used for vowel rhyme with the early 1800s *poke*, "behave dilatorily, potter, saunter," perhaps influenced by 16th-century *slowback*, "sluggard"]

sludd v To suffer the terrible effects of chemical attack [Gulf War armed forces; acronym fr *salivate*, *lachry-mate*, *urate*, and *defecate*]

sluff v To avoid work and responsibility; shirk: *No one accused Bo of sluffing* [1951 +; fr *slough off*]

slug¹ n 1 A bullet: *Doctors said they're still unable to remove the slug* (1622 +) **2** A dollar: *do the job at 125 slugs a week* (1887 +) **3** A drink of liquid, esp of whiskey; **SNORT:** *ordering a slug of Old Stepmother* (1762 +) **v (also slug down):** *The crowd cheered and jeered and slugged beers* (1940s +) [origin uncertain; perhaps fr the

resemblance of a lump of metal to the snail-like creature the *slug*; the earliest attested US senses are “gold nugget, lump of crude metal”; the drink and drinking senses appear to be derived fr phrases like *fire a slug* and *cast a slug*, “take a drink of liquor,” found as metaphors in late 18th-century British sources, and may be fr Irish *slog*, “a drink, a swallow”]

slug² v 1 To hit hard, esp with the fist; CLOBBER: *He tried to make peace, but he got slugged (1862 +)* **2** To make or try for long base hits, esp regularly; GO FOR THE FENCES (1888 + Baseball) [fr British dialect *slog*, probably ultimately fr Old English *slagan*, cognate with German *schlagen*] **See** PUT THE SLUG ON someone

slugfest n 1 A hard and vicious fight, esp a prizefight more marked by powerful blows than by skillful boxing (1916 +) **2** A baseball game in which many base hits are made (1930s + *Baseball*)

slugged adj Drunk: *I want you really slugged when we shoot the scene (1951 +)*

slugger n 1 A consistent long-ball hitter: *He's no slugger, he likes to place his hits (1883 + Baseball)* **2** A boxer more notable for hard hitting than for artistic finesse (1877 +) **See** CIRCUIT SLUGGER

slug it out v phr To fight with powerful blows; try to smash one another; GO TOE TO TOE: *The principals were slugging it out in the alley (1943 +)*

slug-nutty adj Stuporous or uncoordinated mentally and physically from taking too many blows on the head; PUNCH-DRUNK: “*Slug-nutty*” *fighters are often very talkative (1933 +)*

slum¹ or **go slumming** *v* or *v phr* To visit places or consort with persons below one's place or dignity; mix with one's inferiors: *So we went slumming over in Philadelphia* [1884 + ; fr *slum*, "wretched poor area," origin unknown]

slum² or **slumgullion** or **slumgudgeon** *n* Any inferior and esp unidentifiable food or drink; a nasty nameless stew; slop [1847 + ; origin unknown; perhaps a vaguely echoic denigrating coinage related to *slum¹*]

slum it *v phr* To descend to the level of the lower classes; to endure conditions or accommodations that are worse than what one is accustomed to: *slumming it at the Holiday Inn*

slummy *adj* Inferior; lousy: *slummy conditions*

slump *n* **1** A sudden decline or collapse, esp of economic value or activity: *The stock market is in a dangerous slump* (1888 +) **2** A period of bad performance: *The whole team's in a hitting slump* (1895 + *Baseball*)

slurb *n* A suburb of cheap mass-produced houses, ugly business places, etc: *The towns all merged in one faceless, undifferentiated slurb* [1962 + ; probably a blend of *slum* and *suburb*]

slurp or **slup** *n* **1**: *Take a slurp of this soup, it's great!* (1949 +) **2** A glissando passage (1940s + *Musicians*) *v* To eat or drink with greed: *slurping porridge from a wooden spoon/ The cat slupped up the milk in no time* (1648 +) [echoic]

slush *n* Blatant sentimentality; GOO, SCHMALTZ: *He sort of wept and uttered a lot of slush* (1916 +)

slush fund *n phr* In politics, money used for shady enterprises like buying votes, bribing officials, etc: *the use of slush funds to defeat selected victims* [1839 +; fr the armed forces and especially nautical practice of selling grease and other garbage to accumulate a *fund* to buy little luxuries for the troops or crew]

◁**slut**▷ *n* A sexually promiscuous female, esp one who dresses or acts provocatively (1451 +)

smack¹ *adv* (also **smack dab**) Exactly; precisely: *What he said was smack on the mark/ Rosenthal was seated smack-dab next to the Prez in a relatively cozy dinner* (1892 +) *n* **1** A blow; a slap: *He gave her a smack on the kisser* (1746 +) **2** A kiss; SMACKER (1604 +) **3** A try; CRACK: *Let's have a smack at it, shall we?* (1889 +) **4**: *Throughout the 45-minute interview, he kept mentioning "smack," which isn't heroin, but a synonym for trash-talking* (1990s + *Sports*) *v* **1** Hit; slap: *She smacked him hard* (1835 +) **2** To kiss, esp noisily: *She smacked him square on the lips* (1570 +) [probably ultimately echoic]

smack² or **shmack** or **shmeck** *n* Heroin; HORSE, SHIT: *The cocaine pulled from the front while the smack pushed from the back. It was an incredibly intense high* [1942 + *Narcotics*; fr Yiddish *shmek*, "a smell, sniff"; an earlier sense was "a small packet of drugs," hence merely a sniff or whiff]

smack³ *n*: *Smart people who are only interested in school are called "nerds" or "smacks"* (1980s + *Teenagers*)

smacker *n* **1** (also **smackeroo**) A dollar; BUCK: *having to cough up a thousand smackers/ That car's not worth a single smackeroo* (entry

form 1921 +, variant 1940s +) **2** A kiss; SMACK: *Slip me a smacker, sister* (1775 +) [the money sense, attested also of pesos and pounds sterling, may echo the slapping down of a bill on a counter, gambling table, etc, and hence be semantically related to *plank* and *plunk* for coins]

smacky lips *See* PLAY KISSIE

smadge *n* A sergeant major [1970s + Army; fr *smaj* abbr for *sergeant major*]

small beer *n* Something or someone insignificant: *that idea is just small beer*

small change *modifier*: *This is small-change stuff* *n phr* Something of little value: *So I am now small change in Mamie's scorn* (1902 +) [fr coins of small value]

small fortune *n* A large amount of money; a higher-than-expected cost: *a small fortune for Valentine's dinner*

small fry *adj*: *small-fry writers like me* *n phr* **1** Children or a child • Often used as a term of address, either affectionate or derogatory **2** An insignificant person or persons; nonentities: *conveniences not enjoyed by the small fry overhead* [1866 + ; fr *fry*, “small or immature fish”]

small potatoes *n phr* **1** A trivial amount of money; CHICKEN FEED, PEANUTS: *I received \$120,000, which is no small potatoes* **2** An insignificant person, enterprise, etc: *From the tuber is derived the term “small potatoes,” applied with more or less humor to anything mean or petty* (1840 +)

small (or fine) print, the *n phr* Unsuspected and possibly injurious conditions or requirements, esp when part of a contract, an insurance policy, etc: *Be sure you look at the small print if you make any deals with that guy/ Does the mayor read the fine print?* (entry form 1944+, variant 1960+)

small talk *n phr* Talk, esp relaxed and idle conversation; phatic communion; CHIN MUSIC, CHITCHAT: *He's very serious and has a hard time making small talk* (1751+)

small-time *adj* Characteristic of the small time; inferior; petty; second-rate; BUSH LEAGUE: *a small-time political power* (1910+ *Show business*)

small time, the *n phr* Mediocre or inferior businesses, enterprises, entertainment or sports circuits, etc; the BUSH LEAGUES: *After six years in the small time she finally went to Broadway* (1910+ *Show business*)

smarm *n* The quality of something "smarmy": *How to write pet stories, then, while skirting the swamps of smarm?* (1937+)

smarmy *adj* **1** Smooth and flattering; unctuously ingratiating; fulsome: *a rather smarmy doctor and a highly officious nurse* **2** Rich and sonorous; orotund and fruity; PLUMMY: *an announcer with a smarmy voice* **3** Smug and self-righteous: *Uncle Sam's Smarmy Look Into Employee Sex Lives* [1924+; origin unknown; since the earliest attested uses have to do with hair oil, it may be a vague blend of *smooth, smear, palm oil, cream*, etc]

smart *adj* **1** Fashionable; stylish; modish (1718+) **2** Guided toward a target by laser beams, television signals, etc, rather than simply

aimed: *The subs are equipped with smart torpedoes/ the potential accuracy of “smart” bombs and missiles (Armed forces fr Vietnam War)* [the first sense was revived in the 1880s and much reprehended] **See** GET WISE, STREET-SMART

smart aleck or alec modifier: *I asked you to come here to give us advice, not smart-aleck talk* **n phr** SMART-ASS (1865 +) [perhaps fr Aleck Hoag, a thief whose fate was described in an 1844 book by George Wilkes]

smart (or one smart) apple n phr An intelligent person; sagacious person: *I told you. You’re up against a smart apple* (1940s +)

◁**smart-ass or wiseass**▷ **adj:** *That’s a smart-ass question* **n** A person who is quick to offer an often-abrasive opinion or comment from a posture of superior intelligence and learning; BIGMOUTH, KNOW-IT-ALL, WISE GUY: *You’re a real wiseass sometimes, Mary Anne* (1960 +)

smart bomb n phr **1** An aerial bomb that can be guided directly to its target (1972 +) **2** Any similarly precise and directed agent: *Researchers experimenting with mice have created a cancer “smart bomb” that attacks and kills leukemia cells without harming normal cells*

smart card n phr An identity card that provides extensive information on a person by means of a tiny microchip (1980 +)

smart cookie n phr An intelligent person; sagacious judge: *Joanna was a very smart cookie, and she was apt to put two and two together* (1948 +)

smart drug n phr Any substance alleged to make the user more alert

or better able to remember things: *Americans have taken to smart drugs to prepare for tests, prime themselves for business meetings or just burn a little brighter at parties (1980s +)*

smart guy *n* SMART-ASS: *Well, I've got news for you, smart guy (1940s +)*

smart money, the *n phr* The predictions, expectations, and bets of those who know best: *Try to stick where the smart money is (1926 +)*

smartmouth *n* An annoyingly impudent, assertive, and critical person; SMART-ASS: *keeps getting beaten up because he's a smartmouth at school (1968 +)*

smarts *n* Intelligence; BRAINS, SAVVY: *If they had any smarts, they would have put a silencer on a gun and pumped a bullet in his head [1970 + ; probably on analogy with brains and wits] See STREET SMARTS*

smarty or **smartie** *n* smart aleck; SMART-ASS, WISEASS • Most often used in address: *I will bid seven on hearts, smarty (1861 +)*

smarty-pants *n* smart aleck; SMART-ASS, SMARTY: *That smarty-pants always gives a flip answer (1930s +)*

smash *n* **1** A total failure; a disaster, esp a financial collapse (1839 +) **2** (also **smash hit**) A great success; HIT: *Key Largo is an unqualified smash (1923 + Show business)* **3** Wine (1959 + *Black*)

smash and grab *modifier* (also **crash and dash**) Crude and violent: *There's a major difference between the smash-and-grab tactics of the tabloids and the relatively sober treatment these stories get on the networks/ Deregulation promoted the casino economy, with its leveraged buyouts and smash-and-grab finance/ The attempted burglary*

was like scores of other “crash-and-dash” thefts **n phr** A crude and violent robbery: *The smash and grab guys break through your closed window and grab your valuables, knowing that you’re going to be stunned and perhaps blinded by bits of flying glass (1927+)*

smashed **adj** Drunk: *I’m really able to go into a bar without getting smashed (1962+)*

smasher or **smasheroo** **n** Something remarkably impressive and successful: *I thought the book was a smasher/ sequel to 1994’s surprise smasheroo (entry form 1800+, variant 1940s+)*

smashing **adj** Excellent; wonderful • Still chiefly British: *I told her she had a smashing figure (1911+)*

smash-mouth **n phr** **1** A particularly violent sort of football: *Smash-mouth was their type of game* **2** Aggression; a condition of confrontation (1990s+)

smear¹ **modifier**: *They never stoop to smear tactics n: His whole campaign was a vile smear of the other party’s man* • The current term is “negative campaigning” (1943+) **v** **1** To knock unconscious; KAYO (1920+ *Prizefighting*) **2** To defeat decisively; trounce; CLOBBER, SKUNK: *The Rangers got smeared 12-zip (1900+)* **3** To attack someone’s reputation, esp with false or vague charges of the ad hominem sort; defame: *His technique was always to smear his opponent and avoid talking about issues of substance (1847+)* [revived in the 1930s in the political context]

smear² **v** SCHMEAR¹ (1950s+)

◁**smeg**▷ or ▷**smegma**◁ **n** Something quite yukky or despicable, as

the secretion beneath the male foreskin or around the female clitoris

smell v 1 To be nasty and contemptible; STINK, SUCK: *The whole damn situation smells* (1933 +) **2** To take narcotics by inhaling; SNIFF: *You must be smelling the stuff* (1949 +)

smell a rat v phr To be suspicious: *impossible for Schwartz not to have smelled a rat if he had day-to-day contact* (1550 +)

smell blood v phr To be aroused and exhilarated by the imminent destruction of one's prey or opponent: *The Democrats "smelled blood" over the trade issue* [1970s +; fr the behavior of predators who attack prey, esp wounded prey]

smeller n The nose: *a sock on his smeller* (1700 +)

smell like a rose See COME UP SMELLING LIKE A ROSE

smell something out v phr To look for something as if by smelling: *I figure I can't do any worse than the others by coming out here in the street and trying to smell it out* (1538 +)

smell to (high) heaven v phr To smell very bad and very strongly: *smells to high heaven after nuking the Lean Cuisine*

smidgen or smidge or smitch n A little bit; CUNTHAIR, SKOSH: *The deck may be stacked a smidgen against Lianna's husband/ I was a smidge stressed as a result of a call from Mother* [1886 +; origin unknown; possibly fr Scots Gaelic *smidin*, "small syllable, hence tiny quantity"; found by 1845 as *smitchin* and by 1878 as *smidgeon*]

smile See CRACK A SMILE

smiley *See* EMOTICON

smiley face or **smiley n phr** A computer “emoticon” (: -), used to express happiness or approval: *messages studded with smiley faces* (1990s + Computer)

-smith combining word A person who makes or skillfully uses what is indicated; ARTIST: *jokesmith/ tunesmith/ wordsmith/ wafflesmith* (1813 +)

smoke n 1 A cigarette or cigar: *I mooched a couple of smokes* (1882 +)
2 Marijuana; POT: *something called smoke or snow* (1940s + Narcotics)
3 Inferior liquor, esp denatured alcohol: *drink that smoke, then pass out petrified* (1904 + Hoboes) **4** (also **smoke and mirrors**) Artful lies; talk meant to deceive; BULLSHIT: *Those sections of the article are pure smoke* (1565 +) ◀**5**▶ A black person (1913 +) **6** A very fast fastball: *Has Joe lost his smoke?/ the Yankees’ smoke-throwing reliever* (1912 + Baseball) **7** A very fast runner, vehicle, etc: *He’s no smoke as for speed* (1980s +) **v 1** To shoot someone dead; PLUG: *This wasn’t a Jamaican whore got smoked in some vacant lot* (1926 + Underworld & police) **2** To be executed in a gas chamber: *still faced death and might one day be smoked* (1970s + Underworld and police) **3**: *pitchers are supposed to be cranked up and smoking* **4** To be very angry; BURN, STEAM: *He was smoking for about an hour after she called him that* (1548 +) **5** (also **smoke off**) To defeat utterly; trounce; CLOBBER: *He didn’t simply beat Carl Lewis. He smoked him/ The dreaded Bostons came to town, and the Brewers smoked ‘em on opening day/ For a time we “smoked off” our rivals* (1980s +) **6** To hit very hard; CLOBBER: *“Just let me take my jacket off,” and bang, the guy from Chicago*

smokes him/ Alomar smoked a single to left (1980s +) See BLOW SMOKE, BRING SCUNNION, GO UP IN SMOKE, J, JOY SMOKE

smoke, a n Tobacco and a smoking of tobacco (1882 +)

smoke, the n phr Opium: *He went for the smoke himself (1884 + Narcotics)*

smoked out adj phr Intoxicated by narcotics; HIGH, STONED (1990s + Narcotics)

smoke factory n phr An opium den: *a No 9 pill in Hop Lee's smoke factory (1905 + Narcotics)*

smoke-filled room n A place where intense discussion or negotiation takes place: *the smoke-filled rooms of the Democratic Party*

smoke out v phr To find out: *I'll try to smoke out where the bodies are hidden* [1720 +; fr the use of *smoke* in order to get bees and other animals *out* of their domiciles]

smoker n 1 Something thrown, moving, played, etc, very fast: *a number which is a quartet smoker 2* (also **smokeball**) A very fast fastball (*entry form 1912 +, variant 1940s +*)

smoke (or chiba) shop n phr A place where one may buy marijuana, esp a shop where it is sold rather openly: *Smoke shops are taking over our streets/ Thousands of clerks operate more than 800 smoke shops around the city (1960s + Narcotics)*

Smokey Bear or Smokey the Bear or Smoky n phr or n A police officer, esp a state highway patrol officer: *Keep Don advised for the location of "Smokies"* [1970s + Citizens band & truckers; fr the fact

that many state highway patrol police wear a broad-brimmed ranger's hat like that worn by the US Forest Service's ursine symbol]

smokin' adj Attractive; good-looking; desirable; COOL, HOT: *What's smokin' in collectibles? Tobacco jars!/ That is a smokin' car* [1980s+; a synonym of *hot*]

smoking adj Providing evidence of crime or guilt: *smoking bed/ smoking bimbo/ smoking checkbook* [1980s+; modeled on *smoking gun*]

smoking gun n phr Incontestable evidence; the GOODS: *They had discovered the "smoking gun" that would destroy the general's case/ In fact, there may be no "smoking gun," no incontrovertible, black-and-white evidence of wrongdoing* [1970s+; fr the image of a murderer caught with the fatal *smoking* firearm still in hand]

smoky seat n phr The electric chair; old smoky (1940s+)

smooch or **smooge** or **smouge n**: *I'd rather have hooch, and a bit of a smooch* **v 1** To steal; pilfer; MOOCH: *Then she went over to the cash box and smooched four \$20 bills* (1941+) **2** To kiss and caress; NECK, PET: *College kids are still smooching/ a few minutes of torrid hugging and smooching* (1588+) [the pilfering sense probably derives from the kissing sense by way of *mooch*; the kissing sense may be fr German *schmutzen*, "to kiss, to smile"; the dated instance is spelled *smouch*; the term was reestablished as *smooch* in the 1930s]

smoosh or **smush v** To mash: *The one piece of Spandex flattens the curves as it squashes the bulges, so that your top and bottom weight get*

smooshed together evenly (1914 +)

smooth *adj* Excellent; pleasing; attractive: *Boy, she was smooth (1893 + Students)* **See** JUMP SMOOTH

smoothie or **smooth article** or **smooth operator** *n* or *n phr* A person who is attractive, pleasant, and full of finesse: *thought of Dr Hugo Barker as a smooth article/ You think you're such a smoothie [1933 + Students; smoothie is like slicker, but today lacks the connotations of dishonesty and trickiness]*

smurf *n*: *The husband and wife were "smurfs," a type of drug-money launderer. A husband-and-wife smurfing team will travel from bank to bank, posing as strangers v: To avoid being reported by banks, criminals often make numerous deposits of slightly less than \$10,000, a practice known as smurfing (1980s +)*

snaffle *v* To steal; appropriate; SWIPE: *A streetwalker would have snaffled the lot (1725 +)*

snafu (SNA FOO) *adj*: *It's a very snafu set-up here n 1* A very confused situation; FUCK-UP, MESS: *The snafu occurred at Markwood Road 2* A blunder; an egregious mistake; BLOOPER: *My attempt to set things right was a total snafu v: He gave it a good shot, but snafued horribly [WWII armed forces; fr situation normal, all fucked up]*

snail mail *n phr* Mail sent through regular postal service: *Acrobat has the potential to pay for itself rather quickly by eliminating the need to send documents by courier or even regular mail (snail mail, as it is charmingly called by computer aficionados) [1980s + Computer; referring to the slowness of the snail]*

snake *n* **1** A young woman (*WWI Navy*) **2** (also **Snake**) A native or resident of West Virginia (1934+) **3:** *US banks, railways, airlines, and some fast-food restaurants have switched over almost entirely to what is known as the “snake,” where all stations are served by one single-file line (1980s+)* **v** To depart, esp unobtrusively; sneak: *He snakes out of here without an overcoat (1848+)*

snake-bitten or **snakebit** *adj* Helplessly incapacitated; ineffective: *O’Neal seems particularly snake-bitten these days/ I suppose when you’re snakebit you feel lousy. And I sure feel lousy (1940s+)*

snake (or tree) eater *n phr* A special forces soldier trained in survival and commando tactics, the initiates of which actually kill and eat snakes; TREE EATER (1970s+ *Army*)

snake eyes *n phr* The point or the roll of two (1929+ *Crapshooting*)

snakehead *n* **1** Agents who arrange illegal immigration of Chinese: *Sung and the elders in the family raised thousands of dollars to pay the snakeheads to smuggle the young to America (1990s+)* **2** Smuggler; somebody who smuggles illegal immigrants from mainland China into Hong Kong

snake-hips or **swivel-hips** *n* A person whose hips move smoothly and effectively, such as a clever runner in football, a hula dancer, etc (1932+)

snake in the grass *n phr* A sneaky, underhanded person

snake oil *modifier:* *Kenosha officials watch out for the “snake-oil salesmen”* *n phr* A fraudulent remedy: *But I have to admit he sounded sincere, like he really believes in that snake oil he’s peddling (1927+)*

snake poison n phr Whiskey (1889+)

snap n 1 Energy; vim; dash; PIZZAZZ (1865+) 2 A photograph; snapshot (1894+) 3 An insult, esp a public taunt: *In the relative privacy of the dugout, the quick-tempered wreak havoc with what some teams call “snaps”* (1990s+) **v** 1: *The photographer snapped him making a rude gesture* 2 To mock or tease; SNAP ON someone (1960s+ Black) 3 To go crazy; FREAK OUT: *that Richard Herrin should have snapped* (1970s+) [the third noun sense is found by 1648, but the current street and sports use is probably not a survival; the third verb sense is fr the cliché “something snapped in his mind”]

snap, a n phr Something easily done; BREEZE, CINCH: *Winning next time will be a snap* [1845+; fr mid-1800s *a soft snap*, “something snapped up easily, a bargain”]

snap course n phr An easy course; CRIP: *His heavily attended snap course is good for a laugh* (1900+ Students)

snap someone’s head off v phr To make a quick, angry retort: *When I suggested that, she snapped my head off* (1886+)

snap it up v phr To hurry; act faster; SNAP TO IT: *Drop over to the main drag and snap it up* (1940s+)

snap on someone v phr To insult, esp publicly and in a sort of competitive way: *After Ivey spent five minutes on stage snapping on a white man in the audience, they conducted snapping sessions to get contributions from professionals* [1990s+; the general sense is found by 1578, but the current use is probably not a survival]

snap out of it v phr To recover, esp from gloom or sluggardly;

become energetic (1928+)

snapper *n* The point or risible climax of a story or joke; PUNCH LINE, ZINGER: *With Neil Simon's vaudeville snappers what matters is that they come on schedule/ The final snapper was that Lubben never got his income tax paid by his ex-partners, either* [1857+; fr *snapper*, "a cracker on the end of a whip," found by 1817] **See** BRONCO BUSTER

snapping or **snaps** *n*: *Ragging, bagging, snapping, and cracking, these are all word games teens use as a way of competing with one another/ Many blacks regard "snapping," a back-and-forth, can-you-top-this insult contest, as part of their cultural heritage/ I used to think this game was called "playing the dozens," but I recently learned that the '90s term for these insults is "snaps" (1990s+ Teenagers)*

snappy *adj* **1** Quick; brisk; energetic: *Be snappy about it* (1831+) **2** Trim and attractive; fashionable; smart: *wearing a snappy light gray suit* (1881+) **See** MAKE IT SNAPPY

snap to *v phr* To become sharply attentive and responsive: *His soldiers snapped to and did what they were told* [1940s+; fr the quick way a military person *snaps to attention* on command]

snap to (or into) it *v phr* To hurry; go faster; MAKE IT SNAPPY: *Get that floor clean and snap to it* (1967+)

snarf *v* To take or grab: *How to Keep Bandits From "Snarfing" Your Passwords* (1980s+)

snarf up (or down) *v phr* To eat; gobble; SCARF: *We can think of a lot of places we would like to eat chocolate, snarf down a few burgers, and gawk at shiny cars* [1968+; in early 1980s computer slang, defined

in the *Hacker's Dictionary* as “to snarf, sometimes with the connotation of absorbing, processing, or understanding”]

snarky *adj* Irritable; touchy: *She's just in a snarky mood, that's all/ a snarky, no-illusions, but far-from-hopeless comedy* [1906 + ; fr British dialect *snark*, “to find fault, complain,” fr the basic sense “snort, snore”; of echoic origin, with cognates in many Germanic languages]

snatch *n* 1: a \$50,000 ransom to get him back from a snatch 2: A piece of paper covering the slit was rolled aside in the course of a snatch ◀3
▷ The vulva; CUNT: *Put the goddamned piece up her snatch and pulled the trigger* (1903 +) **v** 1 To kidnap: *The kid was snatched as he left school* (1932 +) 2 To steal (1765 +) **See** PUT THE SNATCH ON someone or something

snatcher *n* A kidnapper (1932 +) **See** CRADLE-ROBBER

snazz *n* Elegance; smartness; CLASS: *parading his tricks with skill and snazz* (1930s +)

snazz something **up v phr** To make something smarter and more elegant; enhance; GUSSY UP: *and snazzes them up with appliqués/ Install a new loo, or snazz up your current water closet* (1970s +)

snazzy *adj* 1 Elegant; smart and fashionable; clever and desirable; NIFTY, RITZY: *mounted on snazzy mag-type wheels/ While they may appear snazzy now, time will take its toll* (1932 +) 2 Gaudy and meretricious; HOKEY, JAZZY: *TV's wittiest, toughest, least snazzy news strip* (1970s +) [perhaps a blend of *snappy* and *jazzy*]

sneak *n* (also **sneak preview**): *After a sneak in Chicago they decided to*

shelve it **v** To show a movie unexpectedly to an audience in order to assess its appeal: *We sneaked it in several cities (1960s + Movie studio)*

sneakers or **sneaks** **n** Rubber-soled sports shoes: *wearing a sweater, a shirt, short socks, and sneakers/ Anybody see my old sneaks?* [1895 + ; because one can usually move noiselessly in such footwear]

sneaky **adj** Furtive; shifty; deceptive: *I never trusted that sneaky little weasel (1833 +)*

sneaky pete (or **Pete**) **n phr** **1** Inferior liquor, often homemade or bootleg; PANTHER PISS: *discussing the effects of “sneaky-pete”/ piled into the Ritz bar and polished off a whole row of “sneaky pete” (1940s +)* **2** A cheap fortified wine sold in pint bottles called “jugs”: *full of that cheap wine they call “sneaky pete” (1940s +)* **3** Any cheap and inferior wine (1940s +) **4** Marijuana mixed in wine (1950s +)

snerting **n** Sexual harassment by men: *instituted strict rules against men hounding women (aka “snerting”) (1990s +)*

snide **adj** Contemptible; mean; nasty, esp in an insinuating way • Now used nearly exclusively in reference to remarks and persons who make them: *A woman gets nothing but snide remarks about her driving skills [1859 + ; origin unknown]*

sniff **v** To inhale a narcotic powder; SNORT (1920s + *Narcotics*)

sniffer or **snifter** **n** A cocaine user or addict: *The Baron was “a sniffer” himself (1920s + Narcotics)*

sniffles or **snuffles** **n** A runny nose from a common cold or allergy:

lots of Kleenex for his sniffles (1770s +)

sniff (something) **out v phr** To seek as if by following a scent: *Mike hopes his kids may sniff out something faster than the police (1940s +)*

sniffy or **snifty adj** Disdainful; haughtily fastidious; fault-finding: *even the sniffiest of lexicographers [1871 + ; fr the mien of a person who often seems to be smelling something nasty]*

snifter n 1 A drink of liquor; dram; SLUG, SNORT: *plastered on a couple of snifters (1844 +)* **2** A large, bulbous, stemmed glass used for drinking brandy (1937 +) [origin uncertain; perhaps fr the common upper-respiratory reaction to taking a strong swallow of liquor, also noted in the earlier term *sneezer* and in *snorter*; *snifter*, *sneezer*, and *snorter* were all three used to mean “a strong breeze, gale,” and all three came to mean “something large and impressive, something very strong,” apparently after the drinking senses were established; before the drinking senses, the terms applied to snuff-taking, with its even more pronounced nasal spasms]

snipe n 1 A cigarette or cigar butt (1889 +) **2** An engine-room hand, aircraft mechanic, or other below-decks crew member: *“Snipes” service and maintain their flying crews’ birds (1920 + Navy)* [origin obscure, although apparently these, along with several other slang uses, both British and US, all refer somehow to the long-billed bird and its habits]

snit or **snit-fit n** A fit of angry agitation; SWIVET: *He goes into such a snit that he ploughs the car into a wall/ He has a reputation for throwing considerable snits/ And we forget about our little snit-fit in there*

snitch *n* An informer; RAT, STOOL PIGEON: *Maybe some of my old snitches have run across something new (1785 +)* **v** 1 To inform; SING, SQUEAL: *The little rat snitched and the little snitch ratted (1801 +)* 2 To steal; pilfer; SWIPE: *He snitched a couple of cookies (1904 +)* [noun and first verb senses probably fr underworld slang *snitch*, “nose”]

snog *v* To flirt; court; make love; MAKE OUT, NECK • Chiefly British [1945 +; origin unknown]

snooker (SNŃŃ kər, SNŃŃ) *v* To cheat; swindle; SCAM: *The Chinese clearly believe that they snookered Nixon/ I’ve been snookered before, and it’ll happen again/ The simple arithmetic shows that Koch and the city were snookered [1900s +; fr the pool game called snooker, apparently because a novice at the game can easily be tricked and cheated by an expert; compare euchre]*

snookered *adj* Swindled; cheated: *snookered by the post office again*

snookums *n* Precious one; sweet and dear one • Used to address small dogs, babies, etc: *Yes, you are. You’re my little snookums (1919 +)*

snoop *n* A detective: *Private snoop, hunh?* [ultimately fr Dutch *snoepen*, “pry”]

snoose (SNŃŃS) *n* Snuff, esp a strong moist kind [1912 + Loggers; fr Swedish *snus*, “snuff,” fr *snustobak*]

snoot *n* The nose; snout; SCHNOZZ: *Pokin’ him one in the snoot (1861 +)* **v** To behave haughtily toward; disdain: *people who snoot goat milk (1928 +)*

snoot full or **snootful**, a *n phr* **1** One's intoxicating fill of liquor; a

SKINFUL: *I met a lot of other reporters and I got a snoot full/ You've had a snoot full (1918 +)* **2** More than enough of something; one's fill: *By that time I'd had a snootful of good advice (1940s +)*

snooty adj Snobbish; haughty and disdainful; supercilious; HOITY-TOITY,

SNIFFY: *the snootiest madame in America/ a generally vain and snooty class of men [1919 +; fr the mien of a person who smells something nasty and holds the nose high]*

snooze n **1** Nap or sleep: *not comfortable enough to suit me for a snooze*

2 Something that induces sleep; a soporific event, person, etc: *The concert was a snooze (1960s +)* **v** To sleep; COP ZS, SACK OUT (1789 +) [origin unknown; perhaps echoic of a snore]

snop n Marijuana [1960s + Narcotics; origin unknown]

snork v To drink: *So we sat around snorking beers [1990s +; probably a variant of snort; found as such by 1807 in British dialect]*

snort n **1** A drink of liquor, esp of plain whiskey; HOOKER: *Who's ready for another short snort?/ All hands had another snort (1889 +)* **2** A

dose of narcotic for inhaling; LINE (1951 + Narcotics) **v** To inhale narcotics, esp cocaine; SNIFF: *since ma was a viper, and daddy would snort (1935 + Narcotics)* [drinking sense fr earlier *snorter* of same purport] **See** SNIFFER

snorter See RIPSNORTER, RIP-ROARING

snot n **1** Nasal mucus (1425 +) **2** A despicable person, esp a self-

important nonentity: *Tell that little snot to get lost (1809 +)* **v** To treat someone disdainfully; be haughty: *I should not be "snotted" by*

an owner, maitre d', or waiter (1970s +) [ultimately fr a common Germanic term for "nose," also represented by schnozzle, snout, snoot, etc; the second noun and verb senses probably influenced by snooty]

snotnose or **snottynose** *modifier*: *He's just a snotnose kid* **n** An importunate upstart; a neophyte, esp a knowing one: *some snotnose in New York (1941 +)*

snot-rag **n** A handkerchief or tissue (1895 +)

snotty *adj* Supercilious and disdainful: *I won't give that snotty bastard the time of day [1926 + ; fr snot and influenced by snooty]*

snow **n** **1** Cocaine: *And he was also snorting snow (1914 + Narcotics)*
2: *I thought his rationale was pure snow* **v** To persuade in a dubious cause, esp by exaggeration, appeals to common sentiment, etc; BLOW SMOKE: *The electorate will not be snowed into supporting that silly measure (1945 +) [verb sense fr the idea of snowing someone under with articulate reasons] See EYES LIKE PISS-HOLES IN THE SNOW*

snowball **v** **1** To increase rapidly: *Soon the racket began to snowball (1929 +)* **2** To dominate and crush; STEAMROLLER: *He's less sensitive to people's feelings. He runs over them, snowballs them (1850 +) [first sense fr the fact that a snowball rolled downhill becomes larger and larger; second sense fr the notion of attacking someone with snowballs]*

snowball's chance in hell, a **n phr** No possibility whatever; CHINAMAN'S CHANCE: *He doesn't have a snowball's chance in hell of getting that degree in time (1934 +)*

snowbird *n* **1** A retired person, usu elderly, who winters in the sunny South: *A Connecticut pharmaceutical firm hires elder “snowbirds” during the warmer months and holds their jobs open while they winter in Florida (1980s +)* **2** (also **snowblower**) A cocaine user or addict; COKEHEAD: *Nelly’s eyes had a glassy, faraway look. Snowbird, he thought to himself (1914 + Narcotics)* **3** Any narcotic addict (1931 + Narcotics)

snow (or ski) bunny *n phr* A young woman who frequents skiing resorts (1953 +)

snowed in (or up) *adj phr* Intoxicated with narcotics; HIGH (1920s + Narcotics)

snow job *n phr* Strong and persistent persuasion, esp in a dubious cause; an overwhelming advocacy: *This is no snow job, either. I wish I had 25 Jerry Koosmans/ Don’t let Slattery give you a snow job and get you into trouble (WWII armed forces)* *v*: *I was snow-jobbed into giving the maximum [fr the idea of snowing under with insistent reasons; now probably reinforced by the narcotics sense of snow]*

snowman *n*: *Watson took a snowman, as golfers call an 8, here on the fifteenth, ruining what otherwise might have been the low round of the day/ “Whaddya have?” A snowman (an 8 on the hole) (1980+ Golf)*

snow queen *n phr* A black homosexual who prefers white sex partners: *Zane, of course, was white, as were all the men Jones slept with in those years; in the parlance of the subculture, Jones was a “snow queen” (1971 + Homosexuals)*

snow someone or something under *v phr* To burden or assail with

excessive demands, work, etc; overwhelm: *until a frailer man than he would have been snowed under* (1880 +)

snozzle *See* SCHNOZZ

snubby or **snubbie** *n* A cheap, short-barreled revolver; SATURDAY NIGHT SPECIAL: *cheap, concealable guns with short barrels called “snubbies”/ the short-barreled handguns known as “snubbies”* (1970s +)

snuff modifier Showing or doing murder, esp the killing of women in sadistic shows or orgies: *the snuff murder of an abused and homeless teenaged girl/ the vogue of the snuff film* (1975 +) **v** To kill: *more chillingly, STRESS snuffed at least 20 civilians/ Garlic never snuffed me* (1973 +) [fr the idea of *snuffing out* a flame; found by 1884 in the form *snuff out*] *See* UP TO SNUFF

snuff film (or **movie**) *n phr* A movie in which the actual killing of a person is shown • Filmed murder is very likely a lurid idea rather than a fact: *Year Zero has the shock value of a snuff film/ If he'd told them he was making a snuff movie he would have been treated better* (1975 +)

snuffing *n* A killing, esp a murder: *too eager to put together two unconnected snuffings* (1970s +)

snuffy *adj* Drunk (1823 +)

snuggle-bunnies *See* PLAY SNUGGLE-BUNNIES

snuggle-pup *n* A boyfriend or girlfriend (1922 +)

snuggy *n* A sexually interesting and interested woman: *It's a snuggy. No, too young, a snuette. Fourteen years old and hot to trot* (1970s +)

so *See* SAY-SO

soak *n* A drunkard; LUSH, SOUSE (1820 +) **v** **1** To hit; SOCK: *to soak you in the midriff/ Why don't you soak him?* (1896 +) **2** To overcharge; make someone pay exorbitantly: *a good case of how soak-the-rich corporation taxes wind up right in the pocketbooks of all of us* (1895 +)

soaked *adj* Drunk [1722 +; one of Benjamin Franklin's catalog of words for "drunk"]

◁**soak one's hose**▷ **v phr** To do the sex act; SCREW: *I think maybe he soaking his hose* (1990s +)

soak yourself *See* GO SOAK YOURSELF

so-and-so *n* A despicable person; BASTARD, JERK: *I think I'll sue the so-and-so* *See* SON OF A BITCH

soap *n* **1** SOFT SOAP (1854 +) **2** SOAP OPERA (1943 +) **v** To flatter and cajole; SWEET-TALK: *one of those Republicans who soaped Vivien* (1853 +) *See* NO SOAP

soapbox *n* The attitude from which one orates, pontificates, counsels urgently, etc: *Be careful or she'll get on the old soapbox and preach about fiscal iniquity* (1907 +)

soaper or **soper** or **sopor** *n* A sedative drug, methaqualone; Quaalude™: *an apparently insatiable market for the "sopers"* [1960s + Narcotics; fr *Sopor*, the trademark of a brand of the drug, fr the Latin root for "sleep"]

soap opera *modifier*: *The average man and woman in this country live*

a soap-opera existence **n phr** **1** A radio or television daily dramatic series typically showing the painful, passionate, and riveting amours and disasters of more or less ordinary people: *a new soap opera which threatens to out-misery all the others* **2** A life or incidents in life that resemble such shows: *You want to hear the latest in my never-ending soap opera?* [1939 +; fr the fact that in radio days such shows were typically sponsored by soap manufacturers]

soaps, the **n phr** Radio or television daily dramatic series collectively (1943 +)

◁**sob** or **SOB**▷ (pronounced as separate letters) **n** SON OF A BITCH (1918 +)

so bad one can taste it **adv phr** Very urgently; very keenly: *She wanted the book so bad she could taste it* [1960s +; fr the earlier expression *I have to piss so bad I can taste it*, implying that the urine had risen in one to the level of the throat and tongue]

sober **See** COLD SOBER, STONE COLD SOBER

sob sister **n phr** A woman news reporter or writer who specializes in sentimental or human-interest material (1912 +)

sob story **n phr** A very affecting tale, esp an account of one's disabling troubles; a story that disingenuously appeals to one's charitable nature: *Do not weep crocodile tears over media sob stories* (1913 +)

sock¹ **n** **1**: *To land another sock on Mr Renault's nose* (1700 +) **2** A set of mounted cymbals sounded by tramping on a foot pedal; HIGH-HAT (1920 + *Musicians*) **v** To strike; hit hard; CLOBBER, PASTE: *bein' socked to*

dreamland (1700+) [probably echoic]

sock² n 1 A place where money is kept, esp saved; also, savings collectively: *Every dollar that he will receive for the current four-year term will go into the family sock* (1924+) **2** A box, bag, safe, etc, where money is kept (1930s+ *Underworld*) [fr the use of a sock as a container; one reference of 1698 indicates that sock meant “pocket” in underworld slang]

sock away v phr To save or horde; put away as savings: *Last year that group socked away \$128 billion in savings bonds/ The American people socked away \$3,200,000 in the year’s second quarter* [perhaps fr the notion of concealing money in a sock; but sock, “sew up and conceal,” is attested fr the alteration of 1800s *sock* or *sock down*, “pay, dispose of money”]

sockdollager or socdollager n 1 A decisive blow (1830+) **2** A person or thing that is remarkable, wonderful, superior, etc; HUMDINGER: *his Dauntless Quest to lay his Sockdollager of a Product at the feet of the Public* (1838+) [fr a metathesis of *doxology*, “the finish or finishing part of a religious service,” as suggesting something that terminates, like a heavy blow; influenced by *sock*¹]

socked in adj phr Plagued by adverse weather, esp by fog, heavy rain or snow, etc: *You may find yourself partly socked in if you’re coming down the Jersey Turnpike this morning* [1953+; probably fr the adverse weather indications given by the *wind sock* at early or small airports; perhaps influenced by the notion of being closed up in a sock as money is when it is *socked away*]

sock 'em See ROCK 'EM SOCK 'EM

sockeroo modifier: *putting some sockeroo catches in the president's plan*
n A great success; something with extraordinary power and impact; esp, a lavish and popular film, show, etc; **BLOCKBUSTER:** *an old-fashioned Hippodrome sockeroo/ with Paramount's "Dear Ruth" the only sockeroo (1942 +)*

sock hop modifier: *a kind of sock-hop benefit for Approaching Middle Age*
n phr An lively and informal party where young people typically dance in their stockinged feet: *I feel like a kid at a sock hop, sneaking in here/ many side forays to the drive-in burger stand, the sock hop, lover's lane (1950s + Teenagers)*

sock it to someone v phr To attack someone vigorously and effectively; **LET someone HAVE IT:** *Some congressional liberals would like to sock it to business by taking away the tax reductions/ Thanks for socking it to Barbie, that all-American plastic tart (1877 +)*

socko adj Very powerful; explosively impressive; terrific: *Okay, now a socko surprise/ the socko effect, recorded here by camera (1939 +)*
adv: *find they do socko in their native heath (1948 +)* **interj** An exclamation imitation the impact of a hard blow and expressing abrupt force: *Socko! He punches the villain in the jaw (1924 +)* **n** A hard punch (1925 +)

socks See DROP YOUR COCKS AND GRAB YOUR SOCKS, KNOCK someone's SOCKS OFF

socks off, the adv phr Very thoroughly • Always used, like the semantically similar *the brains out* and *the pants off*, to intensify a verb: *undressed her and screwed the socks off her/ a theoretical homily*

on the true meaning of Eros that, I am forced to admit, absolutely bored the socks off me [1845 + ; the earliest recorded form is *knock the socks off*, and the usage has been revived recently] **See** BEAT THE SOCKS OFF someone

sod *n* A male; man; GUY • Chiefly British: *Your lodge brother, your neighbor, the guy on the beat who's just a plain good sod* (1818 +) **v** To curse and vilify; revile extremely; DAMN, FUCK, PISS ON someone or something: *You do not send the Prime Minister to China to bargain for just an airport. Sod the airport* [fr sodomite and sodomize]

soda jerk (or **jerker**) *n phr* A person who makes icecream sodas and other treats at a soda fountain: *She worked for a while as a soda jerk/ the champion soda jerker of the United States* [1883 + ; fr earlier *beer jerk*, “tapster,” perhaps fr the action of drawing back on the vertical handle that controlled the flow of beer; perhaps also related to *jerewater*] **See** JERK SODA

sodding *modifier* Fucking • A British expression of anger or contempt, or an intensive

sod off *v phr* To leave; depart; FUCK OFF • Often an irritated command: *Well, that's that. If you don't like it, sod off* (1960 + British)

soft *adj* **1** Nonaddictive, as drugs **2** Stupid: *soft in the head* **See** WALK SOFT

◁**soft-ass**▷ *adj* Slack and feeble; ineffectual; WIMPY: *basic economic psychology, not the soft-ass welfarism of Down East* (1970s +)

softball *adj* Trivial and contemptible; nonserious: *a softball question if ever there was one/ This softball performance by Democrats on the*

Judiciary Committee in the Thomas hearings left many in a huge TV audience wondering what legitimate claim to national power this bumbling crowd could possibly have [1970s+; based on hardball]

softcore *adj* Somewhat less than extreme; moderated; slightly ameliorated: *The fashion magazine is softcore pornography/ a softcore picture of a bare-chested woman* **n** Something that is not extreme, esp a sexually arousing but not carnally explicit movie, magazine, etc: *She doesn't care for X-rated, but enjoys a little softcore now and then [1966+; based on hardcore]*

soft drug *n phr* A narcotic like marijuana and some hallucinogens, thought of as nonaddictive and only slightly damaging to health [1959+; based on *hard drug*]

softie or **softy** *n* A person who is amiably and quickly compliant; someone easy to cajole and victimize: *You are a patsy, a quick push, a big softie (1886+)*

soft in the head *adj phr* Stupid; dim-witted; LAMEBRAINED [1938+; *soft* is found by 1621 in the sense "silly, simple, foolish"]

soft landing *n phr* A slowing of the economy without a crash or recession: *A weakening dollar clearly holds risks for the White House, where prospects of a soft landing after 48 months of economic growth offered some hope (1980s+)*

soft money (or **currency**) *n phr* **1** Currency that is highly inflated or likely to become less and less valuable: *During the first two months of this year, soft money contributions, chiefly from industry, flowed into the coffers of the Republican National Committee (1940+)* **2**

Campaign donations that are not regulated by the Federal Election Commission: *raising millions of dollars of what is known in election-financing language as “soft money”/ Clinton is behind in the collection of soft money, funds that are supposed to go for “party-building activities” but can make a big difference in a Presidential contest (1980s + Politics) 3 Money from research grants, which may run out if the grant is not renewed (1976 + Universities) [modeled on hard money]*

soft on *adv phr* Romantically attracted; also, easy on someone: *soft on Kevin Costner/ soft on violators*

soft-pedal *v* To make less prominent; deemphasize; DOWNPLAY: *Even my friends advised me to soft-pedal my criticisms* [1915 +; fr the *pedal* on a piano that *softens* the notes played]

soft sell *n phr* Selling or advertising in a nonstrident, noninsistent tone [1955 +; modeled on *hard sell*]

soft soap *n phr* Flattery; cajolement; SWEET-TALK: *I won her over finally with a lot of soft soap* (1830 +) *v*: *We had to soft-soap the electorate pretty shabbily* (1840 +)

soft touch *n phr* **1** A person from whom it is easy to borrow or wheedle something: *You get the reputation of being a soft touch* (1939 +) **2** SOFTIE (1940s +) **3** An easy job; a sinecure: *He spent his life seeking the ultimate soft touch* (1955 +)

SoHo *n* The area in New York City that is located south of Houston Street (1970s +)

so hot *See* NOT SO HOT

SOL (pronounced as separate letters) *adv* Shit out of luck; ruined; KAPUT: *If the press gets ahold of this, we're SOL* [WWI armed forces; fr *shit out of luck*]

so last year *modifier* Outdated: *jellies are so last year*

sold *adj* Cheated; deceived; EUCHRED, SCREWED: *I've tunneled, hydraulicked, and cradled, and I have been frequently sold* [1876 +; one source traces the use to 1597 in Shakespeare]

soldier *n* **1** DEAD SOLDIER (1917 +) **2** A low-ranking member of the Mafia; an ordinary thug or gangster (1963 + *Underworld*) *v* To

avoid work; idle; shirk; FUCK THE DOG, GOLDBRICK: *He soldiered on the job and the place was deserted (1840 + Nautical) See* FIRST MAN, SUNDAY SOLDIER

soldier on v phr To persist doggedly: *A little warning bell went off, but I soldiered on (1954 +)*

sold on, be v phr To be convinced of the value of something or someone; strongly favor or accept: *It took me a half hour to get sold on the job (1928 +)*

solid adj Wonderful; remarkable; GREAT, GROOVY • Said to have been used regularly by Louis Armstrong: *Man, what solid jive/ That's solid, Willie, let's get together and blow (1920 + Jazz musicians)*

so long interj A parting salutation [1865 +; origin unknown; perhaps fr German *adieu so lange*; perhaps fr Hebrew *shalom* and related Arabic *salaam*, both greetings meaning “peace”; perhaps fr Irish *slan*, “health,” used as a toast and a salutation]

some adj Very good; very effective; real • Often used ironically: *In three weeks England will have her neck wrung like a chicken. Some neck! Some chicken! (1808 +)*

somebody n A consequential person: *Leroy was a somebody/ I could have been somebody, Charley. I could have been a contender (1566 +)*

some jeans See STRETCH SOME JEANS

some kind of adj phr Very good; very effective; SOME: *God, isn't she some kind of a singer? (1970 +)*

some pumpkins n phr Something or someone very effective, impressive, etc: *He is some pumpkins (1846 +)*

some skin *See* GIVE SOME SKIN, SKIN

something *n* A remarkable person or thing: *Did you see his shirt? It's something!* (1582 +) *See* MAKE SOMETHING OUT OF

something else *n phr* SOMETHING [1909 +; an intensive of *something*]

something else again *n phr* Something quite different; something contrasting; DIFFERENT ANIMAL: *The question of wages is something else again* (1949 +)

something fierce (or **awful**) *adv phr* In a harsh and pronounced way; severely: *He cusses her out something fierce/ She came at me something awful* (entry form 1909 +, variant 1898 +)

something on the ball *n phr* Talent; skill; ability: *a guy with something on the ball* [1912 +; fr the curve, speed, etc, that a baseball pitcher puts *on the ball*]

something the cat brought in *n phr* Something or someone bedraggled, perhaps due to weather (1928 +) *See* LIKE SOMETHING THE CAT DRAGGED IN

some Zs *See* COP SOME ZS

song *See* RAP SONG, TORCH SONG

song and dance or **song** *n phr* or *n* A prepared account or speech aimed at persuasion, apology, advocacy, wheedling, etc: *A flimsy excuse or transparent lie is called "a song and dance"/ Some bum will brace you with a long song of utter inconsequence* (1895 +) *See* GO INTO one's DANCE

◁**son of a bitch** or **sumbitch**▷ (also **son of a b** or **son of a buck** or

son of a gun or **son of a so-and-so**, all euphemistic) *interj* An exclamation of anger, annoyance, amazement, disappointment, etc: *Son of a bitch! The thing's busted again!* *n phr* or *n* **1** A despicable person; BASTARD, SHITHEEL: *I told the son of a bitch what I thought of him* (entry form 1707+, variants 1975+; *gun* 1786+) **2** Something very difficult or vexatious, esp a hard task: *Getting that thing fitted was a son of a bitch* **3** A person or thing that is remarkable, wonderful, superior, etc; BITCH: *Their new album is a son of a bitch, I tell you/ a big son of a buck* [the *son of a gun* variant was said by Admiral Smythe to have been “originally applied to boys born afloat,” at a time when women could accompany men to sea, and when children could be born and cradled under a gun or gun carriage, hence have no proper legitimate parentage]

◁**son-of-a-bitching** or **sumbitching**▷ *adj* Wretched; accursed: *I'm going to have a son-of-a-bitching press conference of my own* (1970s+)

Sooner modifier: *the Sooner football team* *n* A native or resident of Oklahoma (1930+) [fr the fact that some settlers entered the public land and staked their claims *sooner* than the legal date and hour in 1889]

SOP or **sop** (pronounced as separate letters) *n* The way things are properly and usually done: *The SOP here is that you ask the chairman first* [WWII armed forces; fr *standard operating procedure*]

soper or **sopor** *See* SOAPER

soph (SAHF) *n* A sophomore (1778+ *University*)

soppy *adj* Sentimental; maudlin; MUSHY, SCHMALTZY: *the soppy story of a*

rich-boy drop-out (1918 +)

sore *adj* Angry; irritated; PISSED OFF: *I was sore* (1738 +)

sorehead *n* An irritable person; a constant complainer; a grouch (1848 +)

soreheaded *adj* Angry; resentful; irritable (1844 +)

sore thumb *See* STICK OUT

sorrow *See* DROWN one's SORROWS

sorry or **<sorry-ass>** *adj* Wretched; worthless; inferior; HALF-ASSED: *this one kid, and he was a sorry shit/ The reputation of the Barclay has been one of sorry-ass service/ One more sorry-ass useless killing* (entry form 1250 +, variant 1970s +)

sorry about that *sentence* I am sorry; please forgive me • Most often an ironic understatement, as when one has been responsible for making a big mistake [1960s +; popularized in the 1960s TV program *Get Smart*]

sort of or **sorta** *adv* Somewhat: *sorta mixed-up* (1839 +)

SOS¹ (pronounced as separate letters) *n* The usual tedious exaggerations, pieties, wretched food, etc [WWII armed forces; fr *same old shit*]

SOS² (pronounced as separate letters) *n* Chipped beef on toast or some similar food; SHIT ON A SHINGLE: *It was commonly referred to in the service as SOS* [WWII armed forces; fr *shit on a shingle*]

so-so *adj* Average; ordinary: *It's a so-so movie* (1530 +)

so's your old man *interj* An exclamation of contempt and defiance, usu reciprocal: *the most desperate exercise of so's-your-old-man since polemics began (1925 +)*

soul *adj* **1** Pertaining to a moving form of popular African-American music: *program content on soul radio stations/ That's what the Soul scene taught everybody* **2: a soul ballad/ a soul-jazz-blues quintet** **n** **1** An instinctive, sensitive, humorous, and sympathetic quality felt by black persons to be inherent and to constitute their essential and valuable attribute: *He's got soul when he dances! I mean Super Soul!* **2 (also soul music)** This quality in music, and music having this quality: *When Aretha Franklin pours forth a thousand cups of soul (1946 + Jazz musicians)* *See* BLUE-EYED SOUL, BODY AND SOUL, GRIPE **one's ASS**

soul brother *n phr* A male black person; BLOOD, BROTHER (1957 + *Black*)

Soul City or Soulville *n phr* Harlem (1959 + *Black*)

soul food *n phr* Food characteristic of and preferred by black persons, esp of Southern culture (1957 + *Black*)

soul kiss *n phr* An intraoral and interlingual osculation, usu of a steamy sort; FRENCH KISS (1953 +) **v phr**: *The blissful pair soul-kissed the evening away*

soul sister *n phr* A female black person; SISTER (1957 + *Black*)

sound v **1** To taunt or provoke; goad; RAZZ **2** SIGNIFY (1950s + *Street gangs*)

sound bite *n phr* A very brief excerpt of speech or film used esp in political campaigns to make a quick impression: *They present him*

chiefly in a staccato series of sound bites (late 1980s +)

sound off *v phr* **1** To talk, esp to complain, loud and long; bluster: *Its leaders have sounded off on various issues (WWI Army)* **2** To boast; brag: *He was sounding off again about what a big shot he is (WWII Army)*

soup *n* **1** Nitroglycerine; NITRO (1902 +) **2** Fuel, esp that used in fast cars, airplanes, etc (1940s +) **3** The foamy part of a wave: *a big wave with lots of soup, or white water (1962 + Surfers)* **4** Developing fluid or bath (1929 + Photography) *v* **1** SOUP UP (1940s +) **2:** *I had the lab soup my test roll normal, and the first frame was perfect* **See** DUCK SOUP, IN THE SOUP, JERKWATER, LAUGHING SOUP, PEA SOUP

soup-and-fish *n* A man's formal evening dress: *getting into the soup-and-fish* [1908 + ; fr the formality of a dinner that commences with the *soup* and then the *fish* course]

soupbone or **souper** *n* A pitcher's pitching arm [1930 + Baseball; probably fr the notion that *soup* represents one's sustenance; found by 1910 as "the pitcher"]

souped up *adj phr* **1** Producing a higher power or acceleration than the normal: *a Ford with a souped-up motor/ teenage infatuation with souped-up cars in which speed-crazy kids raced* **2** Increased or heightened in value, attraction, production, etc: *the souped-up Premium Bonds are also designed to this end* [1949 + ; fr *supercharged*, referring to a pump that forces additional air into the cylinders of an engine to increase its power; perhaps reinforced by *soup*, "fuel for a powerful engine," and "material injected into a horse with a view to changing its speed or temperament," the latter attested fr

1911 and earlier]

soup job *n phr* A car that has been altered mechanically for increased power and speed (1940s+ Teenagers)

soup-strainer *n* A mustache, esp a luxuriant one (1932+)

soup to nuts *n phr* Start to finish; all of the courses or parts (1950s+)

soup up *v phr* To increase power and speed above the normal; supercharge: *He souped up the motors* (1931+) **See** SOUPED UP

soupy *adj* SOPPY (1953+)

sour *See* GO SOUR

sourball or sourbelly *modifier*: *Everyone thought it was funny except the sourballs instructor* **n** SOREHEAD (1900+)

sourpuss or sourpan *n* A morose person; a chronic complainer and moaner; PICKLEPUSS: *the regular assortment of first-night sourpusses and professional runners down/ He'd change into a sourpan* (entry form 1937+, variant 1942+)

souse *n* 1 A drunkard; LUSH: *A wonderful thyroid substance sobered up the souse in 30 minutes* (1906+) **2** Drunkenness; intoxication: *Economic and religious saviors give a new kind of emotional souse* (1903+) [fr an extension of *souse*, "pickle brine, something pickled," hence semantically akin to *soak*, "drunkard," and *pickled*, "drunk"]

soused *adj* (Variation: **to the gills** may be added) Drunk [1613+; probably fr the image of a pickled herring or other pickled fish]

South See a MOUTH FULL OF SOUTH

south of the border *adj phr* Failed and ineffective; rejected; NG • The phrase is similar to and enacted by the thumbs-down sign: *As performances go, yours was somewhat south of the border* [1970s+; apparently a blend of the general notion of down as the direction of failure and rejection with the legendary significance of the Mexican *border* as the demarcation *south* of which a hunted or rejected person may disappear] **See** GO SOUTH

southpaw *modifier*: *switched to a southpaw stance for his 11th round* **n**
1 A left-handed player, esp a pitcher; FORKHANDER: *Southpaw Warren Spahn pitched his 17th victory (Baseball)* **2** Any left-handed person: *Many brilliant persons are southpaws, although perhaps only coincidentally (1940s+)* [apparently coined by the humorist Finley Peter Dunne, “Mr Dooley,” when he was a Chicago sports journalist and baseball diamonds were regularly oriented with home plate to the west]

sow-belly *n* Fat salt pork, or bacon (1867+)

so what *interj* **1** An exclamation of specified indifference; BIG DEAL: *When she heard the president was outside, she said, “So what?”* **2** An exclamation of defiance, reciprocal challenge, etc: *He told me I had screwed the affair up, and I said, “So what?”* (1934+)

so what else is new or **what else is new** *sentence* Do you have any other startling information? TELL ME ABOUT IT • Always used with heavy irony: *We are told that Stalin’s was an exceptionally evil mind. So what else is new?/ Once again, headlines warn of a trade war between*

the U.S. and Japan. So what else is new? (1950s +)

sozzled *adj* Drunk (1886 +)

space or **space out** *v* or *v phr* To daydream; wool-gather; not attend to what one is doing: *He'd space on calling, break plans with me to hang out with his friends (1968 + Teenagers)* **See** SPACE CADET

space cadet or **space-case** or **space-out** *n phr* or *n* A mad or eccentric person, esp one who seems stuporous or out of touch with reality as if intoxicated by narcotics; NUT, SPACED-OUT: *Alda presents her as such a space cadet that the agony of divorce is tempered/ meant to convince the jury that he is an unreliable space-out, that perhaps he was hallucinating [1980s + ; probably fr the 1950s TV program Tom Corbett, Space Cadet, which followed the adventures of a group of teenage cadets at a 24th-century space academy, thought of humorously as being far out, way out, etc]*

spaced-out *adj* **1** (also **spaced** or **spacey** or **spacy**) Stuporous from narcotic intoxication; in a daze: *queerly bashful, shy, respectful, or spaced-out/ with very spaced-out movements, examines the parts of her body/ You get into a trance, spaced, makin' plans* **2** Crazy or eccentric; NUTTY: *the teacher, a spacey and sweetly strange spinster/ He is not spaced-out, a point he makes clear in his new book [1968 + ; probably fr black usage space or space out, "go, depart," reinforced by the notion of distance and remoteness in outer space and by the notion of blanks, gaps, and spaces in an otherwise sane and reasonable train of thought, speech, etc]*

space opera *n phr* A movie or show about interplanetary

exploration, warfare, sex, etc [1941 + ; coined by Wilson Tucker]

space out *v phr* To become stuporous from narcotic intoxication; be in a daze (1968 +)

◀**spade**▶ *n* A black person: *The spades inhabited Harlem and let the ofays have Wall Street to themselves* [1928 + ; fr the color of the playing-card symbol and fr the phrase *black as the ace of spades*]

spades *See* IN SPADES

spag bol *n* Spaghetti bolognese (1970 +)

spaghetti modifier: *George is a rookie, but he's got presence of mind, knowing that when they're in a "spaghetti" situation, when the receivers are in close, they're going to run crossing routes, like they scored on last week* (1990s + *Football*) *n* ◀1▶ An Italian or person of Italian descent (1931 +) 2 Fire hose: *A foreman will always "Lay Spaghetti" when running out the hose* (1941 + *Firefighters*) 3 Tubular insulation that may be cut and fitted over a wire conductor in radio or other electronic work (1940s +) 4 An unreadable computer program (1980s + *Computers*) [the taboo sense is semantically similar to Yiddish *luksh*, "an Italian," fr *lukshen*, "noodle"]

spaghetti Western *n phr* A cowboy movie usu made by Italian directors and producers, often in Europe: *reacquaint yourself with films that made the spaghetti Western a grindhouse phenomenon/ The best turkeys, he went on, were spaghetti Westerns, because they earned a lot of bread* (1969 +)

spam *v* To send a computer message out to myriad people: *the cost to spam an advertisement in thousands of news groups is typically less*

than \$50/ Spamming. Sending out on the Internet the cyberspace equivalent of junk mail [1990s+ Computer; fr Spam, trademark for a brand of canned meat, which acquired a probably undeserved unsavory reputation among WWII troops]

spang *adv* **1** Precisely; exactly; SMACK: *Abilene was spang on a new westering railroad line* **2** Entirely; totally: *I had got spang through the job before they interrupted me [1843+; fr British dialect, “spring, leap,” and so semantically similar to an expression like *jump on the hour he got there*, because of the sharp precipitousness of a leap]*

Spanglish *n* Vocabulary mixing English and Spanish; Spanish characterized by numerous borrowings from English [1954+; blend of *Spanish* and *English*]

Spanish walk *See* FRENCH WALK

spanking *adv* Very; extremely, esp in an admirable sense [1666+; origin uncertain]

◁**spank the monkey**▷ *v phr* To masturbate; JACK OFF, MILK THE LIZARD (1990s+)

spare tire *n phr* **1** Flab about the waist; a certain embonpoint; BULGE (1925+) **2** A superfluous and unwelcome person: *I didn't come, because I knew I'd be a spare tire in that crowd* (1940s+) **3** A tedious person; a bore (1940s+)

spark *v* To initiate and stimulate; trigger: *Willy Mays sparked an eighth inning Giant drive by stealing second* (1912+)

sparkler *n* A gem, esp a diamond (1822+)

spark plug n phr The most stimulating and energetic member of a group, team, etc; LIVE WIRE: *Mr Fadiman himself is a splendid spark-plug (1941 +)*

spaz or spastic (also spas) adj: *only the spastic twits in competition n 1* A strange and stupid person; WEIRDO: *The man's a spaz, a total spaz (1965 + Teenagers)* **2** A nonathletic person, esp an awkward one (1977 +) **3** A fit of anger; HISSY FIT: *Well, they threw a spaz and said we can talk on the phone, but I can't see him or have him over (1990s +)* [sometimes used cruelly, in reference to the plight of cerebral palsy patients exhibiting constant body spasms]

spaz out v phr To lose control of oneself; FLIP OUT: *I spazzed out during the Chem final (1980s + Teenagers)*

spazzed out adj phr SPACED OUT: *A couple of spazzed out bikers (1980s +)*

spazzy adj Stupid; WEIRD: *You gotta be spazzy if you think that, just because kids aren't admitted to the casinos, they can't have a great time in Atlantic City [1960s + Teenagers; fr spastic]*

speakeasy or speak or speako n A cheap saloon, esp an illegal or after-hours place: *It had been a speakeasy once/ All they give you in these speaks is smoke/ one thing that puts a speako over [1889 +; Samuel Hudson, a journalist, says in a 1909 book that he used the term in Philadelphia in 1889 after having heard it used in Pittsburgh by an old Irish woman who sold liquor clandestinely to her neighbors and enjoined them to "spake asy"; hence related to early 1800s Irish and British dialect *spake-aisy* or *speak softly* shop, "smugglers' den"]*

speak someone's (or **the same**) **language v phr** To understand one another very well, agree with each other

spear carrier n phr An unimportant participant; supernumerary:
What helped me most was having been a catcher and a "spear carrier" definitely not a star/ like last-minute walk-ons in the closing scene, spear-carriers in Valhalla [1960 + ; fr the persons who appear on stage, esp in operas, as soldiers in the background]

◀**spear chucker**▶ **n phr** A black person: *When whites refer to blacks as spear chuckers, they're not thinking about the Olympics/ Where are the defenders of social stability when prime-time demagogues like Howard Stern deride African Americans as spear-chuckers? (late 1960s +)*

spec¹ n The spectacular opening procession of a circus: *Mrs Webster rode an elephant in the "spec" (1926 + Circus)*

spec² See ON SPEC

special See the RED-EYE, SATURDAY NIGHT SPECIAL

Special K n phr: *The pre-voting-age enthusiasts come out of the stalls pie-eyed after a few lines of Special K, a snortable combination of horse tranquilizers, heroin, and coke [1990s + Narcotics; fr the trademark name of a brand of breakfast cereal]*

specs¹ n Spectacles; glasses: *Oh Lord, I broke my new specs (1807 +)*

specs² n The specifications of a blueprint, architectural plan, printing order, etc (1940s +)

speechifier n A person who "speechifies": *Her presentations bear*

touches of an experienced speechifier (1778 +)

speechify *v* To talk, esp in a pompous, pontifical way (1723 +)

speed *n* An amphetamine, esp Methedrine™ (1960s + Narcotics) *See*

BRING SOMEONE UP TO SPEED

speedball *n* A dose of a stimulant and a depressant mixed, esp of heroin and cocaine: *smack, coke, reefers, acid, speedballs (snorting cocaine and heroin together), a “luxury” (1909 + Narcotics)* *v* To produce rapidly; expedite: *I could have the agency speedball you a nice layout (1980s +)*

speed bump *n phr* **1** A transverse hump in a road made to slow the traffic (1975 +) **2:** *Aloe vera extract, fast on its way to becoming an all-purpose medicinal herb, has run into its first speed bump: a study suggesting that it delays the healing of some major surgical wounds/ Instead, the drive toward integration has been stymied by the speedbump of crime (1990s +)*

speed demon *n phr* A person who drives fast or is a fast runner: *speed demon on the court*

speedfreak or **speedo** *n* A habituated user of amphetamines and other such stimulants: *Well, you know about speedos (1960s + Narcotics)*

speed merchant *n phr* **1** A very fast runner: *The little guy could really scoot, a speed merchant (1910 + Baseball)* **2** A very good fastball pitcher: *He had a glass arm and he certainly was no speed merchant (1940s +)*

spell out v phr 1 To explain; define: *a commission of distinguished citizens to spell out the difference between right and wrong (1707+)* 2 To explain very patiently in great detail: *Are you a schoolboy I have to spell out everything for you? (1940+)*

spender See BIG SPENDER

spending money n Cash that one is allowed or able to spend

◀**spick or spic**▶ **adj:** *Jill don't want anyone to know she got a spic baby*
n 1 A Latino or person of such descent: *female spick, short, fat (1913+)* 2 The Spanish language (1933+) [fr the presumed protestation "No spick English"]

spicy adj Scandalous; mildly salacious: *a spicy bit of gossip (1886+)*

spiel n 1 A barker's or hawker's persuasive talk (1896+) 2 A speech meant to persuade by force and eloquence; a sales patter; LINE: *I'll give his honor a spiel (1896+)* 3 An advertising monologue on radio or television (1940s+) [fr German *spielen*, "play"]

spieler n A person who makes a persuasively eloquent speech: *a real accomplishedspieler (1894+)*

spiff n: *a top-of-the-line washer and dryer that would bring not only a nice commission but a spiff (bonus) as well (1859+)*

spiffed adj Drunk (1918+)

spiffed out adj phr Fancily and formally dressed (1877+)

spiffed up modifier Dressed or fixed up; polished: *spiffed up for a night on the town*

spiffing *adj* SPIFFY (1872+)

spifflicated *adj* Drunk: *a slightly spifflicated gent/ a spifflicated patient entangling himself in a revolving door* [1906+; fr British dialect *spifflicate*, “confound, dumbfound, crush,” of obscure origin, found by 1785]

spiffy *adj* Elegant; excellent; SNAZZY: *They wear spiffy red-and-gold scarves/ New Model Buggy for Amish Is Spiffy* (1853+) **adv** Well; elegantly: *They don’t translate so spiffy* (1937+)

spike *n* A hypodermic needle (1934+ *Narcotics*) **v** **1** To strengthen a drink by adding alcohol or liquor: *He spiked his coffee with brandy* (1889+) **2** To rise to a high level, esp rapidly: *He also spikes into the upper registers/ push fluids when the patient has spiked a temp* (1960s+) **3** To reject; quash: *The spiking of Schanberg’s column at The Times drew hundreds of angry letters from readers/ confident the man’s disbelieving New York editors will spike the story* (1908+) **4** To injure a player, most often a defending baseman, with the spikes on one’s shoes (1885+ *Baseball*) **5** To punch a volleyball powerfully and unreturnably down (1970s+ *Volleyball*) **6** To slam the ball down, usu done by a player who has just scored a touchdown (1970s+ *Football*) **7** To shoot: *Figure whoever spiked Porter probably did us a favor* (1990s+ *Black*) [all senses fr *spike*, “large nail,” hence “sharp point”; the sense “to reject” may be fr the earlier phrase *spike a gun*, “render a cannon useless by driving a spike into the touchhole,” or fr the notion of dealing with a paper, bill, manuscript, etc, by impaling it on a spindle or spindle file]

spike up *v phr* To inject narcotics; SHOOT UP: *if he came home and found*

her spiking up (1960s + Narcotics)

spill v 1 To upset; down; dump: *I'll spill you in the drink (1731 +)* **2**
To utter or confess something, esp something damaging; SPILL THE
BEANS (1574 +)

spill one's guts v phr To tell everything one knows; be totally and
lengthily candid: "*Can I be perfectly frank with you?*" "*Good. Spill
your guts*" (1927 +)

spill the beans v phr To tell something inadvertently; blurt out a
secret (1919 +)

spin n 1: A distinctive point of view, emphasis, or interpretation; a
distinctive character or style: *He put a spin on the facts [1979 + ; fr
the notion of spin on a baseball or pool ball, which gives a deviant
rather than a straight track; semantically related to throwing
someone a curve]*

spinach n 1 Nonsense; worthless matter; JUNK: *You could put up with
this spinach (1929 +)* **2** Money; CABBAGE

spin control n phr: *Spin control is the subtle art of massaging reporters'
minds after the event has taken place. The "doctors" try to control the
interpretation, or "spin," the reporters will put on their stories (mid-
1980s +)*

spin someone's dials v phr To excite or stimulate someone; arouse
someone; TURN someone ON: *a seemingly great guy who for some reason
does not spin your dials (1990s +)*

spin doctor or spinmeister n phr An adviser or agent, esp of a

politician, who imparts a partisan analysis or slant to a story for the news media: *Just after the debate, Johnson took his place with the other “spin doctors” (mid-1980s +)*

spin off *n*: *This store is a spin-off from the big one downtown* **v phr** **1** To produce as an entity separated from the whole: *The conglomerate spun off five new companies* **2** To dispose of; rid oneself of; DITCH: *Why didn’t he spin off this stupid cunt? (1959 +)*

spin one’s wheels **v phr** To waste time; work fruitlessly: *Nobody spun his wheels. I’m proud of them/ Stop spinning your wheels, get yourself in gear (1940s +)*

spit *n* Nothing; ZILCH, ZIP: *“What’d she come up with?” “Spit” [1960s + ; a euphemism for *shit*] See HOT SPIT, NOT COUNT FOR SPIT, NOT WORTH A BUCKET OF WARM SPIT, SWAP SPIT*

spit and polish *n phr* Order and precision; orderliness: *spit and polish practiced by the troops*

spitball *n* **1** A pitch thrown using a ball wetted with spit or otherwise illegally besmeared (1905 + *Baseball*) **2** A nasty but feeble attack: *despite the spitballs he keeps getting from the critical liberal media (1970s +)* **v** To speculate; propose conclusions or possibilities: *Well, I’m just spitballing/ You’re just spitballing (1955 +)* [second noun and verb senses fr the mischievous schoolboy’s vice of throwing bits of paper soaked in saliva; verb sense fr the notion of tossing such spitballs more or less idly]

spit in someone’s eye **v phr** To show extreme contempt and ingratitude: *What I hate is when you pay for it and they spit in your*

eye (1908 +)

spit it out *v phr* To speak out; reveal; disclose: *If you've got any more to tell me, spit it out right now* (1855 +)

spitless *See* SCARED SPITLESS, SCARE someone SHITLESS

spit tacks *v phr* To become very upset and angry; SHIT A BRICK: *I expected Eartha to spit tacks over the injustice* (1970s +)

spitter *n* SPITBALL (1908 + Baseball)

spizzerinktum or **spizzerrinctum** *n* Vigor; pep; PIZZAZZ: *the fellow who put foresight, science, and spizzerinktum into their business* [1940s +; origin unknown; since the earliest meaning is “money,” perhaps a coinage fr Latin *specie rectum*, “the right sort”]

splash *See* MAKE A SPLASH

splat *n* A slap or smack (1958 +) *v* To hit with a smacking sound; slap: *I wouldn't be at all concerned that a tomato would splat me in the face* (1922 +) [echoic]

splat movie or **splatterfest** *n phr* A movie that features a major catastrophe or other event where things and people are severely damaged: *When he was working on the 1974 splatterfest The Texas Chainsaw Massacre* (1970s +)

splendiferous *adj* Quite splendid [1843 +; orig US jocular formation from *splendid*]

◀**splib**▶ *n* A black person who opposes discrimination, etc, but will not challenge the status quo; a liberal black: *Don't nobody want no nice nigger anymore. They want an angry splib* [1964 + Black; fr

spade plus liberal]

splice v To marry • Most often in the passive: *crying to be spliced*
(1751 +)

splice the main brace v phr To have a drink of liquor (1850 +
Nautical)

spliff n A marijuana cigarette: *Smoking a spliff of high-octane chronic*
[1936 + Narcotics; a West Indian term] **See** ENGLISH SPLIFF

splinter See KNEE-HIGH TO A GRASSHOPPER

split v To leave; depart; CUT OUT: *This party is dullsville, let's split*
(1956 + *Jazz musicians*) **See** LICKETY-SPLIT

split a gut v phr To try very, very hard; make a maximum effort; BUST
one's ASS (1940s +)

◁**split beaver**▷ **n phr** A photograph or view of a woman's vulva
between spread legs; SPREAD BEAVER: *I can toss off phrases like "split
beaver" with almost devil-may-care abandon* (1972 +)

splitsville n A parting or dissolution; separation: *teach the little
chickadees to fly and then it's splitsville/ Splitsville ... Fergie and Prince
Andrew are calling it quits* (1980s +)

splitter See LIP-SPLITTER

split the difference v phr To compromise, esp when agreement is
near: *We're almost agreed, so let's split the difference/ She may have to
realize that the philosophical difference between herself and Rome
remains one that finally just can't be split* (1750 +)

split the scene v phr To leave; depart; CUT OUT, SPLIT: *just as I was about to split the scene (1952+ Black musicians)*

split the sheets v phr To get a divorce: *They split the sheets [1980s+; fr the division of property after a divorce]*

split-up n 1 An angry separation: *Me and the old man had a split-up (1908+)* **2** A divorce or legal separation of a married couple (1975+)

spoil v To kill; WASTE: *You wanted to hate his guts so it would be easier to spoil him? (1980s+)*

spoil someone rotten v phr To indulge and pamper someone to an extreme: *Spoiling your kid rotten from the start? (1970+)*

spondulics or **spondulix** (spahn D^{oo}o liks) **n** Money [1856+; said by Tony Thorne to be fr Greek *spondylikos* fr *spondylos*, a seashell used as currency]

sponge n 1 (also **sponger**) A parasite; FREELOADER, MOOCHER, SCHNORRER: *You avoided college boys, sponges (1598+)* **2** A drunkard; SOAK (1900+) **v**: *We were able to sponge lots of meals off his parents (1676+)* **See** THROW IN THE SPONGE

sponge off v phr To live off someone else or take advantage of them without offering compensation: *sponged off her for years*

spoof n 1: *Don't take it seriously, it was just a spoof (1884+)* **2** A parody or pastiche; SEND-UP, TAKEOFF: *The show was a spoof of a TV sitcom (1958+)* **v** To fool; hoax; tease: *He was just spoofing (1889+)* [coined by the British comedian Arthur Roberts, born 1852, as the name of a nonsense game he invented]

spoofing *n* To gain access electronically to a computer deceptively and perhaps illegally: *I thought someone might be electronically impersonating him, a practice that is known online as “spoofing”/ The technique is called “spoofing” because it fools a computer into thinking that another, friendly computer is requesting access (1990s + Computer)*

spooge *v* To squeeze something into an operating system, to its detriment: *Consumers don’t know it yet, but Microsoft is going to spooge a lot of the interface of Word for Windows into the Word for Mac 6.0 version and the new Mac version will operate slow as a glacier (1990s + Computer)*

spook *n* ◀1▶ A black person: *Some are just spooks by the door, used to give the organization a little color (1945 +)* 2 A spy; secret agent: *Mr Wolfson isn’t a spook for the CIA (1942 + Espionage)* *v* To put on edge; make apprehensive; frighten: *“It’s the first time in my life I’ve ever been spooked,” says a Byrd staffer (1935 +)* [fr Dutch]

spooked *adj* Frightened, startled; in a panic (1937 +)

spoon *v* 1 NECK, PET 2 To flirt; woo (1831 +) **See** GREASY SPOON

spoony *adj* Amorous; romantic: *I guess we got kind of spoony (1836 +)*
n A foolish or silly person: *I don’t believe a cock-and-bull story like that. Quiz was no spoony (1795 +)*

spork *n* A piece of cutlery combining the features of a spoon, fork, and sometimes, knife (1909 +)

sport *n* 1 A stylish and rakish man • Often used as a term of address, sometimes with an ironical tinge: *What did she tell you, sport?*

(1923 +) **2** GOOD SPORT (1920 +) **v** To wear: *He sported a Day-glo necktie* (1778 +)

sport a woody v phr To have an erection (1980s + *Students*)

sporting house n phr A place for gambling and dissipation, esp a brothel (1857 +)

sport-ute n: *There's about as much sport in most sport-utility trucks as there is in a professional wrestling match. Isuzu is doing its part to change this. Its sport-ute, the Trooper, is sporty* (1990s +)

spot n 1 A short commercial or paid political announcement on radio or television: *How do you like the spots, Senator?* (1937 +) **2** A nightclub, restaurant, or other such venue of pleasure: *They were often seen in a fashionable spot uptown* (1940s +) **v 1** To give odds or a handicap; to give an advantage to: *They spotted Pittsburgh five runs before getting down to serious business* (1961 + *Sports & gambling*) **2** To recognize or identify: *I spotted her as a phony long ago* (1848 +) **3** To lend someone something: *spotted her ten bucks* [found by 1718 in the second verb sense as “identify as a wrongdoer”] **See** DEUCE SPOT, FIVE-SPOT, HIT THE SPOT, HOT SPOT, JOHNNY-ON-THE-SPOT, NIGHT-SPOT, ON THE SPOT, PUT **someone** ON THE SPOT, SWEET SPOT, TWO-SPOT, X MARKS THE SPOT

spotlight v To single out prominently; focus on for emphasis: *He was trying to spotlight the danger of high deficits* (1942 +) **See** IN THE SPOTLIGHT

spot market n phr The free market in petroleum, outside the price scales set by the producers' organization [1982 + ; *spot oil* is found by 1888]

spot-on adj Exact; precise; faithful; ON THE BUTTON, ON THE MONEY • Chiefly

British: *Elwood's spot-on use of an argot, half G.I. and half cokehead, infuses the book with surprise and a screeching undercurrent of despair* [1956 + ; found in adverbial use by 1920]

sprawl *n* Spreading overdevelopment of urban areas: *The state can put the brakes on senseless sprawl* (1980s +)

spread *n* **1** Coverage in a newspaper or magazine, esp the full use of facing pages: *Do you know how much a two-page spread in the New York Times costs these days?* (1858 +) **2** A copious meal; a feast (1822 +)

spread oneself *v phr* To make a great effort; do one's utmost: *You may be sure the staff will spread itself to accommodate you* (1857 +)

◁**spread beaver**▷ *n phr* SPLIT BEAVER (1970s +)

◁**spread for someone**▷ *v phr* For a woman, to do or offer to do the sex act with someone; spread her legs for coital access (1950s +)

spread it (on) thick *v phr* To exaggerate; overstate; BULLSHIT: *To say it was for the good of humanity is spreading it a bit thick* (1940s +)

spread oneself thin (or **too thin**) *v phr* To attempt more than one can do; strain one's resources: *It's a good idea to get involved in a lot of activities, but don't spread yourself too thin* (1960s +)

spring *v* **1** To get out of or be released or escape from prison: *The proprietor knew how to "spring" them, that is, get them out of jail/ When's he springing?* (1900 + *Underworld*) **2** To reveal or do something as a surprise • Very often used with *on*: *John L Lewis is preparing to spring a dramatic move/ If we spring it on them suddenly*

they won't know how to react (1876 +)

spring chicken *n phr* A young person, esp a woman: *Maggie Smith is the spring chicken among them* [1906 +; fr the market name for a small young chicken] **See** NO SPRING CHICKEN

spring for something *v phr* To pay for, esp a treat of food or drink;
POP: *always more than glad to guzzle the pitchers of Michelob you sprung for on payday/ We'll spring for the gas*

spring (or pop) someone to something *v phr* To treat someone to something: *I sprang him to a couple of beers (1941 +)*

spritz *n* **1** A serving of carbonated water, esp an addition of carbonated water to a glass of wine: *She asked for white wine with a spritz (1960s +)* **2** A slight rain or shower: *We may get just a wee spritz this afternoon (1970s +)* *v* To spray or sprinkle: *the fixative with which he spritzed it so it would not smear/ She spritzed a little scent behind her ear and was ready (1976 +)* [fr Yiddish, "spray"]

spritzer *n* A glass of wine mixed with carbonated water (1961 +)

spritzzy *adj* Light and volatile; airy; frothy: *She now does a string of spritzzy little jetés that barely get her off the ground/ the hair-trigger switch between Nathan's spritzzy charm and the scary violence of his anger (1970s +)*

sprout *n* A child, esp an infant: *A girl out your way has married and is coming home with a sprout (1934 +)*

sprout wings *v phr* To become angelic, before or after death

sprung *adj* Drunk (1833 +)

spud *n* A potato [1845 + ; origin unknown; perhaps related to the fact that in British dialect use *spud* means “a weeding instrument” and in US dialect it means “a spade,” hence potatoes would be something *spudded* or dug; a relation has been seen between the fact that potatoes are also the nickname of men named Murphy, or indeed of any Irishman]

spunk *n* 1 Energetic courage; mettle; BALLS, GUTS: *little girl’s got a lot of spunk* (1773 +) <2> Semen: *rushing with their hot spunk in their hands to the microscope* (1888 +) **v** <1> To ejaculate semen; COME: *the filthy pigs spunking into women* (1970s +) [apparently fr Celtic *spong*, “tinder, touchwood, punk,” fr Latin *spongia*, “sponge”; apparently semantically fr a resemblance between semen and a spongy excrescence found on trees, in which sense the word is found in British dialect]

spunky *adj* Gutsy and enthusiastic; showing courage: *spunky girlfriends*

squad *See* GOON SQUAD, TAXI SQUAD

square *adj* 1 UNCOOL: *You do not try to convert the square world* (1925 + *Jazz musicians*) 2 Fair; even-handed; just: *I’ll be square with you* (1872 +) **n** 1 (also **square meal**) A copious meal: *I’ve had my three squares every day* (1882 +) 2 A conventional person, esp one with musical tastes not extending to jazz, swing, bop, etc; CLYDE: *That GL strictly a square/ I do a little vocal number for the squares* (1925 + *Jazz musicians*) 3 (also **square joint**) A tobacco cigarette; SLIM, STRAIGHT (1960s + *Narcotics*) **v** To make things right, just, proper, etc: *He could never square himself with the police after that* (1859 +) [the

sense “conventional person, etc,” is said to come fr a jazz musician’s and standard conductor’s hand gesture that beats out regular and unsyncopated four-beat rhythm, the hand doing so describing a *square* figure in the air]

squared away *adj* Straightened out; settled: *He’s all squared away while we go out to dinner*

squared circle, the *n phr* A boxing ring; the CANVAS (1927 +)

square deal, a *n phr* Fair and honest treatment: *Don’t look for a square deal from them crooks* (1876 +)

square guy *n phr* An honest and reliable man; Right Guy: *Trust him; he’s a square guy* (1908 +)

◀**squarehead**▶ *n* A Scandinavian or person of Scandinavian descent; Scandahoovian (1903 +)

square John (or john) *n phr* An ordinary honest person; a good citizen; a noncriminal person who can be victimized by, and is contemptuously regarded by, criminals (1920s + *Underworld*)

square off *v phr* To put oneself in a fighting posture: *The two biggest companies are squaring off over the microchip market* (1837 +)

square one *n phr* The place where some process begins or has begun; the original configuration: *So after all this fuss we are at square one again* [1960 + ; fr board games where a token is moved off the *first square* after the shake of a die, drawing of a card, etc]

See GO BACK TO SQUARE ONE; BACK TO SQUARE ONE

square peg *n phr* A misfit; an inconvenient and intractable person:

They were square pegs who weren't succeeding [1901 + ; fr the earlier expression *put or drive a square peg in a round hole*, fr carpentry or joinery]

squares *See* THREE SQUARES

square shooter *n phr* An honest and candid person; STRAIGHT ARROW •
Now used nearly always with the conscious irony of archaic sincerity (1914 +)

Squaresville or **squaresville** *adj*: *on campus, where it once was squaresville to flip for the rock scene* *n* A putative city inhabited entirely by dull, conventional people: *The Innocent Nihilists Adrift in Squaresville/ Untimidated by being in the squaresville, which is also the power center of the free world* (1960s + Bop talk)

square with *v phr* To be honest with someone; come clean: *You need to square with her about the intrusions*

squat *n* <1> Excrement: *Don't step in the squat* (1930s +) 2 Nothing; zero; DIDDLY, ZILCH, ZIP: *She's got squat to do with that kind of shit/ You can't do squat anyway these days* (1934 +) *v* 1 To sit: *Hey, squat there a minute and I'll be right with you* (1768 +) <2> To defecate; SHIT, TAKE A DUMP (1940s +) *See* NOT GIVE A DAMN, NOT KNOW BEANS, TAKE A DUMP

<squaw> *n* A woman, esp one's wife (1934 +)

squawk *n*: *Okay, what's your squawk this morning?* (1909 +) *v* 1 To complain; BEEF, BITCH: *Will you stop squawking about the food, please?* (1875 +) 2 To inform; SQUEAL: *Joe squawked* (1872 + *Underworld*) [echoic of an unpleasant sound, esp the grating screech of a bird]

squawk box *n phr* A military public address system; BITCH BOX (WWII Navy)

squeak by (or through) *v phr* To pass, succeed, achieve a goal, etc, by the narrowest of margins: *He just barely squeaked through his medical boards (1938 +)*

squeaker *n* **1** A very closely contested and uncertain game, contest, etc: *They met in a squeaker that year (1960s +)* **2** Something poised on the edge of one result or another, esp a success versus a disaster: *“It’ll be a squeaker,” Bartow said. “This is a nervous time for us” (1960s +)*

squeaky-clean *adj phr* Perfectly clean; white, sanitary, and untarnished • Sometimes used ironically to emphasize conventionality and unimaginativeness: *this English band, made up of six squeaky-clean men in their early twenties/ one of the most squeaky-clean and buttoned-down of US corporations [1972 +; fr the squeaky sound produced by rubbing a finger across chinaware free of grease or dirt]*

squeal *n* **1** (also **squeel**) An informer; RAT, SNITCH, STOOL PIGEON: *He was working on a case with a squeal, and he knifed him (1750 +)* **2** (also **squeak**) A complaint to the police: *cop at stationhouse took the squeal/ The young cops who had caught the squeal didn’t know what to do (1908 +)* *v* To inform; RAT, SING, SQUAWK (1825 +)

squealer *n* An informer; RAT, SNITCH, SQUEAL (1865 +)

squeegee operator (or man) *n phr* A person who cleans one’s windshield unbidden and then asks for payment: *Giuliani’s mayoral*

campaign was directed at aggressive panhandlers, squeegee operators, brazen drug dealers (1980s +)

squeeze *n* **1** A situation of great pressure or peril; CRUNCH: *I'm afraid we're in something of a squeeze just now* **2** One's romantic partner; lover **See** MAIN SQUEEZE, PUT THE SQUEEZE ON someone

squeeze-box *n* An accordion (1936 +)

squeeze play *n* Pressure or coercion: *a squeeze play over signing the contract* [1916 +; fr earlier baseball sense, tactic involving bunting or hitting the ball softly so that the runner at third base can reach home]

squib *n* A brief, sometimes witty piece of material in a newspaper or magazine, usu a space-filler: *A friend of mine, he writes those witty "squibs"* [1739 +; fr *squib*, "a small firecracker," of unknown origin]

squid *n* An obnoxious person, esp one who studies too hard; DWEEB, GRIND, LOSER, NERD (1980s + *Students*)

squiffy or **squiffy-eyed** or **squiffed** *adj* Drunk: *so-and-so's getting "squiffy" at a dance/ one of Frenise's squiffy-eyed nieces* (entry form 1855 +, second variant 1890 +)

squiggle *n* The tilde, a sinuous diacritical mark (1980s + *Computer*)

squillion *n* A very large number; myriad; ZILLION: *the Beat Farmers have played in a zillion bars here and overseas* (1990s +)

squinch *v* To distort the face; squint: *The eyes are squinched with innocence and glint* (1840 +)

squinchy adj Like one who “squinches”: *You’ve got that squinchy look around the eyes, and you’re gritting your teeth (middle-1800s +)*

squirrel n 1 A crazy or eccentric person; NUT, WEIRDO: *I seen some squirrels in my life, but you got ‘em all beat (1940s +)* **2** A hesitant or confused hot-rod driver (*1950s + Hot rodders*) **v 1** (also **squirrel away**) To hoard or cache something; hide and save something for later (*1939 +*) **2** To weave about the road while driving, esp a hot rod (*1950s + Hot rodders*) **See** SEAM SQUIRREL

squirrel-bait (or -food) n A crazy or eccentric person; NUT, SQUIRREL: *I’m afraid the old mentor is squirrel-food by now [first form 1919 +, second 1915 +; fr the fact that squirrels eat nuts]*

squirrelly adj Crazy; eccentric; NUTTY: *I tell you, working out alone can make you squirrelly (1934 +)*

squirt n 1 A short or small person, esp an insignificant, contemptible little male; PEANUT: *Ah, what a little squirt is there (1839 +)* **2** (also **young squirt**) A young man, esp a presumptuous or foppish youth (*1848 +*)

squirts n Diarrhea

squish n: *It wasn’t that I was becoming a “squish” (That’s a Washington term for a softy) (1980s +)* **v** (also **squush** [by 1846] or **squoosh**) To squeeze; compress: *This universe he had built was a Guggenheim and a Toys-R-Us squished into one/ some mondobra engineering breakthrough, to squoosh your breasts together and push them up under your chin (1647 +)*

squishy adj Sentimental; SCHMALTZY, SOPPY: *The sentiment may sound*

squishy to those who have never been close to him/ the squishy sentimentality attributed to him by most critics (1953 +)

squooshy (SKWŃŃ shee) **adj** Soft; yielding and insubstantial: *Support for Reagan is “all very squooshy”* [1970s +; the date should probably be earlier; **sqush**, “to collapse into a soft, pulpy mass,” is found by 1884]

SRO (pronounced as separate letters) **n** **1** Standing room only, usu indicating a full house and a successful production (1890 + *Theater*) **2** Single-room-occupancy residence hotel: *They’re planning to demolish the SROs on this street (1941 +)*

stab n A try; CRACK, SHOT, WHACK: *Well, I’ll have a stab at it (1895 +)*

stab in the back n phr Betrayal; harming someone in a treacherous way • Also verb phrase (1916 +)

stable n The group of people performing similar work, managed by one person: *She’s part of his stable of writers (1937 +)*

stache See STASH

‘stache n A mustache: *If they didn’t, Garner would trash his own ‘stache (1980s +)*

stack See BLOW ONE’S TOP

stacked adj Very well-built in the sexual sense; having an attractive body, esp a large bosom: *She’s well-stacked and sort of young* [1942 +; found in the form *stacked up nicely* at Stanford University in 1931]

stack of Bibles See SWEAR ON A STACK OF BIBLES

stack the cards (or the deck) v phr To prearrange something dishonestly; assure one's advantage fraudulently; COLD DECK: *I should have had the job, but they stacked the cards against me (1825 +)*

stack up n A multiple-car wreck (*1950s + Teenagers*) **v phr 1** To transpire; go along; succeed: *How are things stacking up for you this year? (1911 +)* **2** To compare; measure against: *I'd like for somebody to begin stacking up Native Son with some of Frank Norris's stuff (1903 +)* **3** To wreck a car; RACK UP (*1950s + Teenagers*) [first two verb-phrase senses fr the *stacking up* of one's poker chips to show winnings or for comparison]

stack Zs See COP ZS

staff See CHIEF OF STAFF

stag adj For men only; without women: *a stag function/ Several of the brothers were going to the dance stag (1873 +)* **n 1** A man who goes to a party alone, without a woman partner (*1905 +*) **2** (also **stag party**) A party for men only, such as a bachelor party: *as broad as the jokes at a Legion stag (1904 +)*

stage See UPSTAGE

stagedoor Johnny n phr A man who haunts the stagedoor of a theater in order to meet actresses, chorus girls, etc (*1912 +*)

stage mother n phr A person who is aggressively overzealous in promoting the success of offspring, proteges, etc: *Once there were stage mothers, the legendary behind-the-scenes forces who achieved Broadway immortality as Rose in Gypsy/ Many in the thin Dodger front line were pressed into larger roles, and they were cajoled and*

hugged and implored and cursed by Lasorda, their loud and unabashedly emotional manager, a stage mother if there ever was one (1919+)

stagflation *n* A simultaneous stagnation and inflation in the economy (1965+)

staggers, the *n phr* A faltering and unsteady physical state, esp from liquor or narcotics intoxication: *The next day you've got the staggers and your fine coordination is destroyed for 72 hours* [1599+; originally a disease of animals]

stag line *n phr* The group of unescorting males at a dance, thought of as a line beside the floor, studying the women as possible dance partners (1934+)

stairs *See* UPSTAIRS; THE MAN UPSTAIRS

stake *See* GRUBSTAKE

stake-out *n* A police surveillance: *as silently as only a cop on a stake-out knows how to stand/ The stake-outs continued* (1942+ *Police*)

stake out *v phr* To put someone or something under constant police surveillance: *He's been staked out often enough* [1942+ *Police*; fr earlier senses, as old as the 1600s, where *stake out* meant "mark off a territory, a line, a track, etc, with stakes"]

stakes *See* PULL UP STAKES

stake someone to something *v phr* To give or provide something to someone, inferentially as a loan: *Could you stake me to a new suit so I can get a job?* [1853+; fr the earlier senses where *stake* meant

someone's basic provisions for farming, prospecting, etc]

stalk *v* To harass someone, esp a woman, in a menacing way: *During the first week at Wimbledon, a German stalking Steffi Graf had to be expelled/ The clinics have recourse to local laws against blocking an entrance and stalking doctors and nurses/ A 9-year old boy who left a message for a 10-year old girl has been accused of violating the state's anti-stalking law (1980s +)*

stall¹ *n* **1** A pretext or excuse for delaying; a reason for inaction: *His claim of illness is only a stall (1889 +)* **2** A pretense or false indication, esp as part of a criminal alibi: *"I'd take meals up to him. I think that was just a stall" "You mean the meals were for someone else?" (1851 +)* *v* **1** To delay; temporize; consume time and delay action; BUY TIME: *I told him to quit stalling and give us a decision (1903 +)* **2** (also **stall off**) To subject someone to delay; make excuses for inaction: *You stall her while I try to find her original letter (1906 +)* [fr Old English *steall*, "standing, state, place, animal stall," whence the notion of stubbornly holding one's place]

stall² *n* **1** A pickpocket's accomplice who in one way or another maneuvers the victim (1591 +) **2** A criminal's accomplice who primarily diverts attention, obstructs pursuit, keeps watch, etc: *an excellent lookout or "stall" for her male companions (1930 + Underworld)* [fr earlier *stale* or *stall*, "decoy bird," probably fr Anglo-French *estale* or *estal*, "a pigeon used to lure a hawk into a nest"; since delaying and misleading are involved in both, this derivation and that of *stall*¹ have probably intermingled over the centuries, as illustrated by the fact that *stand* meant "a thief's

assistant” in the late 16th century]

stallion *n* **1** STUD (1553 +) **2** A sexually attractive and/ or active woman; FOX (1970s + *Black*)

stamping ground (or **grounds**) *n phr* One’s particular domain or territory; one’s native heath: *Ann Arbor used to be my stamping ground* [1821 + ; fr 1700s sense, “a place frequented by animals”]

stand *n* A shop or store; a place of business: *You can get it at the Brooks Brothers stand on Fifth Avenue* (1787 +) **v** **1** To give or pay for as a treat: *She stood him tea and muffins* (1821 +) **2** To cost; SET someone BACK: *The suit I got on stood me ten cents* (1362 +) **See** ONE-NIGHT STAND

◁**stand around with one’s finger up one’s ass**▷ (or **in one’s ear**) **v phr** To be idle and helpless; fail to cope; be useless: *If you’re just standing around with your finger up your ass you might as well lend a hand here* (1940s +)

standee *n* A person forced to stand because all seats are sold or occupied: *long lines of standees waiting their turns* (1856 +)

stand (or **stand still**) **for** something **v phr** To tolerate or abide something; SWALLOW something • Usu in the negative: *He said he wouldn’t stand for being replaced* (entry form 1626 + , variant 1970s +)

standin *n* **1** A performer who takes the place of another (1938 +) **2** A substitute or proxy; a deputy: *Naive Stingo, as standin for us* (1937 +) [perhaps fr the use of a substitute to replace a performer during such tedious procedures as adjusting lights, arranging the

stage or set, etc; perhaps also fr the earlier notion of a deputy or place-holder, literally a lieutenant, in French, “a place-holder”]

stand in v phr To substitute; act as a proxy: *I’ll have to stand in for her and run the meeting (1904 + Show business)*

standing O n phr A standing ovation: *The audience greeted John Harbison’s new cello concerto with a standing O/ Thiede got a standing O (1990s +)*

standing on one’s head See DO something ON TOP OF one’S HEAD

standing up See DIE STANDING UP

standoff n A balanced and static conflict; stalemate; deadlock: *The union and the company are locked in a standoff (1843 +)* **See** MEXICAN STANDOFF

standoffish adj Haughty; aloof; reserved and snobbish: *He gave us all a standoffish look (1860 +)*

stand on one’s brakes v phr To apply the brakes of a car very hard: *The guy on my right stood on his brakes (1970s +)*

stand-out n A person or thing that is extraordinary, usu uncommonly good or talented; an outstanding person or thing: *Her performance of Amanda is the stand-out of the season (1928 +)*

stand pat v phr **1** To keep one’s original five cards in draw poker, without drawing new ones (1882 + *Poker*) **2** To retain one’s position; refuse to shift; carry on as one is; SIT TIGHT: *The President stood pat on his decision to cut taxes (1890 +)* [fr the adverb *pat*, “exactly, precisely to the purpose”]

stand tall v phr To be proud and ready; have an imposing and confident stance (1970s + Army)

stand the gaff v phr To persist and endure against rigors; TAKE IT: *I've had at least seven lifetimes on Seventh Avenue, mainly because I've learned to stand the gaff* [1896 + ; fr *gaff*, the steel spur attached to the leg of a fighting cock]

stand the heat See IF YOU CAN'T STAND THE HEAT STAY OUT OF THE KITCHEN

stand-up adj Courageous and personally accountable; bold; GUTSY • Most often in the expression *stand-up guy*: *He handled the humiliating defeat like a stand-up guy/ And he's very, very stand-up* (1841 +) **n** A live interview at the scene of a news event: *I hang a left past the faded Rose law firm and the networks doing evening stand-ups at the entrance* (1990s + Television) [adjective sense perhaps fr *stand up and be counted*]

stand someone up v phr To fail to keep an appointment, esp a date, with someone: *You won't stand me up, now will you?* [late 1800s + ; perhaps related to *stand up* in the sense of "go through a wedding ceremony," the image being the forsaken bride or groom left standing alone at the altar]

stand up and be counted v phr To announce and be accountable for one's convictions, opinions, etc; not be afraid to speak up: *Maybe a lot agree with you, but they won't stand up and be counted* (1900s +)

stand up for someone v phr To defend and support someone; GO TO BAT FOR someone: *Nobody stood up for her, so she had to back off*

stanza n A period, an inning, a round, a chukker, or some other

division of a game or contest; CANTO: *The Jets pulled an el foldo in the third stanza (1933 + Sports)*

starchy *adj* Very stiff or formal in behavior; conventional (1823 +)

◀**starfucker**▶ *modifier*: *Mellencamp appears to revel in the starfucker mentality he pokes fun at n* A person, esp a young woman, who spends time with star performers and relishes the sex act with them; GROUPIE: “*She was promiscuous.*” “*The queen of the star fuckers*” (1970s +)

starker *See* SHTARKER

starkers *adj* **1** Naked; stark naked; BARE-ASS: *sitting there at the bar starkers from the waist up/ You jog about, absolutely starkers, and then dive straight into a swimming pool (1923 +)* **2** Crazy; BONKERS, NUTS: *The doctor told me I was starkers to do that (1962 +)* [fr *stark* *naked* and *stark*, *staring mad*, with the British slang suffix *-ers*]

star-struck *adj* Enchanted by entertainment stars; enamored of glamour: *I don't get star-struck (1990s +)*

starters *See* FOR OPENERS

start from scratch *v phr* **1** To begin on an even footing, with no advantage or handicap: *We're gonna have a good life together starting from scratch* **2** To begin with the very first and simplest steps; build from the ground: *So they threw their plans away and started from scratch* [1936 +; fr the *scratch-line*, the starting line for races, often scratched in the earth]

Star Wars defense *n phr* A system of defense against guided missiles

that depends on orbiting laser-beam weapons: *to spend between \$22 billion to \$29 billion over the next four years to build a “Star Wars” defense* [1983 +; fr the name of a very popular science-fiction movie of 1977]

stash¹ or **stache** *n* **1** A hoard or cache: *She had a little stash of money in her bureau drawer* (1914 +) **2** A hiding place: *if he wasn’t home or in his stash/ I have some here, in a stash downstairs* (1930 +) **3** A supply of narcotics, esp one’s personal supply: *meeting him at the airport with samples of their “special stash”* (1960s + *Narcotics*) **4** A place where narcotics and associated paraphernalia are hidden, esp by a dealer (1960s + *Narcotics*) **v** (also **stash away**) To hide; hoard; save up: *I had not stashed any dough away/ I’d stash that jug* (1797 +) [origin unknown; perhaps a blend of *stow* or *store* with *cache*]

stash² *n* A mustache; ^{‘STACHE:} *He had a little red stash* (1940 +)

stash bag *n phr* A small bag for carrying personal possessions, esp one used for marijuana (1960s + *Narcotics*)

state *See* IN A STATE

state-o *n* A convict’s prison uniform: *It griped me to have to put on “state-o” or official clothes* [1950s + *Prison*; perhaps fr *state official*]

state of the art *adj phr* The latest; the very newest and most advanced: *Many of the escort services are so state-of-the-art that they make Toner’s look primitive* [1967 +; found by 1889 in the form *present status of the art*, which anticipates the modern use]

Stateside or **stateside** *adj*: *a genuine Stateside flavor to the celebration*

n The United States itself as distinct from foreign places, overseas possessions, etc (*WWII armed forces*)

static n Complaints, BACKTALK, trivial objections, etc: *Here's the policy, and let's not have any static about it* [1953 + ; fr the atmospheric interference that makes unwanted noise in radio transmissions]

station See FILLING STATION

stats n Figures or statistics, esp relating to sports; NUMBERS: *They are the kind of stats that a college powerhouse might covet/ An extraordinary cornucopia of mathematical data. Still, the line had to be drawn. No stats* (1962 +)

stay v To maintain a penile erection (1960s +)

stay loose See HANG LOOSE

stay out of the kitchen See IF YOU CAN'T STAND THE HEAT STAY OUT OF THE KITCHEN

stay put v phr To stay where one is; not budge: *No, stay put. I won't be but a minute* (1843 +)

steady n One's constant and only boyfriend or girlfriend (1897 +)

See GO STEADY

steak See TUBE STEAK

steal n A great bargain: *I got that for half price, a real steal* (1940s +)

steal someone blind v phr To rob someone thoroughly and subtly; strip someone [1974 + ; fr the notion that the person being robbed must or might as well be *blind*]

stealth adj Covert; clandestine; SNEAKY: *His piece of stealth journalism*

was an exercise in character assassination/ The Republicans are turning Dan Quayle into a virtual stealth Vice President; not even any pictures of him on the Bush-Quayle re-election posters [late 1980s + ; fr the US Stealth fighter plane, activated in 1983, which, along with a bomber version, was designed to be invisible to radar detection]

steam v 1 To anger; make furious: *I steam easily/ It steams me to hear that our fair burg is the Crime Capital of the World (1922 +)* **2** To make someone hotly amorous: *Be thrilled by, chilled by, and steamed by Gilbert and Garbo (1970s +)* **See** LET OFF STEAM

steamed adj Angry; PISSED OFF: *I'm too steamed to sleep, Lacey/ O'Neill wasn't the only member of Congress to be steamed (1935 +)*

steamed up adj phr 1 Angry; HOT AND BOTHERED, PISSED OFF: *The first thing she does is get all steamed up about it (1923 +)* **2** Eager; excited: *He's really steamed up about the new initiative (1936 +)*

steamroller v To dominate and crush; achieve by sheer force; SNOWBALL: *The governor tried to steamroller the bill through (1912 +)*

steam someone up v phr To excite and stimulate; incite enthusiasm (1930s +)

steam was (or is) coming out of someone's ears sentence He or she was or is very angry: *Houk was redfaced with anger. Steam was coming out of his ears (1960s +)*

steamy adj Excitingly carnal; sexually arousing; HOT, SEXY: *Hollywood's steamiest starlet (1970 +)*

steep adj Expensive: *steep prices*

steer *n* 1 (also **steerer**) A person who steers patrons and victims: *He is nothing but a steer for a bust-out joint (entry form 1939+, variant 1873+)* 2 Advice or information; a bit of useful data (1899+) **v** To take or inveigle someone to a place or person where gamblers or confidence men might victimize him: *I been steerin' for Schwiefka all day (1889+ Underworld)* **See** BUM STEER

steerer **See** BUNCO-STEERER

stellar *adj* Excellent; great: *stellar character reference*

stem *n* 1 A street, often the main street of a town or city (1914+ *Hoboes*) 2 An opium pipe (1940s+ *Narcotics*) **v** PANHANDLE (1927+ *Hoboes*) **See** MAIN DRAG

stems *n* The legs, esp the attractive legs of a woman (1891+)

stem-winding *modifier*: *Reagan delighted the crowd with a stem-winding speech* *n* Strong persuasion; powerful rhetoric: *Any arguments are exercises in stem-winding (1970s+)* [fr extension of *stem-winder*, "something excellent," found by 1892, in turn related to the *stem-winding watch*, very advanced and first-rate when introduced]

stephen **See** EVEN-STEPHEN

step off the curb **v phr** To die [fr getting hit by a vehicle by stepping into the street]

step on someone **v phr** To break into a CB or VHF radio transmission: *You'll have to say that again; we're being stepped on (1970s+)*

step on it **v phr** 1 (also **step on the gas**) To accelerate; hurry; speed

up: *We better step on it; there's only five minutes left* (entry form 1923 +, variant 1920 +) **2** (Variations: one's **dick** or one's **shvantz** may replace **it**) To blunder; make a serious mistake: *It was only a matter of time before he stepped on his cock and another rising star would be looking for a police chief's job in Iowa* (1970 + Army)

step out v phr 1 To go out socially, esp to a dance or a party: *I haven't stepped out much lately, too busy* (1907 +) **2** To escort someone socially; DATE: *Who is she stepping out with these days?* (1918 +)

step out on someone v phr To be romantically or sexually unfaithful to someone; CHEAT, TWO-TIME (1940s +)

stepping n: *That's stepping. Until recently, this dance form, which is said to have its roots in South African boot dances, has been performed only in African-American fraternities and sororities* (1990s +)

step up to the plate v phr To take responsibility; to step forward to take care of something [reference to baseball]

-ster suffix used to form nouns A person involved with, doing, or described by what is indicated: *clubster/ gridster/ mobster/ oldster* [1000 +; this Old English suffix, always common, has lately become very popular; for instance, forms like *The Newtster*, "Newt Gingrich," are found]

steven See EVEN-STEPHEN

stew¹ n 1 A drunkard; STEWBUM (1908 +) **2** Confusion; chaos; MESS (1806 +) **See** IN A STEW

stew² or stewie n An airline cabin attendant, esp a female one:

Aeroflot personnel, beefy pilots and no-nonsense stewies (1970+)

stewbum n A drunken derelict; Skid Row Bum: *about the kid, as, say,*

compared to an old stewbum/ Get up and go home, you stewbum

(1902+)

stewed or stewed to the gills adj or adj phr Drunk: *He knew where*

the colonel lived from the time he'd taken him home stewed/ He came

in stewed to the gills (entry form 1737+, variant 1922+) **See** HALF-

STEWED

stew in one's own juice v phr To be left to suffer the consequences

of one's actions (1885+)

stick n 1 A baseball bat (1868+ *Baseball*) **2** A baton or rod of office,

now esp a conductor's baton (1688+)

3 A golf club: *The golf dudes*

had their bag of sticks (1857+)

4 A billiard cue: *I lived off the stick*

three months (1674+)

5 The mast of a ship or boat: *The gale blew*

the sticks right out of her (1802+)

6 A control lever or handle; JOY-

STICK (1914+)

7 (also **stick shift**) A manual gearshift lever, esp one

mounted on the floor (1971+)

8 A slide rule; **SLIPSTICK**

(1920s+)

9 A ski pole (1961+)

10 A clarinet; LICORICE STICK (1920+

Jazz musicians)

11 A marijuana cigarette; JOINT, STICK OF GAGE, STICK OF TEA:

*Marijuana was easy to get, 25 cents a "stick" (1938+ *Narcotics*)*

12 A tall, thin person; BEANPOLE (1940s+)

13 A stiff, awkward person; an overformal person (1800+)

14 A dull person; STICK IN THE MUD (1733+)

15 A casino croupier (1940s+ *Gambling*)

16 An assistant who poses as an ordinary innocent person; SHILL: *The man who won the \$246 was a shill, sometimes referred to as a "stick"/ One operator,*

known as a “stall” or “stick,” distracts or frames the sucker in some way (1926+ *Carnival & underworld*) **v** To cheat; swindle; esp, to overcharge; **SHAFT**: *runs the Bowie garage, routinely sticking what customers come his way (1699+)* **See** BOOM STICK, CARRY THE STICK, DIPSHIT, DOPE STICK, FIRE STICK, GET ON THE STICK, GOB-STICK, HAVE A BROOM UP **one's** ASS, JIVE STICK, KICK STICK, KNOW WHAT **one** CAN DO WITH **something**, MAKE **something** STICK, SHITSTICK, SWIZZLE-STICK, TEA-STICK, TELL **someone** WHAT TO DO WITH **something**

stick around v phr To stay at or near a place; **HANG AROUND**: *I asked the cops to stick around for a few minutes (1912+)*

sticker See FROG-STICKER

sticker shock n phr The nasty impact of a price sticker, esp one on a new car, in inflationary times: *We're seeing more in the way of sticker shock lately/ lawmakers are suffering from “sticker shock” at the potential costs of health reform (1970s+)*

stick in the mud n phr A dull, conservative person; **FOGY**: *Be cautious, but don't be a stick in the mud (1733+)*

stick it v phr <1> (Variations: **cram** or **ram** or **shove** or **stuff** may replace **stick**; **up one's ass** or in **one's ear** or **where the sun doesn't shine** may be added) To dispose of or deal with something one vehemently rejects; take back something offered and scorned • Very often used as a rude interjection conveying both rejection and insult: *You can shove your coke up your ass/ Cram it, will you?/ He told them to take the money and ram it/ You can send them to President Carter or stick them in your ear (entry form 1922+, shove 1941+, stuff 1955+)* **2** (also **stick it out**) To endure; **HANG IN**: *It's*

rough as hell, but I'll stick it (1900 + , variant 1876 +)

stick it to someone or something **v phr** To assault violently and definitively; **SOCK IT TO** someone or something: *Pickett has really been sticking it to us in the press (1970s +)*

stick one's neck out v phr To put oneself at risk; invite trouble: *Don't stick your neck out too far (1926 +)*

stick of gage n phr A cigarette, either of marijuana or of tobacco (1950s + *Narcotics*)

stick of tea n phr A marijuana cigarette; **JOINT** (1935 + *Narcotics*)

stick out v phr (Variations: **like a sore thumb** or **a mile** may be added) To be very conspicuous; stand out starkly: *She really sticks out in that bunch/ Low profile? He sticks out like a sore thumb (entry form 1842 + , sore thumb 1936 + , mile 1933 +)*

stick something out v phr To continue to endure something rather unpleasant: *stuck it out until after junior high (1882 +)*

sticks n 1 Drumsticks: *the snare drummer throwing his sticks up (1900 + Musicians)* **2** A drummer (1900 + *Musicians*) **See** **BOOM STICKS**

sticks, the n phr Rural or suburban places; the provinces; the **BOONDOCKS**, the **RHUBARBS**: *A cop was transferred to the "sticks"/ a revue being tried out in the sticks [1905 + ; fr sticks, "trees," representing the backwoods]*

stick shift See **STICK**

sticktoitiveness n Determination; tenacity: *sticktoitiveness over a total of 25 years*

stick to one's knitting v phr To attend strictly to one's own affairs; not interfere with others; be singleminded: *I'm not a personal confidant. I stick to my knitting* [1970s + ; perhaps fr the indefatigable *knitting* of Madame De Farge in Dickens's *A Tale of Two Cities*]

stickum n 1 Glue; paste; cement **2** Any viscous fluid; GLOP, GUNK (1909 +)

stickup n 1 An armed robbery; HOLDUP: *a robbery or a "stickup"* (1887 +) **2** An armed robber: *Mallory looked at the dark stickup* (1905 +)

stick up v phr To rob, esp at gunpoint; HOLD UP: *being "stuck up" by highwaymen/ They're liable to go out and stick up a bank if they owe you* [1846 + ; apparently fr the command *stick 'em up*, "hold up your hands"]

stick up for someone or something v phr To defend and support: *If his own family won't, who will stick up for him?* (1837 +)

stick with v phr To continue to carry out: *stick with it so long* (1915 +)

sticky adj 1 Sentimental; SCHMALTZY, SOPPY: *a sticky little song about a crippled puppy* (1864 +) **2** Difficult; tricky; nasty: *He considered himself a tap dancer, because he was very agile at gliding away from any sticky situation* (1915 +) **See** ICKY

sticky-fingered adj Prone to steal or pilfer; larcenous; LIGHT-FINGERED: *What are you, sticky-fingered?* (1890 +)

sticky fingers *n phr* A person inclined to steal; an inclination to steal:
sticky fingers of the neighbors who cat-sit

sticky floor (or bottom) *modifier*: A sociologist at Skidmore proposes the sticky floor image to encapsulate the plight of hundreds of thousands of women trapped in low-wage, low-mobility jobs *n phr*:
Sticky floor, the inability to rise above an entry-level position, the plight of hundreds of thousands of women trapped in low-wage, low-mobility jobs (the other end of the glass ceiling)/ sticky bottom, an entry-level job that workers can't seem to rise above (1990s +)

sticky wicket *n phr* A very difficult or awkward situation; a nasty affair: *"It's a sticky wicket," he said, but he left open the possibility that it could be orchestrated in a few cases/ It's the original sticky wicket [1952 +; fr the British phrase bat on (or at) a sticky wicket, "contend with great difficulties," fr the game of cricket]*

stiff *adj* **1** Drunk: *when the regular piano player got stiff and fell from the stool (1737 +)* **2** Forged; PHONY: *"I put over a couple of stiff ones" is the way a paper-hanger describes an operation (1940s + Underworld)*
n **1** A drunken person: *Robbing a drunken man they call "rolling a stiff" (1907 +)* **2** (also **stiffie**) A corpse: *a final chapter narrated by the stiff/ So we scope out the stiffie and everybody says you know, like it was too bad (1859 +)* **3** A hobo; tramp; vagabond: *He bore none of the earmarks of the professional "stiff" (1900 +)* **4** A migratory worker; OKIE (1899 +) **5** A working man or woman; a nonclerical and nonprofessional employee; WORKING STIFF: *Coolidge always seemed unreal to the ordinary stiff (1930 +)* **6** A clandestine letter, esp one passed around among prisoners (1889 + *Underworld*) **7** A forged

check, banknote, etc (1823+ *Underworld*) **8** A team, fighter, contestant, etc, that is bound to lose; esp, a race horse that will not, cannot, or is not permitted to win: *There is also a rumor that Follow You is a stiff in the race* (1890+) **9** Any failure; FLOP, TURKEY: *gets a million dollars worth of hype, and I hear it's a stiff* (1960s+) **10** A person who "stiffs" a waiter: *The maitre d', knowing a stiff when he saw one, shrugged* **v 1** To cause a horse to lose a race: *He admitted that he himself had stiffed horses for a fee* (1940s+ *Horse racing*) **2** To fail to tip a waiter or other employee: *But he was slow about getting our orders, so we stiffed him/ who not only stiffs waiters and cab drivers, but golf caddies as well* (1939+) **3** To cheat, esp out of money, fair wages, etc: *The company defends its plan as a business decision and denies it was trying to stiff the women/ which creditors he could stiff, which he could stall, which had to be paid at once* (1950+) **4** To swindle; defraud; SCAM: *Some of the lessons were not as palatable, though, such as the one about a young woman who stiffed him/ In other words, New York City got stiffed* (1950+) **5** To kill; OFF: *Nobody was supposed to stiff a member of the family the way Vinnie had stiffed his niece's boy* (1974+) **6** (also **stiff-arm**) To treat unfairly and harshly; rebuff or push aside brutally: *He had stiffed a Philadelphia charity golf tournament without explanation/ didn't want to stiff him or send him sniffing along false trails/ I'll just stiff-arm them* (1973+)

[the underworld senses having to do with forged and clandestine papers, cheating, etc, are derived fr an early 1800s British sense, "paper, a document," probably based on the *stiffness* of official documents and document paper; the senses having to do with failure, etc, are related to the *stiffness* of a corpse; the sense of

harsh snubbing, etc, is fr the *stiff-arm* in football, where a player, usu a runner, straightens out his arm and pushes it directly into the face or body of an intending tackler] **See** BIG STIFF, BINDLESTIFF, BORED STIFF,

KNOCK someone OUT, SCARED STIFF

stiff upper lip n phr Courage or resolution in the face of fear or danger (1815 +)

stiffy n A penile erection

still wet behind the ears See NOT DRY BEHIND THE EARS

sting n A tricking or entrapment, either in a confidence scheme or as part of a law-enforcement operation: *have used sting to describe undercover operations that use a bogus business operation as a front/ Let's contrast Abscam with traditional law-enforcement stings* (1975 +)

v 1 To cheat; swindle; defraud; SCAM (1812 +) **2** To overcharge; STICK: *He got stung at the corner market* (1927 +)

stinger n An unpleasant or adverse element; CATCH: *Seems like a good proposition, but there's a stinger in it* (1950s +)

stink n phr (also **big stink**) An extensive fuss; huge brouhaha; scandal: *"I never made a big stink about it," says Righetti* (1812 +) **v** (also **stink on ice**) To be deplorable, nasty, totally inept or bungling, disgusting, etc; ROT, SUCK: *The whole idea stinks, if you ask me/ The group and its main man stunk on ice* (1225 +) **See** ACT LIKE

one's SHIT DOESN'T STINK, THINK one's SHIT DOESN'T STINK

stink bomb n phr Something that fails badly: *the stink bomb of a film, Flashdance/ The Chevy Chase Show was really a stink bomb* [1970s +; fr *bomb*, "a failure"]

stinker *n* **1** A despicable person; **BASTARD**: *Stop acting like a stinker* (1898 +) **2** (also **stinkeroo**) Something disgusting, nasty, badly done, etc: *If it proves to be a “stinkeroo” leave the theater quietly or suffer in silence* (1917 +)

◁**stink-finger**▷ **See** PLAY STINKY-PINKY

stinking *adj* **1** Despicable; wretched; **LOUSY**: *It was a stinking way to treat her* (1926 +) **2** (also **stinking rich**) Very wealthy; **FILTHY RICH**, **LOADED**: *The family, in those years, was stinking* (1956 +) **3** (also **stinko**) **Drunk**: *and he got pretty stinking* (entry form 1887 +, variant 1927 +)

stinking with modifier With an abundant amount of something:
stinking with good luck

stink of money *v phr* To be rich • Derogatory (1877 +)

stinkpot *n* A motorboat, esp a cabin cruiser [1960s + Sailors; used in the early 1800s for a steamboat]

stink to high heaven *v phr* To be very disgusting, inept, nasty, etc:
filler items that definitely stunk to high heaven (1963 +)

stink with *v phr* To have much of; be oversupplied with: *He stinks with confidence, certainly* (1960s +)

stinky *adj* Despicable; nasty; **STINKING** (1940s +)

◁**stinky-pinky**▷ **See** PLAY STINKY-PINKY

stir modifier: with the stir haircuts *n* A jail or prison: *John went to stir* (1851 +) [perhaps fr Romany *steriben*; the mid-1800s *sturaban* or *sturbin*, “state prison,” may be a transitional form]

stir-crazy *adj* (Variations: **bugs** or **daffy** or **simple** may replace **crazy**) Insane, stuporous, hysterical, or otherwise affected mentally by imprisonment: *Any number of others were what we call stir-crazy, going about their routine like punch-drunk boxers (1908 +)*

stitch, a *n phr* An amusing or hilarious person or thing; a HOOT: *The Gossages were a stitch, playing it very loose/ What a stitch/ Calling this tarty turn an “interpretation” really is a stitch [1968 +; fr the expression in stitches, “laughing uncontrollably,” perhaps fr the notion of laughing so much that it gives one stitches, “sudden sharp pains,” found by 1601 in Shakespeare]*

stocking *See* SILK-STOCKING

stocking stuffer *n phr* A small, usu cheap present to be put into the Christmas stocking (1976 +)

stog(ie) (or stogy) *n* A cigar

stoked *adj* Enthusiastic; happily surprised: *Everyone’s stoked that he’s here and would he do a couple of tunes [1963 +; fr surfer talk]*

stoked on *adj phr* Enthusiastic over; very much pleased with: *Stoked on cats? If you like catamarans/ I was really stoked on that chick, man [1969 +; fr the notion of being fueled and hot like a furnace]*

stomach *v* To tolerate: *can’t stomach her inaneness*

stomach Steinway *n phr* A piano accordion (1940s +)

stomp *n* 1 A jazz number with a heavy rhythmic accent (1906 + *Jazz musicians*) 2 A student who wears cowboy clothing and boots (1960s + *Students*) *v* To assault viciously; savage; CLOBBER (1946 +)

[fr a dialect pronunciation of *stamp*; verb sense found by 1803 in the sense “stamp on someone”]

◁**stompass**▷ **adj** Violent and pugilistic; rough and vicious: *I never even touched the slut and now there’s gonna be some sort of stompass scene (1970s +)*

stompers **n** Heavy boots [1899 +; revived in the 1960s] **See** SHITKICKERS, WAFFLE-STOMPERS

stone **adj** Thorough; perfect; total: *Reba’s a stone psycho, I tell you/ People think it’s a stone groove being a superstar* **adv** Totally; genuinely: *He is one stone crazy dude* [1935 + Black; fr earlier adverbial sense “like or as a stone,” in phrases like *stone blind* or *stone deaf*] **See** NOT CARVED IN STONE

stone broke **adj phr** Penniless; impoverished: *the money that is made out of stone-broke tramps (1886 +)*

stone cold sober **adj phr** Totally unintoxicated; COLD SOBER (1937 +)

stoned or **stoned-out** **adj** Intoxicated with narcotics or liquor; BOMBED OUT, ZONKED: *They get themselves stoned on beer/ The old man was stoned mad/ giggling in that mutually exclusive stoned-out way (1940s + Cool talk)*

stone dead **adj phr** As dead as can be (1290 +)

stoned to the eyes **adj phr** Completely intoxicated; HIGH: *Under that tree, stoned to the eyes, I wolf down Daybreak, Joan Baez’s autobiography (1970s +)* **See** TO THE EYES

stoner **adj** An intoxicated or stuporous person: *mumbles a stoner*

performance that's sidesplittingly funny/ It's different than it was in the '60s because it's not just your obvious stoner types. It's the jocks and the A-plus students. It's just about everybody (1960s +)

stones *n* 1 Testicles; ROCKS • Euphemistic 2 Courage or bravado: *I have the stones to tell her off*

stonewall *n*: *A sustained stonewall, no one's been willing to answer questions for a week* **v** To delay and obstruct, esp by stubbornly keeping silent: *I want you all to stonewall it* [1914 +; fr a cricket term used of a determined batsman who blocked everything as if he were a *stone wall*; in the US probably influenced by the stolid reputation of the Confederate general Thomas J "Stonewall" Jackson; the term became prominent during the early 1970s Watergate scandal]

stonies *n* Urgent sexual desire: *They passed a local law prohibiting a dude with stonies from soliciting a woman-of-the-night for a piece of ass* [1970s +; semantically similar to *hard up*, with its suggestion of penile erection; probably transferred because of the hardness of *stone* and the sense of *stones* as "testicles"]

stony *adj* Especially good; SUPER (1980s + *Teenagers*)

stood in bed *See* one SHOULD HAVE STOOD IN BED

stooge *n* A servile assistant; a mere flunky or tool: *Whenever Gulliver is not acting as a stooge there is a sort of continuity in his character/ his bail-bond stooges* (1913 +) **v**: *We're glad to stooge for him* (1939 +) [origin unknown; perhaps an alteration of *student*, humorously mispronounced as STOO jənt, in the sense of an

apprentice, especially one unskilled at or learning a theatrical turn of some sort while serving as the underling of a master]

stool *n* (also **stoolie**) A police informer; STOOL PIGEON: *He's nothing but a cop's stool (Underworld 1906 +, variant 1924 +)* *v*: *to make me stool on a friend (1911 +)* [back formation fr *stool pigeon*]

stool pigeon *n phr* A police informer; SNITCH, SQUEALER: *In New York he is also called a stool-pigeon [1930 + Underworld; fr earlier sense "decoy," fr the early 1800s practice of fastening pigeons and other birds to stools or stands as decoys; this term was applied to the decoy or "hustler" for a faro bank]*

stoop *See* STUPE

stooper *n* A person who looks on the ground at betting parlors and racetracks for betting tickets that may be valuable: *The girl said she had become a stooper (1974 +)*

stop *n* A receiver of stolen goods; FENCE (1940s + *Underworld*) *See* PIT STOP, WHISTLE STOP

stop and smell the roses (or flowers) *v phr* To relax from the hurly-burly; enjoy an interval of simple enjoyment: *It's not a total consuming vocation with him as it is with most other members of Congress. So consequently he tends to stop and smell the flowers a lot more*

stop-by *n* A very brief visit, esp by a politician: *Capitol Hill types at this particular bar even include Sen Bill Bradley, who just did a "stop-by," and Rep Richard Gephardt (1990s +)*

stop someone or something **dead in** someone's or something's **tracks**

v phr To stop someone or something very definitely and abruptly: *The economy could be stopped dead in its tracks* [1950s + ; fr the image of a person or animal dropping straight down on being struck; “to shoot or kill someone dead in his tracks” is found by 1824]

stop on a dime v phr To stop quickly and neatly: *The car corners smoothly and stops on a dime* (1964 +)

stopper n A dependable relief pitcher: *I had hoped he'd settle down and be the stopper/ And a bullpen stopper means even more in the confidence he can give the rest of the pitching staff and the entire team* (1948 + Baseball)

storage See IN COLD STORAGE

storch n 1 An easy victim; dupe; MARK, PATSY **2** An ordinary person; GUY, JOE (1960s +)

Storch See JOE BLOW

store See BUDDY STORE, MIND THE STORE

storm v To speed; drive very fast (1950s + *Hot rodders*) **See** BLOW UP A STORM, BRAINSTORM, SHITSTORM, UP A STORM

story See FISH STORY, LOOSE IN THE BEAN, SOB STORY, TOP STORY, UPPER STORY

story of my life, the n phr The sad truth of my earthly career: *Our plans, our hopes, what becomes of them? Nothing... story of my life* (1938 +)

stove See HOT STOVE LEAGUE, POTBELLY STOVE

stow it v To stop doing something • Often an irritated command

(1676 +)

STP (pronounced as separate letters) *n* A powerful hallucinogen: *a strictly contemporary folk drug, called STP by its Haight-Ashbury discoverers* [1960s + Narcotics; fr *Serenity Tranquility Peace*, named in imitation of the oil additive STP™]

strack *adj* Very strict in one's military appearance and grooming [1970s + Army; fr *STRAC*, acronym for *Strategic Army Corps*, chosen units in constant combat readiness, hence elite troops]

straddler *See* FENCE-STRADDLER

straight *adj* **1** Unmixed; undiluted; NEAT: *He takes his liquor straight* (1874 +) **2** Not using narcotics; not addicted; CLEAN (1950s + Narcotics) **3** Having had a narcotics dose, esp the first one of the day: *Once the addict has had his shot and is "straight" he may become industrious* (1946 + Narcotics) **4** Heterosexual; not sexually deviant (1941 + fr homosexuals) **5** True; honest and direct: *from straight-poop tough to moral* (1530 +) *n* A tobacco cigarette; SQUARE (1960s + Musicians & students) *See* GO STRAIGHT

straight-ahead *adj* Unflinching; undeviating: *Bill was a straight-ahead guy* (1836 +)

straight and narrow *n phr* Conventionally moral and law-abiding behavior (1930 +)

straight arrow *adj*: *The distraught heroine murmured to the straight-arrow hero* *n phr* A person who observes the social norms of decency, honesty, legality, heterosexuality, etc; a nondeviant: *It turns out the boy is a straight arrow underneath his finery/ This is a*

supervisory job that ordinarily is won by the group Straight Arrow, the Eagle Scout type [1969 + ; fr an archetypical upright Native American brave named Straight Arrow, mythically associated with a similar Caucasian who is a straight shooter]

straight-edge *adj* Not using narcotics; CLEAN, STRAIGHT: *If you're a teenager and you don't do drugs, you're a straight-up, straight-edge (1990s + Teenagers)*

straighten someone *v phr* To get or administer a narcotic for someone (1960s + Narcotics)

straighten someone out *v phr* To give the correct information, explanation, etc: *First let me straighten you out about where we were when it happened (1894 +)*

straighten up *v phr* CLEAN UP one's ACT (1907 +)

straight face *n phr* A face revealing no ironic amusement or disbelief: *He couldn't tell me that story with a straight face (1897 +)*

straight-faced *adj* Maintaining a straight face; POKER-FACED: *It was a big lie, straight-faced, but a lie (1975 +)*

straight from Central Casting *adj phr* Typical; true to appearance; undeviating: *a man described by one of his own attorneys as "straight from Central Casting" (1990s +)*

straight from the horse's mouth *See* FROM THE HORSE'S MOUTH

straight from the shoulder *adv phr* Honestly and directly; unflinchingly; STRAIGHT: *He gave it to us straight from the shoulder [1856 + ; perhaps from the notion of an honest blow delivered*

straight from the shoulder rather than deviously, from the side, etc]

straight goods (or **dope**) *n phr* The truth: *Is all dat straight goods?*
(1892 +)

straight lane *See* IN THE STRAIGHT LANE

straight man *n* A comedian's interlocutor and companion, who acts as the foil; STOOGES: *The late George Burns was the archetypal straight man* (1923 + *Show business*)

straight shooter *n phr* A direct and honest person; STRAIGHT ARROW: *declares that she is "the straightest shooter you ever saw"* (1928 +)

straight skinny, the *n phr* The truth; STRAIGHT GOODS: *lame enough to have told me the straight skinny about that* (1970s +) *See* the SKINNY

straight talk *n phr* Direct and honest discourse; STRAIGHT GOODS (1900 +)

straight-up *adj* (or *adv*) **1** Honest; upright; STRAIGHT ARROW: *They were straight-up, nice people/ doesn't believe the women's product can compete with men's volleyball, not straight up, not on the basis of skills or popularity* (1910 +) **2** Of cocktails, served without ice cubes; NEAT (1975 +) **3** Of eggs, sunny side up [*straight-up-and-down* in the first sense is found by 1903]

strain at the leash *v phr* To be impatient or eager (1910 +)

strainer *See* SOUP-STRAINER

strap *n* **1** A student interested primarily in sports; JOCK (1970s + *Students*) **2** A condom; RUBBER (1990s +) [first sense fr *jockstrap*, "athletic supporter"]

straphanger *n* A person who rides the subway or bus; a commuter

strapped *adj* **1** Short of money; penniless; BROKE: *He happens to be strapped financially (1857+)* **2**: *We never had a word for carrying a gun. Today, that is what “strapped” means/ They exist in a world of “strapped” (gun-wielding) teenagers (1990s+)* [*strap*, “credit, tick,” in the financial sense is found by 1828]

strapper *See* BOOT STRAPPER

strap with *v phr* To stick someone with a responsibility or burden:
16 and strapped with a baby

strategist *See* ARMCHAIR GENERAL

strawberry *n* A red nose caused by excessive drinking (1949+)

straw boss *n phr* **1** The foreman of a work crew **2** Any assistant chief or subordinate director [1894+; said to be fr the arrangement of a threshing crew, where the chief would superintend the grain itself, and the second the *straw*; perhaps fr Dutch *stroodekkerbaas*]

straw hat *n phr* A summer theater: *a new play that’s at a straw hat (1935+ Show business)*

streak *n*: *The students did a streak across the square* *v* To run naked in public (1973+) *See* a BLUE STREAK

streaker *n* A person who “streaks”: *She complained that several streakers marred her view of the campus (1973+)*

street modifier Having to do with the streets and the street life of a city, esp of a ghetto: *Curtis Sliwa, founder of the street-tough Guardian Angels/ The defendant was not some street punk with a long*

criminal record (1967 +) **See** ON EASY STREET, NOT A ONE-WAY STREET, TWO-WAY STREET

street, the **See** PUT IT ON THE STREET, WORK BOTH SIDES OF THE STREET

street cred *n phr* *Acceptability or popularity, especially among young people in urban areas: don't want to lose your street cred*

street (or garbage) furniture *n phr* Furniture put in the street for the trash collectors, and sometimes taken for use (1960s +)

street people *n phr* **1** Ghetto dwellers **2** Homeless people such as transient hippies, bag ladies, and the like; drifters (1967 +)

streets, the **See** POUND THE PAVEMENT

street-smart or **street-bright** or **streetwise** *adj* Cunning and clever in various practical ways, esp in the street culture of the urban ghetto: *a place for very sophisticated, street-bright people/ supplanting preppie glamour with what's euphemistically called a "streetwise" look. Supertramp is more like it* (1976 +)

street smarts *n phr* Cunning and cleverness of a very practical sort, esp that useful in the urban ghetto: *that raging philosophical conflict between street smarts and pinstripes* (1972 +)

streetsweeper *n* A kind of shotgun: *a bill that would ban the sale of two kinds of assault weapons—the "streetsweeper" shotgun and the Tec-9 pistol* (1990s +)

street time *n phr* **1** The period when a convict is not imprisoned, but is on parole or probation **2** The time between prison terms (1960s + *Prison*)

stressed or **stressed out** *adj* or *adj phr* Suffering from nervous stress: *I'm sorry. I'm just very stressed/ He had to take a two-week leave because he was completely stressed out (1980s +)*

stress out *v phr* To succumb to nervous stress: *Whenever they are at the point of stressing out, inevitably one of them will say to the other, "Want a bugle?" (1990s +)*

stretch *n* **1** A prison term: *a stretch in the Big House (1821 +)* **2** STRETCH
LIMO (1973 +) **3** An unwarranted extension or inference; stretch of the imagination: *Earlier I mentioned Huck Finn and, though it sounds like a stretch, I'm convinced that Pamela Trowel is his direct descendant/ It was not, as they say in Hollywood, a stretch. Throughout those years, Simpson was the good guy (1990s +)* *v* To hang or be hanged (1595 +) [prison sense originally "a one-year prison sentence"; third noun sense found by 1710 in the very similar "an exaggerated statement"]

stretch limo *n phr* A limousine that has been lengthened to provide more seating and more luxurious surroundings: *certified designer fashions, eye-popping jewelry, stretch limos/ a bar the length of a few stretch limos [1973 +; probably modeled on the earlier term stretch or stretched applied to a jetliner with a lengthened fuselage providing more seating]*

stretch some jeans *n phr* To do the sex act, esp homosexually (1970s + *Prison*)

strictly for the birds or **for the birds** *modifier* Worthless; no good (1944 +)

strike *See* SIT-DOWN, WILDCAT

strike it rich v phr To have a sudden financial success (1854+)

strike oil v phr To succeed: *I worked at the problem eight days before I struck oil* (1866+)

striker n **1** An officer's servant or orderly; Dog-Robber (1867+ Army) **2** An assistant; a helper (WWII Navy) **3** A sailor on the lookout for his own advancement, even by flattering means; EAGER BEAVER (WWII Navy) **4**: *Mokie had talked about his friend who was a striker, a recruit, for a motorcycle gang in the Bronx* (1980s+ Motorcyclists)

string v To deceive; fool; hoax: *Who are you trying to string, anyhow?* [1812+; fr the notion of getting someone on a string, under one's control] *See* PULL SOMEONE'S CHAIN, PULL THE STRING

string along v phr To agree; follow; join in: *As long as you string along with me, your cafeteria days are over* (1877+)

string someone along v phr To deceive; fool, esp into a continuing adherence, cooperation, etc; STRING: *I'm afraid that he's just stringing me along, trying to encourage me* [1902+; probably fr early 1800s British *string on*, in the same sense]

stringbean n A tall, thin person; BEANPOLE (1936+)

string someone out v phr **1** To intoxicate someone: *I couldn't figure what she had done in there to string him out so bad* **2** To disturb someone; upset someone: *The one thing that strings me out is punks who travel in packs* (1960s+)

strings *See* PULL STRINGS

string someone up *v phr* To hang someone (1872 +)

strip *See* DRAG STRIP, LEAVE A STRIP

Strip *See* SUNSET STRIP

Strip, the *n phr* Any of various main streets in US cities, esp the street in Las Vegas where most of the gambling casinos are found

stripe *See* HASH MARK

striper *See* CANDY STRIPER, FOUR-STRIPER

stripes *n* Chevrons worn as insignia of noncommissioned rank; Crow Tracks (1827 +)

stripped down *adj phr* **1** Of a car, divested of ornaments and other unnecessary parts; SHAVED (1946 +) **2** Reduced to the essentials; disencumbered: *a stripped-down version of the Oedipus myth* (1961 +)

stripper or **stripeuse** *n* A striptease dancer: *Norma Vincent Peel, the noted stripper* (entry form 1930 +, variant 1939 +)

strip-search *n* SKIN-SEARCH (1947 +)

stroke modifier: *Two things are at stake for employees who parrot their bosses or who always are in stroke mode* (1969 +) *n*: *Everybody needs a stroke or two every once in a while* (1969 +) *v* **1** To praise and please; caress the ego of; flatter; cosset: *Mr Hoover should be called in privately for a stroking session/ and ads in Rolling Stone were more for the purpose of stroking recording artists* (1561 +) ◀2▶ To

masturbate (1970+) [*stroker*, “flatterer,” is found by 1632]

◁**stroke book**▷ *n phr* A lewd or suggestive publication; a pornographic book or magazine; *Fuck Book: It took a stroke book for me to break the ice* [1970+; fr *stroke*, “masturbate”]

◁**stroke house**▷ *n phr* A pornographic movie theater [1970+; fr *stroke*, “masturbate”]

stroll *n* An area or route favored by prostitutes for solicitation: *Ms Lopez, a 38-year-old streetwalker, said she had been chased by packs of youngsters who descended at night on the stroll, where prostitutes ply their trade in the industrial park* (1990s+)

strong *See* COME ON STRONG

strong-arm modifier Using threats of violence; physically brutal: *strong-arm work around election time/ We reprehended his strong-arm tactics* (1901+) **v** To use force and intimidation: *We can't strong-arm them into voting our way* (1903+)

struggle **v** To have difficulty winning or holding the pace; be in athletic travail: *Mets struggling; Cardinals soaring/ Lendl Struggles to Win* [1970s+ Sports; in the general sense “strive despite difficulties,” found by 1597] *See* BUN-STRUGGLE

strung out *adj phr* **1** Using or addicted to narcotics; intoxicated with narcotics: *The entire college population is “strung out” thrice weekly/ got fairly well strung out, fairly well addicted* (1950s+ Narcotics) **2** Emotionally disturbed; psychologically tense, brittle, and vulnerable; UPTIGHT: *She got herself strung way out, just one more little push and she was a dead duck/ or slung low and strung-out on drugs or*

inner tensions (1959+) **adj 3** Infatuated; in love: *He's strung out on her* (1960s+ *Black*) [apparently by extension fr the black term *on a tight leash*, "in love, addicted," stressing the tethered helplessness of each condition]

strut one's stuff v phr To display one's virtuosity, esp in a saucy, provocative way [1926+ *Black*; fr dances featuring a *strut* like the turkey cock's, popular from around 1900]

stuck on someone or something adj phr In love with; infatuated: *That feller was stuck on yuh, Bess* (1886+)

stuck-up adj Haughty and conceited; snobbish; HINCTY: *We didn't like her at first because we thought she acted stuck-up* (1839+)

stuck with past part phr Burdened with; saddled with: *Imagine being stuck with a moniker like that all your life* (1848+)

stud n 1 A man, esp one who is stylish, au courant, etc; DUDE (1929+)
2 A sexually prodigious man; COCKSMAN (1895+) **3** An attractive man; HUNK: *Everyone knows Mike, he's the total stud of his class* (1950s+) **4** A medical student (1980s+ *Medical*) [fr *stud* or *studhorse*, "stallion, esp one kept for breeding," the term found by 1903; first sense popularized by 1940s jive talk]

student n A newly addicted and still lightly addicted drug user: *On a quarter grain a week a man was still a student* (1930s+ *Narcotics*)

studio See RAP CLUB

studly adj 1 Masculine; sexually keen; MACHO: *In one episode Ross is flustered when a new girlfriend wants him to talk dirty to her. For*

advice he goes to studly friend Joey/ Gay men at their pagan-studliest celebrate play, physicality, pretense, not to mention Greco-Roman grappling **2** Excellent; good; COOL: *It seemed like a studly thing at the time. Microsoft got what it wanted, and I got what I wanted (1960s +)*

studmuffin *n* An attractive young man; HUNK, STUD: *The vixen can't stop chasing studmuffins around the old conference table/ Studmuffin David Charvet cannot be coaxed from his trailer for a chat (1980s + Students)*

stuff *n* **1** Liquor, esp bootleg liquor: *The stuff is here and it's mellow (1920s + Prohibition era)* **2** Any narcotic: *Where's the stuff?/ He came out and seemed to be off the stuff (1920 + Narcotics)* **3** A woman regarded as a sex object; ASS, COOZ, PUSSY: *classiest stuff this side of Denver (1909 +)* **4** The various ways a pitcher throws the ball, esp curves, sliders, etc (1912 + *Baseball*) **v** **1** To do the sex act; FUCK • Chiefly British and most often heard in the passive imperative form *get stuffed*, a rude insult; used in any sense of *fuck*: *No women, no children, no fun. Stuff this (1960 +)* **2** To pitch using effective "stuff": *"He'd stuffed us pretty good before," said Brewers manager Phil Garner (1990s + Baseball)* **See** ALL THAT KIND OF CRAP, BLACK STUFF, EATIN' STUFF, the GREEN STUFF, HARD STUFF, HOT STUFF, KID STUFF, KNOW one's ONIONS, KNOW WHAT one CAN DO WITH something, ROUGH STUFF, TELL someone WHAT TO DO WITH something, WHITE STUFF

stuffed **See** GET STUFFED

stuffed shirt *n phr* A pompous person; a stiff, self-important bore (1913 +)

stuffer *See* STOCKING STUFFER

stuff one's face (or oneself) v phr To eat excessively (1939+)

stuff it *See* STICK IT

stuff the ballot box v phr To cast or record fraudulent votes in an election (1854+)

stuffy *adj* Tediously conventional; pompous and self-righteous: *He was inclined to be a bit stuffy in sexual matters* [1895+; fr *stuffy*, "stale, lacking freshness," influenced by *stuffed shirt*]

stumble v To be arrested; FALL (1950s+ *Underworld*)

stumblebum *n* An alcoholic derelict; a drunken drifter; Skid Row Bum: *to bemoan the lack of charisma and to paint the candidates as a wrangling collection of stumblebums* (1932+)

stump v **1** To baffle; perplex; nonplus: *The problem's got me stumped* (1807+) **2** To make speeches, esp on a political tour: *The candidate is stumping today in Illinois* (1838+) **3** A telephone or other wire-carrying pole (1940s+ *Line repairers*) [first sense fr the notion of being blocked by *stumps* in one's way; second sense fr standing up on a *stump* to make a speech]

stump for someone or something v phr To advocate or support, esp very actively [1878+; fr the notion of giving speeches from *stumps*]

stumps *n* The legs: *Everybody stir your stumps when Pa calls* (1460+)

stunner *n* Something very attractive or impressive, esp a good-looking woman (1847+)

stunning *adj* Attractive; impressive: *Isn't that a stunning little dress?*
(1849 +)

stunt *n* Act; bit of behavior; thing to do: *vulgar "stunts" designed to be easily comprehended and greedily relished* (1878 +)

◁**stup**▷ *See* SHTUP

stupe or **stoop** *n* A stupid person: *"Don't call me stupe," Humphrey said/ Surprised that we're not total stupes?* (1762 +)

stupid or **stupid fresh** *adj* or *adj phr* Excellent; splendid; COOL, RAD:
That's stupid/ Yep. Cool, mellow and stupid fresh (1980s + *Black*)

stupid-assed or **stupid-ass** *adj* Stupid; DUMB: *a stupid-assed honor student* (1980s +)

stutter-stepping *n* To run with rapid short steps: *Never mind all that stutter-stepping and looking for daylight* (1970s + *Football*)

style *v* To act or play in a showy, flamboyant way; HOT DOG, SHOWBOAT:
You got an A in physics! You're styling! (1970s + *Black*) [*put on style*, "to act in a boastful way," is found by 1871] *See* CRAMP someone's STYLE, DOG FASHION, LIKE IT'S GOING OUT OF STYLE

stylin(g) *adj n* Showing off one's good looks; looking good: *styling in that button-down shirt she's stylin' in her fleece mini boots*

stymie *v* To block or thwart; frustrate: *Instead, the drive toward integration has been stymied by the speedbump of crime* [1857 + *Golf*; origin uncertain; perhaps fr British dialect *stimey*, "dim-sighted person," fr *stime*, "ray or bit of light"; adopted in golf for situations where the player or, as it were, the ball cannot "see" a clear path

ahead]

suave or swave *adj* Excellent; fine; COOL **n** Smooth skill; polished adroitness: *He has plenty of suave when it comes to girls v: Then I took her off her feet. I suaved her/ I guess old Buck suaved her off her feet (1960s + Teenagers)*

sub **n** A substitute of any sort, esp an athlete who replaces another or an athlete not on the first team (1830 +) **v:** *Who'll sub for me when I go on leave? (1853 +)*

sub- *prefix for forming adjectives* Inferior to or imitative of what is indicated: *sub--Woody Allen (1963 +)*

submarine sandwich or **sub** or **submarine** **n phr** or **n** HERO SANDWICH • Also hoagy, torpedo, grinder, poor boy, etc depending on the locality [1960s +; fr the shape of the bread cut lengthwise for the sandwich]

◁**suck**▷ **n** SUCTION (1960s +) **v** **1** To do fellatio; EAT (1928 +) **2** (also **suck rope, suck eggs**) To be disgusting or extremely reprehensible; be of wretched quality; ROT, STINK: *A failure as an album. It sucks/ Life irretrievably sucks, and what's the use/ Your decision sucks rope/ his own pet phrase, "That sucks eggs," for expressing disdain (1971 +)* **3** SUCK ASS (1900 +) [*Sucks!* as a contemptuous interjection used by British schoolboys is found by 1913]

suckage **n** **1** The worst possible condition or state **2** The amount or degree to which something sucks

suck air **v phr** To be afraid or alarmed, so as to pant; hyperventilate

with anxiety: *Were you afraid? I was sucking air a couple of times/*
(1970s +)

◁**suck ass**▷ **v phr** To curry favor; flatter and cajole; BROWNNOSE, POLISH
APPLES: *He sucks ass with everybody in the front office* (1940s +)

suck canal water v phr To be in trouble; be in a bad situation
(1970s + *Army*)

suck eggs v phr **1** To be mean and irritable: *We've sucked on these*
eggs long enough (1906 +) **2** To do something very nasty, esp when
invited to; GO FUCK oneself • A euphemism: *Tell your husband to suck*
huge eggs (1970s +)

sucker n **1** An easy victim; dupe; MARK, PATSY: *I'm no sucker/ I'm a sucker*
for a beautiful blonde (1838 +) **2** Any specified object, esp one that
is prodigious, troublesome, effective, etc; MOMMA, MOTHERFUCKER • A
euphemism for *cocksucker*: *It took me 90 days to get that sucker*
straightened out (1978 +) **v** To victimize or dupe someone: *if I can*
sucker him into drawing first (1939 +) [origin uncertain; perhaps fr
the *sucker*, a fish supposed to be easily caught; perhaps fr the
notion of an unweaned and relatively helpless creature, as
suggested by an earlier sense, "greenhorn, simpleton"] **See**
COCKSUCKER, EGG-SUCKER

sucker bait n phr Something offered to lure unsuspecting victims:
That discount TV set is plain sucker bait (1939 +)

sucker for n Gullible person; a person who cannot resist something
(1960 +)

sucker list n phr A list of prospective customers, victims, etc: *The*

directory is not intended to be a sucker list (1910+)

suckerpunch *n* A blow that surprises the recipient, who might have dodged or parried it (1947+) **v**: *He suckerpunched me/ I'll sucker punch a man in a second to get what I want*

suck face **v phr** To kiss and caress; NECK, PET: *You know, kiss. Suck face, kiss (1970s+)*

suck someone's flava **v phr** To copy someone's style (1990s+ *Teenagers*)

◁**suck hind tit**▷ **v phr** To be in a disadvantageous situation; get the worst and least of things: *The plum assignments are there. The press coverage is there. We're up here sucking hind tit [late 1930s+; fr the presumed disadvantage of a suckling at the nethermost teat]*

suck someone in **v phr** To deceive; befool or dupe, esp with false promises [1842+; said to be fr the action of quicksand]

sucking *See* COCKSUCKING

suck it up **v phr** To become serious; stop dallying or loafing: *forced the 76ers to suck it up for game four, which they did to beat L.A./ No matter. He'd suck it up and go [1980s+; fr the military expression suck up or suck in your guts, "pull in your stomach and look trim, as a soldier should"]*

◁**suck-off**▷ **adj** Despicable; nasty; SCUZZY: *We did a suck-off thing* **n** A despicable person, esp a flatterer; BROWNNOSE (1950s+)

◁**suck off**▷ **v phr** To do fellatio or cunnilingus; BLOW, GO DOWN ON someone (1928+)

suck up v phr To defeat in a speed race; pass in a drag race: *I have also sucked up plenty of cherry red Vettes* [1970s+; fr the notion of drawing the passed car along in one's turbulence behind]

suck (or kiss) up to someone v phr To flatter and cajole someone; curry favor with someone; BROWNOSE, SUCK ASS: *He gets ahead by sucking up to the mayor/ They are boss kisser-uppers. They kiss up to the boss* (entry form 1860+, variant 1990s+)

sucky adj Repellent; inferior; LOW-RENT: *I was a real sucky waitress/ "The Tyler Set" can be real sucky, too* (1990s+)

suction n Influence; DRAG, PULL (1940s+)

sudden death modifier: *It's like playing a sudden death inning at the beginning of a game* **n phr** Any of several arrangements for breaking a tie by playing an extra period during which the first team to score wins the game: *They went into sudden death overtime* (1927+ Sports)

suds n Beer (1904+)

sudser n A soap opera or soap-opera-like show; SOAP: *Harvey Fierstein's savvy sudser about a not-so-gay drag queen* (1969+)

Sudsville or Suds City n or n phr Milwaukee, Wisconsin: *Sudsville 10 easily cops tilt* [1980s+; fr the prevalence of breweries]

sugar (or sugar baby, sugar pie) n 1 Money; BREAD: *I'd take a trip if I had the requisite sugar* (1859+) **2** Dear one; sweetheart • Most often a term of address: *I hear you, sugar* (1930+) **3** Heroin, cocaine, or morphine (1930s+ *Narcotics*) **4** ACID, LSD (1950s+ *Narcotics*) [second

narcotics sense fr the taking of LSD soaked in a *sugar cube*] **See**
HEAVY MONEY

sugar-coat something *v phr* To make something more acceptable or palatable: *We played bad. I'm not going to sugar-coat it (1870+)*

sugar daddy *n phr* A man who provides money, esp one who supports a clandestine sweetheart or a gold-digger: *Mrs Shawskey must have had a sugar daddy on the side/ The Pentagon seems to be playing sugar daddy to a lot of American workers (1926+)* **See** DADDY

◁**sugar tit**▷ *n phr* Something that gives comfort and security; SECURITY BLANKET [1892+; fr the use of a cloth soaked in *sugar* water to appease a suckling infant; *sugar-teat* is found by 1847]

suicide blonde *n* A woman with hair unprofessionally dyed blonde • Jocular (1942+)

suit *n* A serious business or professional person: *some slick suit comes along and sets him free/ turned as the suits from the Housing Authority approached [1979+; fr the wearing of a suit, shirt, tie, etc, at work]*
See BIRTHDAY SUIT, MONKEY SUIT, ZOOT SUIT

suitcase *n* A drum (1935+ *Jazz musicians*)

sulks *n* A bout of depression or bad temper (1818+)

◁**sumbitch**▷ **See** SON OF A BITCH

◁**sumbitching**▷ **See** SON-OF-A-BITCHING

sun **See** STICK IT

Sunday modifier 1 The best; one's best: *Sunday finest (1794+)* 2 Amateur; occasional: *For a Sunday painter he's not bad (1925+)*

[the first date refers to the phrase *Sunday best*, “one’s best clothes”]

See FORTY WAYS TO SUNDAY

Sunday best or Sunday clothes or Sunday-go-to-meeting clothes *n*

phr One’s best clothes; BEST BIB AND TUCKER: *both wearing what Delaney described as Sunday-go-to-meeting clothes* [entry from 1779 + ; fr the earlier *Sunday-go-to-meeting clothes*]

Sunday driver *n phr* A slow and careless driver, like one out for a leisurely Sunday drive (1925 +)

Sunday punch *modifier: rockets, the “Sunday punch” weapon of the*

war n phr 1 A very hard and effective blow or assault, with the fist or otherwise: *and lay his Sunday punch on your snoot* (1929 +

Prizefighting) 2 A strong and effective pitch, esp an overpowering fastball (1952 + *Baseball*)

Sunday soldier or weekend warrior *n phr* A military reservist or member of the National Guard, who typically goes on uniformed duty on the weekend (1950s +)

sundowner *n:* *A patient who suffers delusions and disorientation at night, but not by daylight* (1980s + *Medical*)

sunny side up *adj phr* Of eggs, fried on one side only with the yolk showing yellow (1900 +)

sunset *v* To subject a government agency, a legislative provision, etc, to automatic termination after a specified period: *Many senior members of the CAB favor legislative proposals to “sunset” the agency earlier* [1978 + ; fr *sunset law*]

sunset law *n phr* A law requiring a government agency to be reviewed periodically or to be automatically terminated after a specified period (1976 +)

Sunset Strip *n phr* A section of Los Angeles, along Sunset Boulevard, frequented by alienated teenagers, drug users, derelicts, and other sub-and counterculture persons (1962 +)

sunshades *n* Sunglasses; SHADES (1965 +)

sunshine *n* LSD, esp taken as an orange tablet; ACID, ORANGE SUNSHINE: *powerful as a tab of “sunshine” dropped before you step in the cab* [1960s + Narcotics; fr the yellow orange color] **See** YELLOW SUNSHINE

Sunshine *n* Term of address for a sour person (1913 +) **See** ORANGE SUNSHINE

sunshine law *n phr* A law requiring that meetings of legislative bodies be opened to the public: *After the sunshine law the city council had to open its doors* (1972 +)

sun-worshipper *n* One who likes to sit in the sun, esp to get a tan: *turns sun-worshipper in April* (1966 +)

super¹ *n* A superintendent, esp one who is custodian of an apartment building (1857 +)

super² *adj* Wonderful; excellent; very superior: *America’s Teenage Girls Speak Language of Their Own That Is Too Divinely Super* [1895 +; perhaps fr *superior* or *superfine*; revitalized in the 1960s]

super- *prefix used to form adjectives* Having the indicated quality to an extraordinary degree: *superhappy/ superwonky* **prefix used to**

form nouns A superbly qualified and prodigious specimen of what is indicated: *superjerk/ superjock/ superchick/ Supermom* [1930s+; noun prefix stimulated from 1938 by the comic-book character *Superman*]

super-duper or sooper-doooper adj Excellent; wonderful; splendid; superb: *this new MGM sooper-doooper musical smash* [1940+; rhyming]

superfly adj Superior; wonderful; ^{SUPER²}: *He really thinks he's superfly when he gets into his thing* (1971+ *Black*) **See** ^{FLY}

superintendent See ^{SIDEWALK SUPERINTENDENT}

super slab n phr A superhighway; an interstate highway (1970s+ *Truckers*)

superwoman n A woman who successfully undertakes marriage, motherhood, and a full working life all at the same time (1976+)

supper See ^{SHOOT one's COOKIES}

Supremes, the n phr The Supreme Court: *If the Supremes agree to take it* [1990s+; fr the name of a popular female singing group]

sure affirmation Yes; certainly: *Sure, I'll support you* (1842+) **See** ^{SHITSURE}

◀**sure as fuck**▶ **adv phr** Surely; certainly; ^{SURE AS SHOOTING}: *Sure as fuck, you didn't tell me you were in there handling her glassware* (1980s+)

sure as God made little green apples adj phr Certain; definite: *It's sure as God made little green apples that they'll never get here* (1940s+)

sure as hell *modifier* Absolutely certain: *You sure as hell are not watching TV*

sure as shooting *adj phr* Certain; definite *adv phr*: *Thousands of them are sent by civic leaders and, sure as shooting, by other federal judges*
affirmation Yes; certainly (1847+)

sure as you're a foot high *adv phr* SURE AS SHOOTING (1930s+)

sure-fire *adj* Unfailing; certain to succeed, happen, etc: *His election is a sure-fire thing* (1901+)

sure thing *affirmation* Yes; certainly; willingly: *Sure thing I'll go with you* (1896+)

sure thing, a *n phr* A certainty, esp a bet that one cannot lose: *His election is a sure thing, right?* (1836+)

surf *v* To move or pass through some range of choices, such as television channels: *I surfed from your show/ They're surfing the same part of the zeitgeist* [1990s+; fr the ease and rapidity of movement while *surfing* on waves] **See** CHANNEL SURF

surface *v* To get up or leave one's room or home: *hasn't surfaced for days since the breakup* (1963+)

surf bunny or **surf bum** *n phr* A person who spends lots of time at the beach; BEACH BUNNY (1960s+)

surfer *n* A person who "surfs": *People are taking the trouble to put the professional sports schedules on line, to be consulted by any surfer of cyberspace* (1990s+)

surf the net *v phr* To browse the Internet (1992+)

surprise or **surprise surprise** *interj* An exclamation of feigned astonishment over something perfectly obvious or predictable: *A study conducted by university researchers a year ago found that the Family Support Act was failing to change the welfare culture. Surprise/ There were two favorite spots for tots. Surprise surprise. The boys loved the little bosom rose (1953 +)*

suss out *v phr* To discover by intuition or inquiry; find out; learn: *I sussed out Whoosh was the chief my first time here/ I've got to start sussing out nonscuzzy places to pee all along our most-traveled routes [1966 + ; fr suspect or suspicion, attested as sus in British sources by 1930s; perhaps popularized and brought to the US by British rock-and-roll groups]*

Suzy Homemaker *n* A woman who fulfills the quintessential housewife role [1960s + ; fr children's toy appliance]

-sville or **-ville** *suffix used to form adjectives* Characterized by what is indicated: *dragsville/ splitsville/ squaresville* *suffix used to form nouns* Place characterized by what is indicated: *Derbyville/ Motorsville (1891 +)*

swab or **swabby** or **swabbie** *n* A sailor, esp a Navy seaman: *better fitting dress uniforms for the hard-to-fit doughboy or swabbie [1798 + ; probably fr the characteristic activity of using swabs for cleaning the decks and other features of a ship]*

swacked *adj* Drunk: *Besides, you're swacked all the time (1932 +)*

swag *n* **1** Stolen goods, money, etc; loot (1794 +) **2** Souvenirs, etc, sold at rock-and-roll concerts: *Somehow, these trifling collectibles*

came to be known as swag (1990s +) [probably fr the swag, “sack,” in which loot might be carried]

swagging *n* Getting money or property illegally, esp by pilfering government property or by taking illegal payoffs or tips: *a lack of hard evidence that “swagging” or tipping had actually taken place* [1846 +; apparently revived in the 1960s]

swak or **SWAK** (pronounced as separate letters) *sentence* Sealed with a kiss (1925 +)

swallow something *v* To accept or endure reluctantly; stomach: *What I can’t swallow is that he was then promoted* (1591 +)

swallow the apple (or **the olive**) *v phr* To become tense and ineffective; CHOKE UP: *I flat-out swallowed the apple and blew it* (1970s + *Sports*)

swallow the dictionary *v phr* To develop a great vocabulary

swamped *adj* Overwhelmingly busy: *swamped with projects and tasks*

swamper *n* **1** A trucker’s or teamster’s helper or loader: *The cops want to know if any of the wives knew which swampers their husbands were using* (1929 + *for a trucker*, 1870 + *for a teamster*) **2** The second in command of a white-water raft (1980s +)

swank *adj* (also **swanky**) Elegant; stylish; POSH, RITZY: *Carroll’s swank office* (1913 +) *n:* *the swank of his riding clothes* (1920s +) *v* To behave ostentatiously; STRUT: *I saw her swanking up the avenue in furs* (1809 +) [origin unknown; perhaps fr Middle English *swanken*, “to sway,” cognate with German *schwenken*, “to flourish”]

swap notes v phr To exchange information: *I thought we might be swapping notes on that by now (1970s +)*

swap spit v phr To kiss (1938 + *College students*)

swat v To strike; hit: *He spoke up and got swatted for it (1796 +)*

swat (or SWAT) team n phr A police unit wearing military-like uniforms and using military assault weapons on assignments requiring extraordinary coordination and force: *When the terrorists took over the whole building, the commissioner sent in the SWAT team [1969 +; fr acronym of special weapons and tactics used as a modifier]*

swave See SUAVE

swear by v phr To have full confidence in something: *swear by Vaseline for makeup removal*

swear like a trooper v phr To use a lot of foul language; to use foul language rather expertly

swear off v phr To desist from something, with or as if with an abstemious vow: *He swore off cheese and crackers for a whole week (1898 +)*

swear (or swear to) on a stack of Bibles v phr To affirm with absolute confidence and considerable vehemence: *Don called all those short-term signals for Joe. I'd swear to that on a stack of Bibles (1866 +)*

swear up and down v phr SWEAR ON A STACK OF BIBLES (1906 +)

sweat v 1 To suffer; stew; COOK (1610 +) **2** To work very hard and

meticulously: *Clinton did not sweat buckets to gain a minimum wage increase, fund extensive job training, or stop budget-busting tax breaks for the well-to-do* (1592 +) **3** To interrogate a prisoner roughly: *We hauled a bunch of them in, sweated them, nobody would give us anything* (1764 +) **See** FLOP SWEAT, IN A SWEAT, NO SWEAT, PANTHER PISS, PIG SWEAT, TIGER SWEAT

sweat bullets v phr 1 To be very worried; be apprehensive; SHIT A BRICK: *They've been sweating bullets since they heard he was looking for them* (1970s +) **2** (also **sweat blood**) To work very hard: *Their father has to sweat bullets to make a living* (1970s +, variant 1911 +)

sweat equity n phr An equity or stake earned by hard work rather than purchase: *They've demonstrated with sweat equity that they're team players* (1968 +)

sweater (or pin-up) girl n phr A young woman, esp a movie actress or a model, with a notably attractive body, which she features by wearing tight and short clothing (*entry form late 1930s +, variant 1941 +*)

sweat hog n phr <1> A heavy and unattractive woman <2> A sexually promiscuous woman **3** A difficult and incompetent high-school or college student (1970s + *College students*)

sweat it v phr To be apprehensive or uptight • Most often used in the negative: *Well, don't sweat it. Look, is a buck and a quarter okay?* (1963 +)

sweat something out v phr To endure or suffer, esp with nervous anticipation: *a young writer sweating out the creation of his first short*

stories [1876 +; revived during WWII]

sweat something out of someone *v phr* To discover by intimidation or harsh questioning (1940s +)

sweats *n* Athletic clothing; warmup suits: *several court reporting firms, a T-shirt and sweats distributor* (1990s +)

sweatshop *n* A factory or workplace with very poor labor conditions

Sweeney *See* TELL IT TO SWEENEY

sweep *n* The winning of a tournament, series, etc, without losing a single game: *He took the match in a sweep, straight sets* (1940s + *Sports*) *v*: *The Giants swept the World Series that year*

sweeps *modifier*: *a bunch of mealy-mouthed wimps who'd break bread with Adolf fucking Hitler if it meant some kind of rating during sweeps week* *n* Audience ratings and their announcement: *She plans to stay through the May ratings "sweeps" (1980s + Television)* [perhaps fr *sweepstakes*]

sweep something under the rug *v phr* To avoid or conceal something: *They just swept the whole race matter under the rug* (1961 +)

sweet *modifier* Great; excellent: *sweet deal* *See* BLONDE AND SWEET

sweet ass *See* BET YOUR BOOTS, BUST **one's** ASS

sweeten *v* To make something more attractive, esp more remunerative: *Then they sweetened the offer by several thousand dollars* (1896 + *Cardplaying*)

sweetener *n* Something that makes a deal more attractive; encouragement or enhancement, such as a monetary payment:
sweetener was all I needed for the deal

sweeten someone **up** *v phr* **1** To bribe or otherwise recompense someone in exchange for something: *He had to sweeten the cops up even after he had the license* **2** To flatter and cajole someone; SUCK UP TO someone: *He sweetened the audience up a little by praising the town* (1950s +)

sweetheart *n* **1** Something excellent; a cherished and valuable object; HONEY: *See that sweetheart of a car?* (1942 +) **2** A pleasant person; DOLL: *Wait'll you meet her father, he's a sweetheart* (1940s +)

sweetheart contract (or agreement) *n phr* A labor contract that particularly favors the employer and is usually negotiated by a corrupt union official (1950s + *Labor union*)

sweetheart deal *n phr* A mutually profitable and either unethical or illegal arrangement, usu involving a public agency: *what the cable companies now term a "sweetheart deal."* *The Port Authority just turned over the whole thing to Merrill Lynch* (1959 +)

sweetie *n* A sweetheart, in all senses • Often a term of endearment in address: *And Tom's the first sweetie she ever had/ Ain't my new computer a sweetie?* [1903 + ; an isolated instance, *sweet-ee*, is found by 1778]

sweetie-pie *n* A sweetheart, in all senses: *His sweetie pie came home in the early hours* (1928 +)

sweet mama *n phr* A female lover (1920s + *Black*)

sweet man (or papa) *n phr* A male lover (1920s+ *Black*)

sweet nothings *n* Loving remarks or comments: *sweet nothings whispered in her ear*

sweet on someone *adj phr* Enamored of someone; in love with someone: *He was never really sweet on Miss Carlisle/ very sweet on a handsome young man (1740+)*

sweet patootie *See* PATOOTIE

sweet pea *n phr* A sweetheart [1940s+; perhaps a shortening of *sweet patootie*, influenced by the name of the garden plant]

sweet potato *n phr* An ocarina (1930s+)

sweets or sweetums *n* SWEETHEART, SWEETIE • A term of endearment: *I'll get it for you, sweets (1930+)*

Sweet 16 *n phr* The last sixteen teams left in the annual college basketball playoffs: *Maryland to the Sweet 16* [1990s+ Sports; fr the traditional phrase for a young girl, found by 1826, and still much in use]

sweet spot *n phr* The best area on a tennis racket, hockey stick, golf club, or baseball bat for contact with the ball or puck: *they will find the sweet spot with greater frequency with the Slotz (1974+)*

sweet-talk *n*: *He listened to her sweet-talk very receptively (1945+)* ***v phr*** To seek to persuade or soften someone, esp by flattery and endearments; FATMOUTH (1936+)

sweet-tooth *n* Narcotic addiction or craving (1960s+ *Narcotics*)

swell *adj* Excellent; wonderful; superb: *The hotels are swell/ He was a hell of a swell fellow (1888 +)* *adv*: *The new owners have treated me swell (1920s +)* **n** **1** A stylish and well-groomed person; DUDE (1786 +) **2** A wealthy, elegant person; a socialite; NOB: *up on the hill where the swells live (1786 +)* [perhaps fr the late 18th-century phrase *cut a swell*, “swagger,” describing the behavior of a person who swells with arrogance]

swelled head *n* Conceit (1891 +)

swellelegant *adj* SWELL

swellhead *n* **1** A conceited person; a person whose head is swollen with pride: *She acted like a swellhead after she got the prize (1845 +)* **2** Conceit: *I was afraid you'd get the swellhead (1867 +)*

swift *adj* Smart and clever; intelligent: *Not too swift, is he*

swig *n* A swallow of liquor; PULL, SLUG [1621 +; origin unknown]

swill *n* Nasty and inferior food or drink; BELLY-WASH: *What is this swill they've placed before us? (1570 +)*

swim *v* To perform well; succeed; FLY: *I didn't think the Harptones quite swam last time I saw them [1970s +; perhaps fr sink or swim]*

swimming in or **rolling in** *adv phr* Immersed in; having a great quantity

swimmingly *adv* Wonderfully; quite nicely: *does swimmingly at illustration*

swindle sheet *n phr* (also **cheat sheet**, **scandal sheet**) An expense account: *Only one goes on the swindle sheet (entry form 1923 +)*

swing *n* **1** A style of white jazz music of the 1930s and '40s, developed from hot jazz and usu played by big bands: *That pastime was called Swing, and its king, Benny Goodman, and most of its greatest exponents and exploiters were quartered here in New York (1899 +)* **2** An interval between work periods: *with two hours' swing in the afternoon for lunch (1943 +)* **v** **1** To have a strong but easy and pleasant impetus: *Chaucer and Jazz are quite similar; they both swing, they both have the same punch, vitality, and guts (1935 + Musicians)* **2** To perform very well, as a good jazz musician does: *It is appropriate that gifted, gravel-voiced Herschel Bernardi should swing eight times a week in this particular hit (1918 +)* **3** To have a good time; enjoy oneself hugely, as at a good party (1957+ *Black*) **4** To do the sex act, esp promiscuously with various partners either seriatim or at once: *The sexual revolution is not new; people have been swinging as long as they are on this earth (1964 +)* **5** To be stylish, au courant, sophisticated, etc; be HIP: *"Songs for Swingin' Lovers"* (1961 +) **6** To be a member of a teenage street gang (1960s+ *Street gang*) **7** To pull off; execute: *Can you swing it*

swing (or go) both ways **v phr** To be bisexual; be AG-DC: *Do you go both ways? (1960s +)*

swinger *n* A person who "swings," esp in the mode of sexual promiscuity: *Kissinger, who enjoyed a reputation as a swinger, was asked to explain his oft-quoted remark/ Many swingers even pride themselves on preserving their marriages through these arrangements (1961 +)*

swing for the fences **v phr** **1** To swing very hard, trying for a home

run: *As the Babe knew, swinging for the fences often brings more strikeouts than four-baggers (1970s + Baseball)* **2** To make a maximum effort; GO FOR BROKE: *What was striking about Clinton's first week in office was the way he swung for the fences on the domestic front/ This stockbroker prefers to invest his own money in issues more risky than the ones Morgan Stanley recommends; he is willing to swing for the fences with his own investments (1980s +)*

swinging single *n phr* A merry and celebratory unmarried person, esp one who is sexually promiscuous as well as au courant: *entertaining other couples every weekend and making jokes about the "swinging singles" all around them (1967 +)*

swingle *n* SWINGING SINGLE

swingman *n* A narcotics dealer; CONNECTION *(1960s + Narcotics)*

swing shift *n phr* A work shift between the regular day and night shift, typically from four to midnight *(1941 +)*

swipe¹ *n* A stroke or blow, esp a strong one • Most often in the phrase *take a swipe at: Let somebody take a swipe at him (1807 +)* **v** **1** To steal, esp something small or trivial; pilfer: *nix on swiping anything (1889 +)* **2** To run a credit card, identification card, etc, through an electronic detector groove: *Swipe your card there and the door will open (1990s +)* [all senses perhaps fr alterations of *sweep* or *swoop* and the actions of sweeping or swooping up, or of hitting a sweeping blow; noun sense perhaps fr dialect preservation of Old English *swippan*, "beat, scourge"] *See* SIDESWIPE

swipe² *n* Inferior liquor, esp of the homemade sort: *the homemade*

bootleg mess made by the natives out of fruit and called "swipe"
[1960s +; probably related to several late 1780s and early 1800s
British senses of *swipe*, "to gulp liquor quickly and deeply," of
swipes, "small beer," and of *swipey*, "tipsy," all of which may be
related to the British nautical *swipes*, "rinsings of the beer barrel,"
and hence to a sibilation of *wipe*]

swish¹ adj Showing the traits of an effeminate male homosexual;
mincing; LIMP-WRISTED, NELLIE: *His walk was quite swish (1930s +*
Homosexuals) **n 1** An effeminate male homosexual; QUEEN: *that fat*
swish 2 Elaborate decoration: *place needs more swish v* To move,
walk, speak, etc, in the manner or presumed manner of effeminate
male homosexuals (*fr homosexuals*) [perhaps *fr* the swinging
movements of the hips in a mincing walk; perhaps *fr swish²*]

swish² adj Elegant; fancy; POSH, RITZY, SWANKY: *You can get a very swish*
version or a very basic version [1879 +; *fr* British dialect, an
apparent variant of *swash*, "a swaggerer," hence semantically
related to *swank*]

switch n 1 A change, esp a reversal or major alteration: *This is a big*
switch for the reigning party (1920 +) **2** An exchange, esp an illicit
substitution: *He made a switch, giving her the empty purse and taking*
the valuable one (1935 +) **v** To inform; SNITCH (1940s + *Underworld*)
See ASLEEP AT THE SWITCH, CHICKEN SWITCH, NOT HAVE ALL **one's** SWITCHES ON

switched See I'LL BE DAMNED

switched-off adj Not in the current fashion; unconventional; OUT OF
SYNC: *responding to his unconventional (at that time), bohemian,*

“switched-off” quality (1966 +)

switched on *adj phr* **1** Fashionable and admirable; au courant; up-to-date; GEAR: *A larger number of the women were in short, switched-on dresses/ They are among the current drop of switched-on young matrons* **2** Exhilarated; stimulated; HIGH, PLUGGED IN, TURNED ON: *He has powerful friends and you don't, switched-on in-crowd celebrity friends, high-all-the-time-and-getting-away-with-it friends* (1964 +)

switcheroo *n* A switch or shift; a reversal: *For people in search of titillating diversion from their daily lives, switcheroos may seem exciting/ We'll pull a switcheroo. We'll use olives instead of cherries* (1933 +)

switch-hitter *n* **1** A player who bats both right-handed and left-handed (1930s + *Baseball*) **2** A versatile person (1950s +) **3** A bisexual person: *Some people thought he was a switch-hitter. But a nice guy* (1956 +)

switch off *v phr* To become disinterested or less interested: *switches off after listening to her for a minute* (1921 +)

switch on *v phr* **1** To join the current trends, tastes, etc; become up-to-date (1960s +) **2** To excite and exhilarate; arouse sexually; TURN ON: *He didn't see any girls that switched him on much* (1960s +) **3** To become intoxicated with narcotics; TURN ON (1960s + *Narcotics*)

swivel-hips *See* SNAKE-HIPS

swivet *n* A fit of angry agitation; SNIT: *You can't get yourself in a swivet over some isolated instances* [1892 + ; origin unknown]

swizzled or **swozzled** *adj* Drunk; TIPSY (1843 +)

swizzle-stick *n* A stick for stirring a mixed drink [1879 + ; fr earlier *swizzle*, “stir a drink,” fr *swizzle*, “a drink, to drink,” perhaps related to *switchel*, “drink of molasses and water, often mixed with rum”]

swoopy *See* ULTRASWOOPY

-sy *See* -IE

sync *n* Synchronism; synchronization (1929 +) **v** To synchronize:

Let's sync our plans, okay? (1950s +) *See* IN SYNC, LIP-SYNC, OUT OF SYNC

◁**syph** or the **syff**▷ *n* or *n phr* (Variations: **siff** or **the siff**) Syphilis:

syphilis, not siff/ They found out he had the syph while he was doin' time (1914 +)

syrup *See* COUGH SYRUP

sysadmin (SISS uhd MIN) *n* The computer operator who supervises a network: *System administrators are the unacknowledged legislators of the net. Sysadmins are really the only authority figures that exist on the net* (1980s + *Computer*)

sysop (SISS ahp) *n* The computer operator who manages a computer bulletin board, a computer display where those with access may get or convey information: *People look up to the sysop* [1980s + *Computer*; fr *system operator*]

system *See* OLD BOY NETWORK

T

T¹ n 1 Marijuana; TEA (1940s + *Narcotics*) **2** A gram of methamphetamine (1960s + *Narcotics*)

T² n A technical foul: *The “T” was absolutely ridiculous (1990s + Basketball)*

◁**TA or T and A**▷ (pronounced as separate letters) **adj phr**: *They turned it into a T and A show* **n phr** A display of female bosoms and bottoms; a show featuring such display; CHEESECAKE: *the realm of feminine esthetics or, as it is known in the profession, TA/ To enliven their product they call for T and A (1972 +)* [fr *tits plus ass*]

tab¹ n phr 1 The bill or check for something, esp for food or drink: *three-or four-hundred-dollar tabs for unpaid liquor (1942 +)* **n 2** A written acknowledgment of debt; IOU: *They’re liable to go out and stick up a bank if they owe you a tab (1950s +)* [origin unknown; perhaps a shortening of *tabulation*] **See** PICK UP THE TAB

tab² v To identify or designate; label: *I tabbed him immediately as a crook [1924 +; fr *tab*, “a tied-on baggage label,” of unknown origin; perhaps an alteration of *tag*]*

tab³ n 1 A tablet **2** A dose of LSD; HIT (1960s + *Narcotics*)

tab⁴ n A tabloid newspaper: *just be sure the other tabs and the London*

papers don't have track pictures either (1990s +)

tabby *n* PUSSYCAT: *The 348 is a tabby by comparison (1990s +)*

table *See* UNDER THE TABLE

table grade *See* EATIN' STUFF

table-hop *v* To go from table to table in a restaurant, nightclub, etc, visiting and chatting: *Linda goes to Elaine's to table-hop, not to eat (1956 +)*

tablet *See* BRAIN TABLET

tabs *See* KEEP TABS ON

tach *n* A tachometer (1966 +)

tack *n* An equestrian's equipment for riding [1924 +; an abbreviation of *tackle*, "equipment"]

tacks *See* SPIT TACKS

tacky *adj* Inferior; shabby; vulgar; ICKY, RATTY: *She talked in a manner that would be considered a bit countrified, if not slightly tacky/ The girl's hunger for validation, however tacky [1862 +; apparently fr tacky, "small, useless horse," and later "hillbilly, cracker"]* *See* TICKY-TACKY

◀**taco** ▶ *n* A Mexican or person of Mexican descent (1970s +)

taco stand *n phr* A tacky or lousy place: *Let's blow this taco stand*

tad *n adj* **1** A small boy; a child: *I've liked reading since I was just a tad (1877 +)* **2** A small amount; CUNT-HAIR, SKOSH, SMIDGEN: *may be taking his new series just a tad too seriously/ seem white to me even if they are a*

tad deformed (1915 +) [origin uncertain; perhaps a shortening of *tadpole*; perhaps fr British dialect *tadde*, “toad”]

ta-da or **tah-dah** *interj* An exclamation announcing one’s arrival or some revelation: *She said “Ta da,” and dropped the bath towel, and seduced me/ So, one-oh-two West a Hundred Sixteenth Street is, tah-dah!, Mohammed Temple Number Seven* [1940s + Show business; originally a two-note musical phrase introducing a performer]

tag *n* **1** A person’s name (1934 +) **2** An arrest warrant: *Is there a tag out for me?* (1934 + *Underworld*) **3** An automobile license plate: *The Seminoles get special tags* (1935 +) **v** **1** To hit; BELT, SOCK (1940 +) **2** To write graffiti on walls, etc: *tagged with the rebellious urban scrawl of graffiti artists* (1980 +) [final sense fr the fact that many such graffiti are the names, or *tags*, of the painter] **See** DOG TAGS

tag along *v phr* To accompany someone, esp when not invited: *If you don’t mind, I’ll just tag along with you/ Which I can do on my own, or whatever; you want to tag along* (1900 +)

tagger or **tag banger** *n* or *n phr* A person, esp a street gang member, who defaces walls, etc, with graffiti: *promised Sunday would be a new crackdown on graffiti “taggers”/ Taggers, gang members and visitors who spray-paint graffiti in national parks/ focusing on graffiti as a crime and tag bangers and killing* (entry form 1986 +, variant 1990s +)

tagging crew *n phr*: *Frighteningly aggressive panhandlers. “Tagging crews” that cover a city with graffiti* (1990s +)

tail *n* **1** The buttocks; ASS: *if all of us parked ourselves on our tails/ I*

hadn't tossed him out on his tail (1303 +) <2> A woman regarded solely as a sex partner, object, or organ; ASS: *a nice piece of tail* (1933 +) <3> Sexual activity or gratification; ASS, FUCKING: *It was said that the freshmen up at Yale got no tail* (1920 +) 4 A person who follows another for surveillance; SHADOW: *The security officer was even going to put a tail on the children* (1914 +) **v:** *tailing a jewelry salesman* (1907 +) [in the second noun sense, *tail*, "sex organ," is found by 1362] **See** one's ASS OFF, DRAG-TAIL, DRAG one's TAIL, GET one's TAIL IN A GATE, HAVE A BROOM UP one's ASS, HAVE A TIGER BY THE TAIL, HAVE someone or something BY THE TAIL, PIECE OF ASS, RINGTAIL, SHAVETAILED, WORK one's ASS OFF

tailbone *n phr* The buttocks; ASS (1940s +)

tail-end Charlie *n* Ass-End Charlie, Butt-End Charlie (WWII)

tailgate **v** 1 To follow another car, truck, etc, dangerously closely; HIGHTAIL: *drove her car behind him, tailgating him between red walls of dead brick* 2 To watch girls go by (*College students*) 3 To join what one says closely to what has just been said; DOVETAILED (*Army*)

tailgate party *n phr* 1 An outdoor party or picnic, typically in the parking lot of a sports stadium, and served on the tailgates of station wagons 2 A style of jazz said to resemble the early New Orleans sort (*Jazz musicians*) [musical sense fr the fact that the *tailgate* of the band's wagon was left down to give slide-room for the trombone]

tailor-made *adj* 1 Exactly fitting or appropriate: *a situation tailor-made for that sort of intervention* 2 Made especially for someone or something; custom-made: *He had his own tailor-made piano stool* **n** A

ready-made cigarette, as distinct from a hand-rolled one; Pimp Stick

tailpipe *See* BLOW IT OUT

tails *n* Men's formal dress

tailspin *See* IN A TAILSPIN

take *n* **1** The money taken in for a sporting event, at a gambling casino, etc; GROSS: *Nevada's take has been hit by a recession (1931 +)*
2 An acceptable portion of movie or TV recording, musical recording, taping, etc: *The director said okay, it was a take (1922 +)*
3 A portion; extract; bit; OUTTAKE: *fast takes from the latest research that may change your life (1847 +)* **4** One's interpretation or reaction: *What's your take? You think he was telling the truth or was it just drunken bragging? (1980s +)* **v** **1** To cheat or defraud someone; swindle; SCAM: *The old couple got taken for their life savings (1920 +)*
2 (also **take** someone **into camp** or **take** someone **downtown**) To defeat someone utterly; trounce; CLOBBER: *UCLA took Illinois in the Rose Bowl/ Last year Tanner took Borg downtown in the same round/ In his heart, Gingrich thinks, "I can take them all" (1939 +)* **3** To succeed; COME OFF, CUT IT: *I tried to apologize, but I guess it didn't take (1633 +)* [the third noun sense's dated example refers to a portion of reporter's copy set in type] *See* DOUBLE-TAKE, ON THE TAKE

take a back seat *v phr* To assume or accept a subordinate position; demote or degrade oneself: *He said he wouldn't take a back seat to anybody but the president himself (1888 +)*

take a bath *v phr* To suffer a financial or other loss; Go To The

Cleaners, TAKE A BEATING: *Is it possible to take a bath on items previously thought to be incapable of depreciation?/ Though the Republicans didn't take a bath, they did not end up breaking even in this election* [1940s + ; fr Yiddish, where *er haut mikh gefirt in bod arayn*, literally “he led me to the bath,” means “he tricked me”; the sense is derived fr the deception of persons reluctant to take a steam bath and have their clothing decontaminated and who hence had to be tricked; probably reinforced by *cleaned out* and *taken to the cleaners* as terms for loss of money in gambling or business]

take a beating v phr 1 TAKE A BATH (1940s +) **2** To be bested in a transaction; pay too much: *You really took a beating if you paid \$2 a pound* (1970s +)

take a break v phr To rest or cease temporarily from working; Caulk Off, KNOCK OFF: *Why don't you guys take a break while I figure this out?* (1940s +)

take a bye v phr To decline; choose not to take; PASS something UP: *The kid took a bye on breakfast* [1880s + ; fr the term *bye* used when a participant in a tournament passes to the next level without playing, since he or she has drawn no opponent]

take a chill pill v phr To calm down or relax; CHILL OUT

take a crack at something See HAVE A CRACK AT something

take a D v phr To commit suicide [1970s + ; said to be fr the dramatic mythical sort of suicide where the unhappy person, usu a disappointed movie actor, leaped off the letter D in the HOLLYWOOD sign on Mount Lee, but suspiciously like an abbreviation of *take a*

dive]

take a dig at someone *v phr* To make an irritating or contemptuous comment; BAD-MOUTH: *When he took a dig at his mother, his brother decked him (1970s +)*

take a dim view of something or someone *v phr* To regard as not especially hopeful, delightful, etc; greet with less than buoyant enthusiasm: *Her parents take a decidedly dim view of me (1941 +)*

take a dive *v phr* To fall in a feigned knockdown or knockout; lose a fight, game, etc, dishonestly; TANK: *He refused to take a dive, so they took him out (1942 + Sports)*

take a drink *v phr* To strike out [1916 + Baseball; fr the fact that the player can then go to the *drinking fountain* in the dugout]

◁**take a dump** ▷ *v phr* (Variations: **crap** or **shit** or **squat** may replace **dump**) To defecate; SHIT: *two dogs taking a dump on a restaurant lawn/ like taking a dump on Mom's apple pie (1940s +)*

take a fall *v phr* To be arrested; FALL: *He took a fall, Duke/ who had already taken two falls for burglary (1940s + Underworld)*

take a flyer (or flier) *v phr* To take an ambitious gamble; take a risky chance or chancy risk, esp financially: *I don't believe you, but what the hell, I'll take a flyer [1885 + ; fr flyer, "jump, leap"]*

◀**take a flying fuck** ▶ *v phr* (Variations: **frig** may replace **fuck**; **at a rubber duck** or **at a rolling doughnut** may be added) May you be accursed, confounded, humiliated, rejected, etc; GO FUCK oneself, GO TO HELL: *about four guys who could really tell me to go take a flying frig*

*and make it stick/ And if I was to tell you to go take a flying fuck at a rolling doughnut, what would be your reaction, Sid? [flying fuck is explained in a source of about 1800 as “copulation done on horseback,” found in a broadside ballad *New Feats of Horsemanship*]*

take a gander v phr To have a look; scrutinize; inspect: *I go over and take a gander into it (1914 +)*

take a hike sentence Leave me alone; go away; GET LOST: *He took one look at my clothes and told me to take a hike (1960s +)*

take a hinge at See GET A HINGE AT

take a (or the) hit (or chop) v phr To be punished, damaged, etc, esp when not solely responsible; be the scapegoat: *Your standard of living will take a big hit over the short term/ Those accounts aren't even insured; the fund can't keep taking hits like that/ The Government winds up taking the hit for Resolution Trust/ I was vice president of the institute, so he thought I should take the chop for those demonstrations (1990s +)*

take a hosing v phr To be cheated or duped; be unfairly used: *The average worker and his family think they're taking a hosing (1940s +)*

take a knee v phr Of the quarterback, simply to kneel rather than execute a play: *He told Brent Favre to take a knee on the final play of the game because “I didn't want anybody to get hurt” (1990s + Football)*

◁**take a leak**▷ **v phr** To urinate; PISS, WHIZ: *fella has to take a leak/ You worry you'd miss it if you took a leak and went to the refrigerator (1934 +)*

take a load off (or off your feet) v phr To sit down; rest; relax: *He waved Vito into a chair, "Take a load off. You take anything in your coffee?"* (1945 +)

take a meet v phr To meet; colloque: *Get down here, Babe! I need you to take a meet* [1990s +; *meet*, "meeting," is found by 1879; it often refers to a clandestine or criminal activity]

take a nosedive v phr To decline or collapse; to go into a sudden rapid drop or decline: *Her popularity took a nosedive*

take a number sentence Don't be impatient; take your place in line: *"Tall enough to kick you in the balls," he said. "Take a number," I said* [1980s +; fr the practice at a busy shop or office, where petitioners are invited to *take* a printed *number* card to ensure their serial priority]

take a page from someone's book v phr To imitate or emulate someone: *I think I'll take a page from Castro's book and grow a beard and cigar* (1970s +)

take someone or something apart v phr 1 To criticize severely and in a detailed way; defame **2** To defeat; thrash: *mugger took them apart* (1942 +) **3**To dismantle: *took the Legos apart*

take a peek v phr To look; examine: *Shall we just take a peek at that sore?* (1836 +)

take a pew sentence Sit down; take a seat: *Now that you're here, you may as well take a pew* (1898 +)

take a pop at (or whack) v phr To throw a punch at; hit: *took a pop*

at me and I flattened him

take a potshot at someone v phr To criticize harshly; assault critically: *I don't want to take potshots at Frank* [1927 +; fr the notion of a *shot* taken merely to put game in the cooking *pot*, hence not sportsmanlike or punctilious but crudely practical]

take a powder v phr To leave; depart hastily, esp to avoid arrest or detection; POWDER: *and take a powder out of here that day/ that goddamned Matthews, who took a powder to Florida* [1930s +; fr the magical *powder* of a magician or sorcerer, capable of making a person disappear or change form, a use found by 1688]

take a rain check v phr To arrange postponement or delay of some occasion that one cannot attend at the invited time: *Thanks awfully, Syl, but we're booked that night and will have to take a rain check* (1950s +) **See** RAIN CHECK

take a run at someone v phr To approach or assault with a view to capture or seduction: *I wouldn't take a client of mine into the place, unless he was such a close associate that nobody was going to take a run at him* (1970s +)

take a shine to someone or something v phr To incur a liking for; like: *May Venus take such a shine to you both* (1839 +)

◁**take a shit (or a crap, a dump, a squat)**▷ **See** TAKE A DUMP

take a shot (or whack) (at) v phr To make an attempt; to try to do something: *take a shot at culinary school*

take a walk v phr To leave; absent oneself; abscond (1871 +)

take care of v phr To kill: *boys took care of Willie in the basement of the warehouse*

take care of business v phr To perform stylishly and effectively; deal well with what one needs to: *I got up and took care of business (1950s + Black fr take care of business, found by 1955 among jazz musicians, apparently originally meaning “to copulate”)*

take care of Numero Uno v phr To devote oneself to one’s own profit and well-being; see to oneself; FEATHER one’s NEST: *The Lord helps them that take care of Numero Uno (1970s +)* **See** NUMERO UNO

take someone down a peg v phr To deflate or reduce someone; esp, to humiliate someone pompous or vainglorious; CUT someone OFF AT THE KNEES: *Somebody ought to take that cocky bastard down a peg [1664 + ; said to be fr the fact that a ship’s flag or ensign was belayed on pegs, hence a lower peg meant less dignity in a salute; take a peg lower is found by 1589]*

take someone downtown See TAKE

take one’s finger out v phr A request or demand for effort from a lazy person [1941 + ; fr the notion of idleness characterized by having one’s finger inserted in a body orifice]

take five v phr To take a short respite from work; TAKE A BREAK [1929 + ; about the time it takes to smoke a cigarette]

take someone for a ride v phr 1 To murder by kidnapping and disposing of the body in a remote place, in gangster fashion (1927 +) **2** To cheat or swindle someone (1929 +)

take gas or catch a rail v phr To lose control of one's surfboard and fall off: *To "take gas" is to lose a board in the curl of a wave (1960s + Surfers)*

take heat v phr To endure punishment, complaints, etc: *I took a lot of heat and I stayed in the kitchen/ They think they're taking the heat for being unaware and not doing anything [1940s + ; fr if you can't stand the heat stay out of the kitchen, attributed to President Harry S Truman]*

take in v phr To perceive and understand: *I can't quite take in what he's saying (1727 +)*

take (or rope) someone in v phr 1 To let someone stay with one; offer shelter: *took in the stray cat 2* To deceive or cheat someone: *might try to take you in*

take someone into camp See TAKE

take it v phr To endure pain, violent attack, the buffets of fate, etc; HANG TOUGH, TOUGH IT OUT: *Valley Forge proved the Continentals could take it (1920 +)*

take it easy v phr 1 To keep one's anger and excitement under check; be calm: *Take it easy, Mac, nobody's hurt 2* To work slowly and smoothly: *Hurry and you're dead, take it easy and you survive 3* To stop working; relax; loaf: *I got to take it easy for a few minutes [1880 + ; take it easy is most often used as a parting salutation or a bit of advice for living, in each case intending all senses at once]*

take it hard (or big) v phr To react very strongly to something: *I thought she'd ignore it, but she took it big/ We were surprised he took*

the news so hard (1894 +)

take it in the ear *See* PUT IT IN YOUR EAR

take it on the chin *v phr* To be soundly defeated; be trounced: *They took it on the chin badly in the last period (1928 +)*

take it on the lam *v phr* To leave, esp hastily; escape; LIGHT OUT: *The girl "took it on the lam" (1897 + Underworld)*

take it or leave it *interj* This is your only choice: *Spaghetti for dinner. Take it or leave it*

take it out of someone's hide *v phr* To exact the harshest kind of compensation, even physical punishment, usu in place of a gentler or a monetary one: *He'll pay up, by God, or I'll take it out of his hide! (1940s +)*

take it out on someone or something *v phr* To punish or mistreat an innocent subject for wrongs one has suffered: *Whenever his boss yells at him, he takes it out on his secretary [1903 +; perhaps fr take it out of someone's hide]*

take it to the street *v phr* To make something public; to blather: *taking her misery to the street*

take one's lumps *v phr* To accept and endure severe treatment; TAKE IT: *The boys were taking their lumps trying to stay on wild Brahma bulls [1949 +; get the lumps, "to be beaten up," is found by 1935]*

take something lying down *v phr* To accept something submissively (1860s +)

take one's medicine *v phr* To accept and endure what one has

deserved; FACE THE MUSIC (1903 +)

taken *See* be HAD

take names *See* KICK ASS AND TAKE NAMES

take-no-prisoners *modifier* Ruthless; uncompromising: *Ciarelli's take-no-prisoners approach earned her fifty-five thousand dollars on the sand last year* [1990s +; fr the putative command of a combat officer that all enemies be killed, none captured]

take no shit *See* TAKE SHIT

taken to the cleaners, be *See* GO TO THE CLEANERS

takeoff *modifier*: *and if it comes to a takeoff thing in the street n 1* An imitation, esp of a famous person, actor, etc; an impression: *You should hear her takeoff of Liz Taylor (1846 +)* **2** A robbery, esp an armed street robbery or mugging: *He always uses the mugger's jargon for a street robbery: "takeoff" (1960s +)*

take off v phr 1 To leave; depart; SPLIT: *They all took off for Houston (1813 +)* **2** To have a sudden success, spurt of activity, etc; Take Fire: *but nonsense that doesn't take off can be a trial/ Phase 2 of PAC face lift is taking off with a bang (1963 +)* **3** To rob; commit burglary; HOLD UP, RIP OFF: *We took off a bar/ They want to keep dealing, not just take off two dudes for a little cash (1970 +)* **4** To kill; WASTE, ZAP (1970s + *Black*) **5** To give oneself a narcotic injection; SHOOT UP (1960s + *Narcotics*) **6** To leave work for a time: *I'm going to take off without pay for a week or so (1940s +)* **7** To imitate; mimic; parody: *She takes off a drunk hilariously (1750 +)* [first sense based on the rising and departure of an airplane]

takeoff artist *See* RIPOFF

take off like a bat out of hell (or like a bigass bird) v phr To depart hastily; leave in a hurry; CUT OUT (*WWII armed forces*)

take on v phr 1 To behave angrily; make a fuss: *How you do take on!* (1430+) **2** To stop and search someone, demand identification, question harshly, etc; JACK UP, ROUST: *We were also taught that good cops take on a lot of people* (1970s+ *Police*)

take someone or something on v phr 1 To accept an assignment, job, role, etc: *I'm a bit diffident about my qualifications, but I'll take the chairmanship on* (1300+) **2** To accept combat or confrontation with someone or something: *The Knights took over the Philadelphia Inquirer and later took on the Morning Journal head-to-head* (1885+)

takeout modifier Having to do with food bought to be eaten away from the place where it is prepared: *pies she hoped to sell to the "takeout" trade* (1940s+)

take someone or something out v phr To kill; destroy; totally disable: *They asked Col Beckwith what he intended to do with the Iranian guards. "Take them out." The Brits were just seeking to reassure themselves that we were not planning to take out a country* [1939+; perhaps fr the football term *take out*, "block an opponent decisively"]

takeover n The buying of the control of one company by another, usu by the wooing and rewarding of stockholders and often against the wishes of the acquired company's management: *a popular*

means of conducting corporate takeovers (1958 +)

take something public v phr 1 To make something known in general:

took their romance public 2 To sell shares in a company to the general public: *took Ask Jeeves public and then it tanked*

taker n A person who accepts a bet, challenge, offer, etc: *I dared them all but got no takers (1810 +)*

◁**take (or eat) shit**▷ **v phr** To accept or endure humiliation, victimization, bullying, etc; EAT DIRT • Often in the negative: *Yeah, but at least you don't take any shit from anybody/ Do I have to take this shit from my own partner? (1940s +)*

take some doing v phr To be very difficult; be arduous: *It took some doing, but they got there inside an hour (1891 +)*

takes two to tango, it See IT TAKES TWO TO TANGO

take the cake v phr To win or deserve the highest award and admiration: *His new sonnets quite take the cake [1847 +; fr the prize awarded in a cakewalk dancing contest]*

take the cure v phr To submit to a treatment program or enter a treatment facility: *wanted to take the cure*

take the fifth (or five it) v phr To refuse to testify in court on the basis of the protection of the Fifth Amendment of the US Constitution; to refuse to answer any questions: *took the Fifth on every question*

take the (or some) heat v phr To incur and endure heavy censure or criticism; to take a punishment: *took the heat for letting the cat out*

the door

take the heat off v phr To relieve someone from scrutiny or criticism; also, to take the punishment in place of another: *The appearance of other suspects took the heat off him for a while*

take the money and run sentence If a chance for profit comes, legally or not, accept it: *An objective person would say, if you can get the state out for 73 million, take the money and run!* [1960s+; the title of a 1969 Woody Allen movie]

take the pipe v phr To become ineffective under pressure; CHOKED UP, SWALLOW THE APPLE: *He could have taken the pipe after that horrendous first half, but he didn't* (1970s+)

take the pledge v phr To promise not to drink alcohol: *ready to take the pledge* [fr the Alcoholics Anonymous pledge]

take the plunge v phr To act decisively, despite prior apprehension: *He took the plunge and bought a new computer* (1876+)

take the rap (or the fall or the jump) v phr To accept or suffer the punishment for something, esp for something one did not do: *If she gets caught, I'll take the rap for her/ Make sure Brewster doesn't come unglued. He has to take the fall right along with Beck/ Marcus got to take the jump for it* (1930+)

take the starch out of v phr To reduce or deflate someone's ego or conceit: *took the starch out of her when she didn't win*

take the wind out of someone's sails v phr To reduce someone's initiative or momentum; to rob of an advantage: *hate to take the*

wind out of your sails

take things easy v phr To relax and make slow or little progress, esp to recover and recuperate: *take things easy now you are sick/ taking things easy in retirement*

take to v phr 1 To have a fancy or particular liking or desire for: *took to doing yoga every morning* 2 To develop a habit or apply oneself to a pursuit: *took to begging*

take someone to the cleaners v phr To win or otherwise acquire all or very much of someone's money, esp at gambling, in a lawsuit or business deal, etc; CLEAN someone OUT: *Smarten up, Chrystie, take him to the cleaners/ Ephron did not take him to the cleaners in the divorce (1949+)*

tale See FISH STORY

tale of woe n phr A distressing story • Most often used ironically: *Well, let's hear your current tale of woe, Mr Kvetch (1790+)*

talk v 1 To inform; confess and implicate others; SQUEAL: *Socks would never never talk (1924+)* 2 To talk about; have as one's topic • Always in the progressive tenses: *The administrators aren't talking toga parties/ What we're talking here is seventy-five a key See* BACK TALK, BIG TALK, FAST TALK, HAPPY TALK, LOUD-TALK, PEP TALK, PILLOW TALK, STRAIGHT TALK, SWEET-TALK

talk a blue streak v phr To talk rapidly and copiously: *I left him talking a blue streak about his persecution (1895+)*

talk a good game v phr To speak, if not to perform, impressively: *These political embarrassments helped to establish that the Clinton people talked a good game but weren't up to the grownup job of*

governing (1973+)

talk someone's arm (or ear or head) off v phr To address someone at very great length; GAS: *Donna talked his ear off* (entry form 1833+, variant 1935+)

talk big v phr To boast and exaggerate; be self-aggrandizing; SHOOT OFF one's MOUTH: *He was talking pretty big about how they treated him* (1584+)

talkie n A talking movie (1913+) **See** WALKIE-TALKIE

talking head (or hairdo) n phr A person, esp a news reporter, an interviewer, an expert, etc, who appears on television in a close-up, hence essentially as a bodiless head: *using the medium as something more than a static platform for talking heads/ what the TV experts term a talking head, just Ronnie in an easy chair/ one of those plays for which talking hairdos go to the videotape* (1968+)

talk jockey n phr The "host" of a radio talk show [1972+; modeled on *disc jockey*]

talk out of turn v phr To speak too candidly; be too bold verbally; SHOOT OFF one's MOUTH: *I may be talking out of turn, but I think you ought to make the decision right now, and live with it* (1934+)

talk radio n phr Radio programs on which callers speak with a "host": *QVC is talk radio taken to its most shallow, most comforting limits* [1985+; *talk show* is found by 1965]

<talk shit> v phr 1 To say very rude or untruthful things in order to offend or hurt: *Why do you let your child talk shit to you* **2** To make

empty threats: *You don't scare me. I know you are talking shit*

talk shop *v phr* To discuss work or business rather than have social conversation (1854+)

talk-talk or **talky-talk** *n* Mere talk, esp bombast or idle chatter (1902+)

talk the hind leg off a donkey *v phr* To talk excessively; prate [1861+; *talk a horse's hind leg off* was called "old" and "vulgar" in 1808]

talk the talk and walk the walk *v phr* To be both sincere and effective: *They Talk the Talk and Walk the Walk/ In the end Perot could talk the talk, but he couldn't walk the walk* (1990s+)

talk through one's hat *v phr* To lie and exaggerate; talk nonsense; BULLSHIT [1887+; said to be fr the deceptive demeanor of men who hold their *hats* over their faces on entering church, and are supposed to be praying]

talk to the hand (or **tell it to the hand**) *sentence* Don't bother me as I am not listening to you; I'm ignoring you • said with the hand raised, palm facing out toward the adversary's face: *Complaining again? Talk to the hand* (1990s+)

talk turkey *v phr* To speak candidly and cogently; LAY IT ON THE LINE, LEVEL: *Do you want to talk turkey, or just bullshit?* [1824+; fr a story of the white man who said to the Native American, Wampum, that in dividing the game he would give him the choice: "You take the crow and I'll take the turkey, or I'll take the turkey and you take the crow," whereupon Wampum declared that the white man was

not *talking turkey* to him]

talk until one is blue in the face *v phr* To talk forever, but with nobody listening: *talk till you are blue in the face, but no one is changing their mind*

talk up a storm *v phr* To talk loud, long, impressively, incessantly, etc; CHEW someone's EAR OFF: *City TeenAgers Talking Up a "Say What?" Storm (1970s +)*

tall *See* STAND TALL

tall can of corn *See* CAN OF CORN

tall one *n phr* A large alcoholic drink: *Make it a Long Island iced tea, a tall one*

tall order *n* A difficult assignment or task: *a tall order for a newbie*

tall timbers, the *n phr* Rural areas; the BOONDOCKS, the RHUBARBS (1920 + *Show business*)

tan someone's **hide** *v* or *v phr* To beat someone severely; thrash: *Fetch me my gin, son, 'fore I tan your hide [1670 +; fr the making of a hide into leather by tanning]* *See* BLACK AND TAN

◁**T and A**▷ *See* TA

tang *See* POON TANG

tangle *v* To fight; MIX IT UP (1928 +)

◁**tangle assholes**▷ *v phr* To come into conflict; disagree; quarrel; fight: *Remind them how it was the first time we tangled assholes (1970s +)*

tangle-foot or **tangle-leg modifier**: *a Western writer describing the effects of tangle-foot whiskey* **n** Liquor, esp cheap whiskey (1859+)

tango *See* IT TAKES TWO TO TANGO

tang out v phr To cease; make an end of; BAG: *I'm going to tang out on studying* (1980s+ *Students*)

tank n (also **fish tank**, **fish bowl**, **holding tank**) A detention cell; a jail cell: *when he goes into the tank as a prisoner/ I'm in the fish tank. There are forty of us in the diagnostic center* (entry form 1912+) **v 1** (also **tank up**) To drink liquor, esp heavily: *I think he'd tanked up a good deal at luncheon* (1902+) **2** To lose a game, match, etc, deliberately; THROW: *He lost so implausibly they were sure he had tanked/ the "tanking" of unlucrative doubles matches merely to catch a plane* (1976+ *Sports*) **3** To fall precipitately; collapse: *At FBI headquarters, morale has tanked after the Idaho investigation/ Analysts say Texaco shares could tank to \$25--\$30 in bankruptcy* (1980s+)

See DRUNK TANK, GO IN THE TANK, THINK TANK

tanked or **tanked up adj** or **adj phr 1** Drunk (1893+) **2** Defeated; outscored: *team was tanked again 3* Dead; out of service: *the tanked clunker sat in the garage*

tanker n A competitive swimmer: *The Lady Hawk tankers sprinted to nine first-place finishes* (1990s+)

tank town n phr A small town, such as one featuring mainly a water tank for locomotives; JERK TOWN (1906+)

tanky adj Drunk: *Behind me sat four tanky guys* (1970s+)

tap n: *Tap, also tap-off and tip-off. A jump ball. The center jump which begins the game (1980s+ Basketball) v 1 To rob; burgle: Only chicks this guy taps? (1879+)* **2** To select; designate: *When she was tapped for the job, Reno was in her 15th year as State Attorney for Dade County (1952+)* **See** HEEL-TAP

Tap City adj Lacking money; penniless; BROKE: *You're Tap City? No problem (1970s+)*

tap dance v phr To improvise, tergiversate, etc, in order to hide one's ignorance: *I didn't read the poop sheet, so I had to tap dance when the question came (1970s+ Army)*

tap dancer n phr A person who "tap dances": *He considered himself a tap dancer because he was very agile at gliding away from any sticky situation (1970s+)*

tape See RED TAPE

taped adv For certain; under control; IN THE BAG, RACKED: *By the third round he had the fight taped [1933+; the dated instance is taped out in the same sense]* **See** HAVE something CINCHED

tap someone for something v phr To solicit money from; beg or borrow from; HIT someone, TOUCH: *I tapped my brother for another two hundred (1940s+)*

tap out v phr To lose all one's money, esp in a gambling game: *"It's tapping me out," he says [1940s+ Gambling; perhaps fr having tapped everyone available for a loan and found none]*

tapped out adj phr 1 Penniless; BROKE, TAP CITY: *Tapped out, a bank goes*

under/ the tapped-out underdog he is supposed to be (1940s + Gambling) **2** Exhausted; FRAZZLED, POOPED: *thought he looked terrible, haggard, pale, tapped out (1940s +)*

tar¹ n A sailor [1676 +; fr the *tarpaulin* garments they made and wore]

◁**tard** or 'tard▷ **n** RETARD: *The stupid shit. What a 'tard (1983 +)*

tarfu (TAR FOO) **adj** Totally botched and confused; SNAFU [WWII armed forces; fr *things are really fucked up*]

Tarheel n A native or resident of North Carolina [1864 +; origin uncertain; perhaps fr the gummy resins of the pine barrens, which would cling to their feet; perhaps because a North Carolina unit that lost a hilltop position in the Civil War was jestingly told they had not *tarred their heels* to make them stick]

tarnation n Damnation [1790 +; a euphemistic alteration of *damnation*, apparently influenced by obsolete US slang *tarnal damned*, an alteration of *eternal*]

tarp n A tarpaulin, esp a weatherproof cover for a car, boat, etc (1906 +)

tart n A promiscuous woman, esp a prostitute; harlot; HOOKER: *nothing cheap for us like the grimy tarts on Mercury Street* [1887 +; fr *tart*, the pastry confection, esp the English *jam-tart*; in original early 1800s use it meant any pleasant or attractive woman and only specialized at the end of the century]

tart up v phr To decorate; prettify; bedizen; GUSSY UP: *go the glam route*

or tart it up or punk it down/ American directors feel obliged to tart up Shakespeare (1938 +)

taste *n* **1** A share or percentage of profits; a PIECE OF THE ACTION (1960s + Theater) **2** A dose of a narcotic; HIT (1960s + Narcotics) **3** Liquor in general; a drink of liquor (1919 +) **See** SO BAD ONE CAN TASTE IT

tat *n* A skin tattoo: *There were two favorite spots for tats (1990s +)*

ta-ta *interj* A parting salutation; a farewell [1823 +; fr nursery talk]

◁**tatas**▷ *n* A woman's breasts • Often with *bodacious*: *bodacious tatas of Victoria's Secret commercials*

tater *n* **1** A home run: *the man who hit all those long taters in the American League/ Bolton insisted the outfield fences be moved in, thus allowing his own team's heavy hitters to launch their taters* **2** A potato: *meat and taters/ Fry up some taters for lunch* [1960s + Baseball; perhaps fr earlier Negro League use revived by George "Boomer" Scott when he joined the Boston Red Sox in 1966]

tattooed **See** SCREWED, BLUED, AND TATTOOED

tatty *adj* Inferior; cheap; shoddy; TACKY: *have met over lunch in tatty banquet halls to press the flesh (1933 +)*

taxi **See** TIJUANA TAXI

taxi dancer *n phr* A woman at a public dance hall who dances for hire (1941 +)

taxi squad *n phr* A group of professional football players who are not officially members of a team, although they may be paid to be available as a reserve [1966 + Football; fr the fact that a former

owner of the Cleveland Browns would give such players jobs with his *taxicab* company to support them and keep them available]

T-bone *v* To hit a car, bus, etc, from the side: *All the bus would have had to have been was another 8 or 10 feet into the intersection and that truck would have T-boned it/ hit the wall almost head-on and was T-boned by Eddie Cheever's car (1980s+)*

TCB (pronounced as separate letters) *v* To perform very well what one needs to do: *where he is always to be found TCBing [1970s+ Black; fr take care of business, found by 1955 among jazz musicians, apparently originally meaning "to copulate"]*

tchotchke (CHAHCH kə, TSAHTS kə) (Variations: **tchatchka** or **tchotzke** or **tsatske** or **chotchke** or **chatchke**) *n* **1** Something trivial, esp a gewgaw or decorative trifle; bagatelle; plaything: *little rainbows and neon tchatchkas found in California neon boutiques/ you know, the tchotzkes, the jewelry/ his job at the mall vending Watusi chatchkes* **2** A precious or adorable person, usu a child: *The baby is a tchotchke* **3** A woman considered as a plaything: *She's Harry's tsatske [1964+; fr Yiddish tsatske fr Slavic]*

TD or **Tee Dee** (pronounced as separate letters) *n* A touchdown (1940s+ Football)

t'd off *See* TEE'D OFF

tea *n* **1** (also **T**) Marijuana (1935+ Narcotics) **2** A marijuana cigarette; JOINT, TEA-STICK (1935+ Narcotics) **3** A stimulant, often cocaine or strychnine, given to a racehorse to increase its speed (1951+ Horse racing) [the narcotics senses probably fr use of tea as

winking and ironic concealment] **See** CUP OF TEA, PINK TEA, STICK OF TEA, WEED TEA

teacups **See** ASS OVER TINCUPS

tea'd up **adj** Intoxicated with marijuana; GOWED UP, HIGH (1940s +
Narcotics)

tea head **n phr** A habitual user of marijuana (1953 +)

teakettle **See** ASS OVER TINCUPS

team **See** SWAT TEAM

team up **v phr** To join together in some effort; BUDDY UP (1956 +)

tea pad **n phr** A place where marijuana smokers gather (1950s +
Narcotics)

tea party **n phr** 1 A gathering where marijuana is smoked: *Marijuana "tea parties" are little things (1940s + Narcotics)* 2 An easy, pleasant, safe occasion • Most often used in the negative: *It wasn't exactly a brawl, but the meeting was no tea party either (1960s +)*

tear¹ (TAIR) **n** A drinking spree; BENDER, BINGE: *Fred wanted to go on a little tear in the big town (1869 +)* **See** ON A TEAR

tear² or **tear-ass** **v** To go very fast; rush around rapidly: *McAllister had no inclination to go tear-assing up the slope and into the hills (entry form 1599 +, variant 1940s +)*

tear³ (TEER) **n** A pearl [fr the *tear* shape of some pearls]

◁**tear someone a new asshole (or one)**▷ **v phr** To completely and severely criticize or chastise someone: *tear you a new one if you get in one more accident*

tear someone or something apart v phr To criticize severely; to express a completely negative opinion: *tore him apart for being late*

tear someone or something down v phr To speak or write critically or disparagingly of; to criticize (1978+)

tear one's hair (out) v phr To behave frenziedly, expressing grief, rage, frustration, desperation, or anxiety: *tearing her hair over the SATs* (1600+)

tear into v phr 1 To attack, criticize, or scold severely: *tore into him for losing the keys* **2** To start eating voraciously: *tore into that steak after the hike*

tear-jerker n 1 A sentimental story, movie, song, etc: *See the old tear-jerker* **2** A person who appeals to sentimentality; a fomenter of pathos: *a magniloquent tear-jerker named Delmas* (1921+)

tear off v phr To play or perform: *The musicians began to tear off a La Conga* (1940s+)

◁**tear off a piece (or a piece of ass)**▷ **v phr** To do the sex act; FUCK [1941+; Tony Thorne dates the phrase to the late 1800s]

tearoom or t-room n A public toilet (1970s+ *Homosexuals*)

tearoom queen n phr A male homosexual who frequents public toilets seeking sexual encounters (1970s+ *Homosexuals*)

teaser n 1 A woman who invites or offers sexual activity but refuses to do the sex act; COCK-TEASER: *Maybe Bella was right in calling his "uptown lady" a "teaser"* (1895+) **2** Anything offered as a sample and intended to increase appetite or desire: *He showed them one*

chapter as a teaser (1934+)

tea-stick *n* A marijuana cigarette: *There isn't much record that he went for tea-sticks himself (1950s+ Narcotics)*

tea (or tearoom) trade *n phr* **1** Male homosexuals who seek encounters in public toilets **2** Sexual encounters in public toilets (1970s+ *Homosexuals*)

tec or teck *n* **1** A detective; DICK (1879+) **2** A detective story (1934+) [a shortening of *detective*]

TEC *sentence* Transfer to Eternal Care (1980s+ *Medical*)

tech¹ *n* An engineering or technology college [1906+; fr *technology*]

tech² *n* A technician, esp an electronics expert: *I got a guy to do it, a tech named Ernie Mann (1942+)*

techie *n* A computer enthusiast, expert, etc: *But nerds these days aren't what they used to be. Many of these techies who grew up with computers have gotten older and gotten a life/ Or maybe it was when Conde Nast invested in the glossy techies' magazine Wired (1980s+)*

Technicolor yawn *n phr* The act and product of vomiting [1963+; fr *Technicolor*, trademark for a color-film process]

techno- *prefix used to form nouns* Having the indicated knowledge of, involvement with, or attitude toward technology, esp advanced and computer technology: *technobuddy/ technofreak/ technogood/ technopeasant*

technopop or **techno** *n* Popular music using much technical equipment: *manages to hammer enough melody into the wall of*

technopop he has erected (1990s +)

teddy *n* A one-piece women's undergarment serving as both chemise and panties [1924 +; perhaps fr *teddy bear*]

tee'd (or teed or t'd) off *adj phr* Angry; PISSED OFF: *When people get teed off they want to march* [1950s +; perhaps fr *ticked off*; perhaps a euphemism for *pee'd off*, "pissed off"]

Tee Dee *See* TD

teed up *adj phr* Drunk [1928 +; probably fr 1920s black *teed*, "drunk," probably related to marijuana or *tea* intoxication, and to *tea*, "whiskey," a use attested fr the 17th century]

teen (also **teener** or **teenie** or **teeny**) *n* A teenage person; teenager: *a really interesting biz for a teen who loves being busy/ a robust health that would be remarkable on a teener/ "You only pass this way once," he tells a teenie in persuading her to come along for a ride*

teensy-weensy or **teeny-weeny** *adj* Very small; tiny: *the teensy-weensy kind that small-town dailies like (entry form 1906 +, variant 1894 +)*

teenybopper *n* (also **teenie bopper** or **teenybop** or **teeny-rocker**) A teenager or preteenager, esp one who undertakes the hippie or rock-and-roll culture and way of life: *Teenyboppers opt for zodiac signs/ attract shady record promoters like rock stars attract teenyboppers (1966 +)*

teenzine *n* A magazine for teenagers: *this teenzine cover boy (1970s +)*

tee off v phr To hit someone or something very hard: *He hit a homer, really teed off* [1953 + ; fr the opening shot of each hole in golf, off the tee]

tee someone off v phr To make angry; PISS someone OFF: *This moping is teeing me off* [1961 + ; probably a euphemism for pee or piss someone off, influenced by *tee off on* someone, fr golf]

tee off on someone or something v phr 1 To verbally assault someone, esp to reprimand: *The critic really teed off on my book, alas* (1955 +) **2** To hit the ball very hard: *He teed off on it and it went right over the wall* (1932 + *Baseball*)

teeth See DRESSED TO THE TEETH, DROP one's TEETH

Teflon modifier Immune to criticism; sacrosanct or elusive: *They called Reagan the Teflon president* [fr a trademark brand of plastic coating]

Tejano adj: *Tejano music combines the accordion-driven polkas and cumbias of Mexican conjunto music with synthesizers and rock songs n*
A Texan of Mexican origin or descent: *The Texas Ranger myths legitimized Anglo dispossession and then exploitation of Tejanos* (1990s +)

telegraph v To signal one's intentions, often inadvertently: *The tone of her voice telegraphed it* (1925 +)

telegraph one's punches v phr To let an opponent know one's intentions inadvertently: *never get to the top, he telegraphs his punches* (1936 + *Prizefighting*)

telephone (or phone) tag *n phr* The repeated exchange of recorded telephone messages: *I don't feel like playing telephone tag with her/ "Having computers in our volunteers' homes has eliminated phone tag," says Power, referring to the pervasive round-robin of messages left and phone calls missed (1990s +)*

teleporn *n* Obscene matter broadcast on television (1980 +)

tell *See* SHOW-AND-TELL

tell it like it is *v phr* To be candid and cogent; tell the truth, even though it be unpleasant; GIVE IT TO someone: *by Negro psychiatrists William H Grier and Price M Cobbs, who tell it like it is (1964 + Black)*

tell it to Sweeney *sentence* TELL IT TO THE MARINES [1926 +; *Sweeney* is one of a group of surely mythical Irishmen, like Riley, Kelsey, and Kilroy, whose names are used apparently for some humorous effect]

tell it to the Marines *sentence* I do not believe what you have just told me; what you say is false and futile [1806 +; the usage, esp in the form "tell it to the marines, but the sailors won't believe him," reflects the contempt in which *marines* were held by naval seamen]

tell me about it *sentence* What you are saying is obvious; SO WHAT ELSE IS NEW: *"Put the water on while I shower. I smell like a goat." "Tell me about it" (1980s +)*

tell someone off *v phr* To reprimand; CHEW someone OUT: *The man had just been told off, and told off plenty (1919 +)*

tell the world *See* I'LL TELL THE WORLD

tell someone what to do with something *v phr* (Variations: **where to put** [or **shove** or **stick** or **stuff**] may replace **what to do with**)
To reject something vehemently and defiantly • A euphemism for *stick it up your ass: She told me rudely what to do with my proffered assistance/ The first thing I did when I got home was to tell my old boss where to stick my old job (entry form 1946 +)*

tell someone where to get off (or to go) *v phr* To rebuke, rebuff, or deflate firmly; LET someone HAVE IT • A euphemism for *go to hell: I advised Alice to tell him where to get off when he tries that big-shot stuff (1900 +)*

temp *n* A temporary employee: *Instead of a full-time secretary he kept hiring temps (1923 +)*

ten *See* FIVE-AND-TEN, HANG TEN

ten, a *n phr* A young woman who is maximally sexually attractive; a perfect female specimen [1980s +; perhaps fr *ten-carat*; perhaps fr the conventional question “Where would you put her (him, it) on a scale of one to *ten*?”]

ten-carat *adj* Big; impressive; imposing: *No more ten-carat heels were going to tell me sorry*

ten cents *n phr* A ten-dollar packet of narcotics; DIME BAG (1960s + *Narcotics*)

tenderfoot *n* A newcomer; neophyte; callow person; GREENHORN (1881 +)

tenderloin *n* A district of a city where vice and corruption are rife [1887 +; fr earlier sense of undercut of a sirloin steak; orig applied specifically to a district of New York City, fr the notion that the proceeds from corruption made it a juicy morsel for the local police]

ten feet tall *adj phr* Hugely impressive; menacing: *Iraq had an extremely large military force, and we gave them credit for being ten feet tall in certain areas (1962 +)*

ten-foot pole *See* NOT TOUCH someone or something WITH A TEN-FOOT POLE

ten-four or **10--4** *affirmation* That is correct; okay: *That's a ten four, you have it just right (fr citizens band)* *n phr* The signal that a message has been received, the equivalent of the earlier and military "roger" (1962 + *Citizens band*) [fr a code of conventional procedure signals used esp by the police, where *ten* was a sort of prefix, and the numeral following bore the message; *ten seven*, for example, meant "transmissions finished"]

tenner *n* **1** A ten-dollar bill: *spent the tenner on Jersey applejack (1887 +)* **2** A ten-year prison sentence (1866 + *Prison*)

tennies or **tenny runners** *n* or *n phr* Tennis shoes, running shoes, or other such rubber-soled footwear: *grateful that my tennies were rubber-soled and silent/ a plain black T-shirt and beige tennies (1969 +)*

ten pounds of shit in a five-pound bag *See* BLIVIT

tense up *phr* To become stiff, ineffective, and semi-paralyzed from nervous tension (1973 +)

ten-spot *n* **1** A ten-dollar bill; ten dollars; DIME-NOTE, TENNER: *A ten-spot can't get you past two counters in a grocery store without limping (1848 +)* **2** A ten-year prison sentence: *after having served a ten-spot (1928 + Prison)*

tent *See* PUP TENT

-teria *See* -ATERIA

terminal *adj* Extreme; unmitigated: *Terminal cuteness is the dread disease of too much Southern writing [1990s + ; based on the medical sense "fatal, incurable"]*

terminally *adv* Intractably; hopelessly: *All but the terminally high-minded should try to get to see the Blue Man Group (1990s +)*

tern *n* An intern (1970s + *Medical*)

terps *n* **1** (also **turps**) Turpentine (1823 +) **2** Elixir of terpin hydrate with codeine, a cough syrup prized as a narcotic (1970s + *Narcotics*)

terrific *adj* **1** Excellent; wonderful; GREAT: *The script is apt to be terrific*
2 Prodigious; extreme; amazing: *Times Square hotel biz is on the terrific fritz (1888 +)*

territory *See* GO WITH THE TERRITORY

terror *See* HOLY TERROR

test *See* POP QUIZ

test the waters *v phr* To make a preliminary assessment: *I've tested the waters, and this product works/ One sign of this is the number of*

vice presidents who are testing the union's political waters [1970s + ; an example from 1888 may refer to such an assessment or may refer to an actual testing of well-water]

tetchy *adj* Irritable; irascible; testy: *the days when tetchy film crews invaded the center of soporific conferences* [1592 + ; fr dialect *tetched*, “crazy, touched in the head”]

Texas leaguer *n phr* A hit that falls out of reach between the infielders and the outfielders; BANJO HIT, BLOOPER [1905 + Baseball; fr the fact that such hits were used in minor-league baseball's *Texas League* as trick plays]

Tex-Mex *adj* Texan-Mexican **n 1** A native of the Texas-Mexico border region: *Fender, who calls himself a Tex-Mex, was born in the south Texas valley border town of San Benito* **2** A style of cooking characteristic of the Texas-Mexico border region: *exemplars of Tex-Mex, the mongrel cuisine that has grown up along America's southern border* (1949 +)

TGIF (pronounced as separate letters) *sentence* Thank God it's Friday: *When I came out of the Wheaton Liquor Store I didn't see a cruiser. TGIF* (1970s +)

thang *n* Thing • Jocular mispronunciation: *doing my thang*

thanks a lot (or a bunch or a million) *sentence* Thank you very much • Often used ironically: *Well thanks a lot; that kick in the face was just what I needed/ Thanks a bunch* (entry form 1940s +, variant 1980s +)

thanks for nothing *sentence* Thank you very much for what you

have not done for me: *Willie has an assortment of bumper stickers: To All You Virgins, Thanks For Nothing* (1960s+)

thank you ma'am *n phr* A bump or hole in the road [1849+; because riders bounce up and down as if they were bowing thanks]
See WHAM-BAM THANK YOU MA'AM

that ain't (or isn't) hay *sentence* That is a large sum; that is not insignificant • *Chopped liver* is very commonly used analogously; *cornflakes* and *zucchini* are also found, but rarely: *And what they pay me in addition ain't hay* (1943+)

◁**thatch**▷ *n* Pubic hair: *love to get under her thatch* (1933+)

that does (or tears) it *sentence* That ruins things; that's the last straw [entry form 1968+, variant 1909+; by 1837 in the form "Now you have done it"]

that dog will hunt *sentence* The idea is a good one; success is probable: "Let's order out for pizza." "That dog'll hunt"/ *Looks like this dog will hunt, to use Clinton's own phrase* (1980s+)

that dog won't (or don't) hunt (or bark) *sentence* That proposition is invalid; the explanation will not do: *Then they got that crazy bullet zigzagging all over the place, so it hit Kennedy and Connally seven times. That dog won't hunt* [1930s+ Southern; the folk saying is certainly older than the quoted date; such sayings about inadequate animals are found by 1789, "That cock won't fight"; 1838, "That cat won't jump"; 1860s, "That cat won't fight"]

that'll hold you *sentence* That will care for your needs; that will keep you from being troublesome: *So I gave him the ten thou and*

said “*That’ll hold you*” (1900+)

that’s all someone needs *sentence* That is precisely what someone does not need; that is excessive, fatal, very ill timed, etc: *Another tax increase is all I need right now/ A speeding ticket? Brother, that’s all you needed* [1930s+; perhaps fr a translation of the ironical Yiddish lament *Dos felt mir nokh*, “I still lack that”]

that’s all she wrote *sentence* That is the sum and end of it; that is the bitter end: *Tell him that’s it, brother, that’s all she wrote* [1940s+; fr the sad case of someone, esp a World War II soldier, who got a *Dear John* letter from his sweetheart, ending the affair]

that’s big of you *sentence* Your behavior is very generous • Often used ironically: *That’s big of you, to help him up after you knock him down* (1920+)

that’s close *sentence* That’s nonsense; that’s not so: “*She’s real George all the way*” ... “*Huh, that’s close*” (1950s+ Teenagers)

that’s my boy (or girl) *sentence* You have done very well; I’m proud of you; WAY TO GO (1930s+)

that’s show business (or show biz) *sentence* Such is the unpredictable or grim nature of things; THAT’S THE WAY THE BALL BOUNCES:
We didn’t get invited, but that’s show business (1947+)

that’s that *interj* That is final. That is the way it is going to be: *I’m going to finish this and that’s that*

that’s the ball game *sentence* That’s the end of the affair • Usual spoken by the loser

that's the ticket *sentence* That's just what is needed: *You have a spare blanket? That's just the ticket* [1838 +; origin uncertain]

that's the way the ball bounces (or the cookie crumbles) *sentence*
Such is life; such are the buffetings of fate; c'est la vie: *Guess that's the way the ball bounces* (entry form 1951 +, variant 1956 +)

that way *adj phr* In love; enamored: *He decided he was that way about her* (1929 +)

the goods *n phr* 1 Competent and genuine; the REAL CHEESE: *They told me she was the goods, and I believed them* (1904 +) **2** Convincing evidence against someone: *He turned himself in when he knew the cops had the goods on him* (1913 +) [second sense fr goods, "stolen property"]

the hang *n phr* A useful knowledge and command of something: *He fired me just when I was getting the hang of the operation* (1845 +)

the limit *n phr* As much as one can tolerate: *He's the limit in this town* (1885 +)

them apples *See* HOW DO YOU LIKE THEM APPLES

the pits *n phr* The most loathsome place or situation imaginable: *The Soviet "government is the pits"* [1953 +; fr *armpits*]

therapy *See* GREYHOUND THERAPY

there or right there *adj* or *adj phr* Very competent; very well informed; WITH IT (1849 +)

there ain't no such animal *sentence* No such person or thing exists: *Those looking for New Jersey farm-raised certified organic turkeys are*

out of luck. There ain't no such animal (1922 +)

there's no (or no such thing as a) free lunch *sentence* The world is a hard place and one must work for what one gets (and even then one may not get it): *Rep David Obey believes there is no such thing as a free lunch* [1980s +; fr the memory of old-time saloons, where one could eat from a copious *free lunch* on the bar, even with a minimal liquor purchase]

there's no way *adv phr* Under no conceivable circumstances: *There's no way I'll ever see it your way (1975 +)*

there you are or there you go *sentence* 1 That is, unfortunately, the way things happen; THAT'S THE WAY THE BALL BOUNCES: *Beau started to laugh softly, at the absurdity of everything. "Well, there you go," said Beau* **2** Things happen as expected; results follow actions: *You push this one, see? There you go, it turned on* **3** You have done something wrong again, of your habitual sort: *There you go, meddling again (entry form 1883 +, variant 1897 +)*

thick *adj* 1 (also **thickheaded**) Stupid; dull-witted (1597 +, *variant 1801 +*) **2** (also **thick as thieves**) Intimate; very well acquainted: *The two of them are very thick (1756 +, variant 1833 +)* **3** Shapely; CURVACEOUS (1980s + Teenagers) **See** SPREAD IT THICK

thicko *n* A stupid person; DIMWIT: *Charlie doesn't know anything. He's a thicko (1976 +)*

thieving *adj* Inclined to steal: *thieving piece of crap (1598 +)*

thighs *See* THUNDER THIGHS

thinclad *n* A track-and-field athlete: *Local thinclads prepare for state meet (1940s +)*

thin dime, a or one *n phr* **1** The least amount of money; a RED CENT: *He was stony broke, not a thin dime could he produce* **2** A dime; ten cents: *which sells old-fashioned ice cream sundaes for one thin dime [1918 +; fr the fact that the *dime* is the *thinnest* and smallest of US coins]*

thing *n* One's particular predilection, skill, way of living or perceiving, etc: *He ignored the world and stuck to his thing [1841 +; revived in the 1960s]* **See the** BEST THING SINCE SLICED BREAD, HAVE A THING ABOUT, JUST ONE OF THOSE THINGS, SURE THING, a SURE THING

thing, a *n phr* An amorous couple: *I just found out you and he are a thing (1943 +)*

thingamajig *n* (also **thingumabob** or **thingumadoodle** or **thingummy** or **thingamadoger** or **thingamadudgeon** or **thingumbob** or **thingamananny**) An unspecified or unspecifiable object; something one does not know the name of or does not wish to name; DINGUS, DOODAD, GADGET: *When you want to go down you push this thingamajig up as high as it will go/ a thingummy so addicted to lethal violence (entry form 1824 +, first variant 1832 +, others late 1700s + or 1800s +)*

thingy or **thingie** *n* A thing; GIZMO, THINGAMAJIG: *one of those thingies on the roofs of churches that the water spouts through (1968 +)*

think **See** DEEP-THINK

think something *v phr* To concentrate on; aspire to; desire: *A fashion*

magazine could tell its readers to “think pink” one season, because they’d been thinking navy blue or yellow or aqua the season before (1980s+)

think-box *n* The brain (1917+)

think-piece *n* A newspaper or magazine article of intellectual virtue or pretension; a thoughtful essay: *The Knightly Quest drifts off into a think-piece on the nature of romantics and the state of the nation (1947+)*

◁**think one’s shit doesn’t stink**▷ *v phr* To be very conceited; be stuck up and self-impressed: *The way she looks down her nose you know she thinks her shit doesn’t stink (1940s+)*

think tank *n phr* An institute or institution that specializes in the custody of interpretive intellectuals, esp in the social sciences, and usu caters to and is financed by a government in return for studies, prognostications, etc: *A peace academy would be part graduate school, part think tank [1959+; think-tank, “the brain,” is found by 1905]*

thin-skinned *adj* Overly sensitive to criticism or insult: *can’t be thin-skinned and expect all the neighbors to like you*

third base *See* GET TO FIRST BASE

third degree or **third** *n phr* or *n* Long and harsh, even brutal, questioning, esp by the police: *The Third Degree, A Detailed and Appalling Exposé of Police Brutality/ He’s giving me a third about some gun he says I had [1900+; origin uncertain]*

third lieutenant *n phr* A commissioned officer, such as a warrant officer or a flight officer, ranking below a second lieutenant (*WWII armed forces*)

third sacker *n phr* A third baseman (*1911 + Baseball*)

third wheel *n* An extra person in a social venue, esp one that interferes or gets in the way: *He was a third wheel when they went to the fair*

thirty or **30** *See* OH-DARK-THIRTY

this *n* My penis • Accompanied by a gesture toward the indicated part: *Hey Vanessa, how about the bailiffs seize this?/ "Mom said to go walk the dogs" "Walk this, John! You walk the dogs!" (1940s +)*

this is it *sentence* The final crisis is here; the unavoidable has come; prepare for the worst: *He held her hand fast and said "This is it, kid" (1942 +)*

thoroughbred *n* An underworld figure who is loyal and trustworthy to cohorts (*Underworld*)

thou (THOU) *n* A thousand, esp a thousand dollars; GRAND: *A hundred and fifty thou is business (1867 +)*

thought *See* DON'T GIVE IT A SECOND THOUGHT

thrashing *n* A thorough or sound defeat: *thrashing by their rival (1815 +)*

threads *n* Clothes, esp a suit of clothes; DUDS (1926 +) *See* SET OF THREADS

three-alarm (or five-alarm) fire *n* A very exciting or overwhelming

event; a crisis

three-bagger *n* A three-base hit; a triple (1940s + *Baseball*)

three bricks shy of a load *adj phr* Stupid; NOT ALL THERE: *A fine man, all right. It's too bad he was three bricks shy of a load* (1970s +)

three D or 3-D *adj* Three-dimensional: *a three-D turkey of a movie* *n phr* or *n* The technique of making or showing stereoscopic, three-dimensional movies: *They started making a lot of dreadful splat movies in three D* (1952 +)

three-dollar bill *See* PHONY AS A THREE-DOLLAR BILL

three-dollar pistol *See* HOT AS A THREE-DOLLAR PISTOL

three-letter man *n phr* A homosexual [1930s + *College students; fr the fact that fag has three letters, and based on the custom of gauging athletic distinction by the number of varsity letters*]

three-peat *n* The third repetition of a feat; something like a “hat trick”: *won the match and with it a chance for the rare three-peat/ Streisand's return to Broadway leaves one hungry for yet another album, a three-peat* [1990s + ; modeled on *repeat*]

three sheets to (or in) the wind *adj phr* Drunk [1821 + ; fr the fact that a drunken person is as helpless and disorganized as a sailboat with its *sheets*, that is, with its sails, flying, and hence its course and movement entirely out of control]

three squares or three hots and a cot *n phr* Enough to eat; an acceptable standard of living: *He isn't rich, but he gets his three squares every day/ homeless men do break the law to get “three hots*

and a cot" (1899+)

three-time loser *n phr* A criminal who has been convicted several times and is in jeopardy of an automatic life sentence in some states if convicted again; hence a hardened and perhaps dangerous criminal (1914+)

thrift *n* A savings and loan association (1980s+)

thriller *n* An exciting movie, play, etc, esp a horror show; CHILLER (1889+)

thriller-diller *n* A very effective thriller; CHILLER-DILLER (1950s+)

throat *n* A very intense and competitive student, esp a premedical student: *throat, a person who is over-competitive about grades* [1970s+ College students; fr *cutthroat*] **See** CUT one's OWN THROAT, JUMP DOWN someone's THROAT

throb **See** HEARTTHROB

throne *n* A toilet; JOHN, SHITTER (1922+)

throttle **See** BEND THE THROTTLE

through a tin horn **See** LIKE SHIT THROUGH A TIN HORN

through one's hat **See** TALK THROUGH one's HAT

through the mill *adv phr* By the course of hard experience; where the most difficult and practical experience is to be had: *He knows just where it's at; he's been through the mill* (1818+) **See** GO THROUGH THE MILL, PUT someone THROUGH THE MILL

throw v 1 To confuse and incapacitate; amaze; confound; FLABBERGAST:

When he called me that it just about threw me (1844 +) **2** To lose a game, race, etc, deliberately; TANK: *Basketball players confess that they have accepted bribes to “throw” games (1868 +)* **3** (also **pitch** or **toss**) To be host or hostess at; arrange for: *The president has to throw him a luncheon/ One of his assistants actually pitched a party for me/ Kendall tossed a cocktail party for a group of us visiting writers (1922 +)*

throw, a *adv phr* For each; apiece; PER EACH: *The meetings were a dollar “a throw” [1896 + ; probably fr carnival games where the customer pays so much for several *throws* of a ball, a ring, etc, trying to win a prize]*

throw a bird *v phr* FLIP THE BIRD (1968 +)

throw someone a curve *v phr* To do something quite unexpected; deceive by the unpredicted: *But Spicoli threw him a curve (1940s +)*

throw a fit (or spaz) *v phr* To behave or react very angrily; HAVE KITTENS: *She just about threw a fit when I told her we weren’t going/ Well, they threw a spaz and said I can’t see him or have him over (entry form 1896 + , variant 1990s +)*

◀**throw a fuck into someone**▶ ***v phr*** (Variations: **bop** or **boff** or **screw** may replace **fuck**) To do the sex act with someone; FUCK: *It’s inevitable that someone is going to want to throw a bop into someone else’s wife (entry form 1940s +)*

throw a monkey wrench into something *v phr* To confuse or disable something: *Hot-eyed radicals eager to throw a monkey wrench into the social machinery (1920 +)*

throw something **at** something **v phr** To cover or pelt a problem with some usu futile remedy: *Experience with throwing bureaucrats at such problems does not presage success (1970s +)*

throwaway modifier 1: *He had a sort of throwaway casualness about him* **2** Designed to be thrown away; disposable: *It came in throwaway bottles (1928 +)* **3** Useless; superfluous; cruelly neglected: *a three-times convicted killer, a throwaway man now/ Haiti has always been a throwaway nation (1970s +)* **n** A line, joke, etc, deliberately spoken unemphatically, thus increasing its effect (1955 + *Show business*)

throw away v phr To deliver a “throwaway” line, joke, etc: *I love the way he threw away that misquotation from Plato (1934 + Show business)*

throwaway gun **See** DROP GUN

throwback n A retro thing, person, etc; a reversion to a technique or method of an earlier period: *That guy tries so hard to be a throwback to the 60s (1888 +)*

throw something back v phr To drink something; also, to eat something: *threw back a few beers*

throw down v phr 1 To threaten or challenge; start trouble: *I told him about Sam throwing down on me with a gun/ irate macho mesomorphs about to throw down (1950s +)* **2** To challenge a rival break dancer by performing a particularly difficult feat or gyration (1980s + *Black teenagers*) **3** To have fun; GET DOWN, PARTY: *I'm going to throw down at the party Saturday night (1980s + Teenagers)* **4** To eat,

esp voraciously: *threw down some burgers* [first two senses perhaps fr late 1800s *throw down on*, “aim one’s pistol at”; perhaps fr *throw down the gauntlet*, “issue a challenge,” found by 1548]

throw someone or something for a loop *See* KNOCK someone or something FOR A LOOP

throw one’s hat in the ring *v phr* To issue a challenge, esp to announce one’s candidacy in an election, for an appointment, etc (1917+)

throw in the towel (or the sponge) *v phr* To concede defeat; give up; FOLD [1940s+; fr the signal of surrender given by a defeated boxer’s manager or associate when he tosses a *sponge* or a *towel* in the air or into the ring; found by 1960 in the form *throw up the sponge*]

throw money at something *v phr* To spend extravagant amounts of money in the hope of solving some problem: *The answer to the quality of schools is not just to throw money at the problem* (1970s+)

throw someone out on someone’s ass (or ear) *v phr* To eject someone, esp violently; BUM-RUSH: *I just raised a little question and they threw me out on my ass*

throw the book at someone *v phr* To impose a severe punishment, esp to assign a maximum sentence to a criminal; treat mercilessly: *If he catches you one more time he’ll throw the book at you* [1932+; fr the image of a judge *throwing the whole lawbook* full of punishment indiscriminately at the convicted person]

throw the bull *v phr* SHOOT THE BULL

throw together *See* KNOCK TOGETHER

throw one's weight around *v phr* To use one's influence, esp in a crude way; exploit one's authority: *You'll never get picked if you start throwing your weight around* (1916 +)

thumb *n* A marijuana cigarette; JOINT (1960s + Narcotics) *v* (also **thumb a ride**) To solicit rides along a highway by pointing with one's thumb in the direction one wishes to travel; HITCHHIKE (1939 +) [narcotics sense fr the fact that one sucks the cigarette as a baby does its *thumb*] *See* a GREEN THUMB, STICK OUT

thumb in one's eye, a *modifier*: *The underside of Gramm's conservatism and thumb-in-your-eye individualism is a brutal political style* *n phr* An annoyance; a constant irritant: *Yeah, he's been a thumb in my eye for a long time* (1970s +) [fr a tactic in rough-and-tumble fighting, scorned by the traditionalists]

thumbnail sketch *n phr* A very brief account; esp, a quick biography [1852 +; so brief, that is, as to be written on a *thumbnail*]

thumbprint *n* What is characteristic and individual about one's personality, work, etc; one's seal or cachet: *The director has achieved what is known in the theater as his thumbprint* (1951 + *Theater*)

thumbs *See* ALL THUMBS, TWIDDLE one's THUMBS

thumbs down *n phr* A negative response; a negation: *It's thumbs down on his promotion this year* [1906 +; fr the *pollice verso* gesture of the audience at a Roman gladiatorial show, indicating that a defeated gladiator was to be killed rather than spared]

thumbsucker *n* A newspaper or magazine article with pretensions of gravity and authority: *appeared in the Whole Earth Review in a misty-eyed thumbsucker by Kevin Kelley/ story known in the trade as a thumbsucker, the desperate resort of editorial writers everywhere* (1974+ *Journalists*)

thumbs up *n phr* A positive response; an affirmation; the NOD: *We go, the answer is thumbs up* [1887+; the opposite of *thumbs down*] **See** THUMBS DOWN

thumping *adj* Especially great; also, large: *thumping good time* (1576+)

thunderbox *n phr* A large stereo radio, esp one played very loudly in public places; GHETTO BOX: *the thunderbox radios blaring trumpet fanfares* (1970s+)

thunder thighs *n phr* Heavy thighs, esp when regarded as ugly and undesirable: *Bye-bye thunder thighs. You can have slimmer legs in 30 days/ the sinewy thunder thighs of marathoner Gayle Olinekova* (1970s+)

thusly *adv* Thus: *content to sum up his contribution thusly: "It was the toughest thing I ever attempted"* (1865+)

tick¹ *n* Credit: *plenty of canned goods and plenty of tick at the store* [1642+; fr *ticket*]

tick² *n* 1 A degree, esp of upward motion or increase; a discrete amount: *if the price would have stayed where it was or skipped up a few more ticks* (1970+) 2 A second; a JEFFY: *I'll be there in a couple of ticks* (1879+) **See** RICKY-TICK, UPTICK, WHAT MAKES someone TICK

tick³ *See* TIGHT AS A TICK

ticked off or **ticked** *adj phr* or *adj* Angry; PISSED OFF, TEE'D OFF: *Steve Kemp is ticked off* (1959+)

ticker *n* **1** A telegraphic printing machine for stock quotations, news reports, etc: *It's just coming in on the AP ticker* (1883+) **2** The heart: *He tapped the left side of his chest. "Ticker," he said* (1930+)

ticket *n* An official license or certificate, esp one for a ship's officer, a radio operator, etc (*late 1800s*+) *See* BIG TICKET, HAVE ONE'S TICKET PUNCHED, MEAL TICKET, WALKING PAPERS

ticket, the *n phr* Exactly what is wanted: *That's the ticket, my dear, at last* [1838+; perhaps fr *the winning ticket* in a lottery, a race, etc]

tickety-boo *adj*: *The sergeant reported that all was tickety-boo* *adv* Very well; splendidly: *Weitz's report just after liftoff that "everything's going tickety-boo so far" (WWII British armed forces)* [origin uncertain; perhaps fr *the ticket*; more likely fr the slightly earlier Royal Air Force *tiggerty boo* in the same sense, fr Hindi *teega* plus unexplained but euphonious *boo*]

tickle *See* SLAP AND TICKLE

tickled *adj* Pleased; happy: *She says she's tickled to be off her soap in New York* (1586+)

tickled to death (or **pink**) *adj phr* Very much pleased; happy as can be: *They were tickled to death with the suggestion/ I am tickled pink to have been asked* (entry form 1834+, variant 1922+)

tickler *See* FRENCH TICKLER, RIB-TICKLER

tickle the ivories v phr To play the piano, esp to play it well
(1906 +)

◁**tickle the shit (or piss) out of someone**▷ **v phr** To please someone very much; overjoy someone (1940s +)

ticklish adj Difficult because it requires sensitive handling: *ticklish question* (1591 +)

tick someone off v phr To anger someone; PISS someone OFF: *Just the slightest thing could tick off Harold* (1915 +)

tick over v phr To idle; barely run; operate very slowly: *The motor was just ticking over* (1916 +)

tick-tock n A clock; also, by extension, the human heart: *wind the tick-tock/ tick-tock is going strong at 70*

ticky-tacky adj (also **ticky-tack**) Inferior; shabbily made or done; TACKY: *oil rigs and ticky-tack motels/ draw their energy from the ticky-tacky-taco style of curio shops* (1969 +) **n** Shabby materials; insubstantial and inferior goods: *little houses made of ticky-tacky* (1962 +) [coined by Malvina Reynolds and used in “Little Boxes,” a 1960s satirical song about California housing tracts where the houses are described as little boxes made of *ticky-tacky*]

tiddly or tiddled adj Drunk, esp slightly drunk: *a little tiddly, which is to say, shot or blind* (1905 +)

tidy See TOUGH SHIT

tie (or get) a bag on v phr To go on a drinking spree; get drunk: *You still tie a bag on now and again* (1940s +)

tie a can to (or on) someone v phr To dismiss; discharge; CAN, FIRE:
First it was the Braves who tied a can to Tommy Hughes [1926 + ; probably fr can, “discharge”]

tied up modifier Busy: *tied up with a conference call*

tie-in n 1 A connection: *I wonder if there’s any tie-in with organized crime (1934 +)* **2** An item sold because of the existence of another item: *The book is a movie tie-in (1943 +)*

tie someone or something in knots v phr To immobilize or paralyze with complications: *Lobbyists had helped tie the Energy and Commerce Committee in knots (1957 +)*

tie into v phr To assault; attack or deal with vigorously: *She put her head back and tied into her drink/ No sooner had I said it but both of them tied into me (1904 +)*

tie it up v phr WRAP UP (1954 +)

tie one on v phr To get drunk; go on a spree (1940s +)

tie the knot v phr To get married; also, to marry two people

tie up v phr To inject narcotics into a vein, or tie a rubber tubing around one’s arm in order to find a vein; SHOOT UP: *pop a handful of bennies, then tie up, smoking a joint at the same time (1960s + Narcotics)*

tiff n A minor quarrel or fight (1754 +)

tiger n A strong, virile man; a dangerous man • Often used in direct address, either admiringly or ironically: *He’s switched from being a pussycat to being a regular tiger (1940s +)* **See** BLIND PIG, BLIND TIGER, HAVE A

tiger sweat *n phr* Cheap, raw liquor; PANTHER PISS, ROTGUT: *cheap alcohol, also known as tiger-sweat (1950s +)*

tight *adj* **1** Parsimonious; tight-fisted; stingy: *He is tight in his dealings (1805 +)* **2** (Variations: **as a drum** [or a lord or a **mink**] may be added) Drunk: *Little tight, honey?/ I wasn't especially tight (1830 +)* **3** Close; sympathetic: *John and Mary are very tight (1956 +)* **4** Attractive; COOL: *Renee's wig is tight (1980s + Students)* **See** SIT TIGHT

tight as a tick *adj phr* Very drunk [1927 +; fr the inflated tightness of an engorged *tick*, found in reference to fullness by 1678]

◁**tightass**▷ *adj*: *That is Dr Nathan Schlemmer, very uptight, very tightass* *n* A tense and morally rigid person: *I know that one, a real tightass (1970 +)*

◁**tightassed**▷ *adj* **1** Not disposed to sexual promiscuity; chaste: *Washington, I saw, was full of tightassed women (1903 +)* **2** Tense; overly formal: *tightassed British film critic (1967 +)*

tighten one's belt *v phr* To prepare for an economic recession or depression: *tightening our belts due to gas prices*

tighten someone up *v phr* To discipline someone; rectify someone's life: *There were actually men on the block that if you did something wrong they were going to catch you and tighten you up (1980s + Black)*

tight money *n phr* Money when the supply is scarce, esp during a period of high interest rates (1866 +)

tights, the *n phr* A penniless or financially grim condition; the SHORTS:
No go. Everyone's got the tights (1970s +)

tight spot *n phr* A difficult situation; JAM: *I'm in a tight spot and would appreciate your help (1852 +)*

tightwad *adj*: *Don't be so tightwad with that hootch n* A parsimonious person; a stingy person; a miser: *the "tightwads" who have saved money (1900 +)* [fr the forbidding *tightness* of his *wad* of money]

Tijuana Bible *n phr* A pornographic book of the most revolting sort (1950s +)

Tijuana taxi *n phr* A police car [1960s + Citizens band; probably because of the relatively colorful decoration of such cars]

till *See* WITH one's HAND IN THE TILL

till hell freezes over or till kingdom come *adv* Forever

till (or until) one is blue in the face *adv phr* Until one is able to do no more; to the point of helpless exhaustion: *Hail and beware the dead who will talk life until you are blue in the face* [1864 +; fr the *facial blueness* or darkening symptomatic of choking]

till the fat lady sings *See* the OPERA AIN'T OVER TILL THE FAT LADY SINGS

timber *interj* An exclamation of triumph, achievement, etc [1912 +; fr the cry of loggers as a tree begins to fall] *See* the TALL TIMBERS

time *See* BAD TIME, the BIG TIME, DOUBLE-TIME, FLYING TIME, GIVE someone A HARD TIME, GOOD TIME, HAVE oneself A TIME, MAKE TIME, MAKE TIME WITH someone, RACK DUTY, SACK TIME, the SMALL TIME, STREET TIME

time (out) interj Wait: stop talking or doing something: *Time out. It's my turn*

time of day, the See NOT GIVE someone THE TIME OF DAY

timer See OLD TIMER

times See HARD TIMES

time warp n phr A blank, an inordinate rapidity or slowness, a blatant discontinuity, a seeming anachronism, or some other anomaly of time: *The case of five people indicted more than four years ago has been "lost in a time warp" of delays, state prosecutors say* [1954+; fr science-fiction notions of instantaneous eons and the like, devised to legitimize travel over enormous distances within conceivable and dramatically useful periods of time, and based on Albert Einstein's concept of "curved space"]

timey See OLD-TIMEY

tin n 1 A police officer's badge; POTSY: *Boone had to flash his tin* (1949+ *Police*) **2** A few grains of cocaine (1960s+ *Narcotics*) **3** Money (1836+)

tin can n phr 1 A depth charge (*WWII Navy*) **2** A naval warship, esp a destroyer (1937+ *Navy*) **3** A car, esp a Model T Ford (1923+)

tin ear n phr Unselective and unmusical hearing; auditory tastelessness: *He sometimes has a tin ear for dialogue/ I have a tin ear* (1909+)

tin fish n phr A torpedo (1925+ *Navy*)

tin hat n phr A soldier's helmet (1903+)

tinhorn or **tinhorn gambler** *n* or *n phr* A petty but flashy gambler, or any person with those characteristics: *denunciations of punks, tinhorns, and gyps* [entry form 1857 + , variant 1885 + ; fr the horn-shaped metal can used by chuck-a-luck operators for shaking the dice; the notion of inferiority comes fr the presumed superiority of other, more sophisticated kinds of gambling, and fr the generalized inferiority of *tin* to other metals]

tin horn *See* LIKE SHIT THROUGH A TIN HORN

tinkle *n* A telephone call • Chiefly in the expression *give someone a tinkle* (1938 +) *v* To urinate; PEE • A nursery use (1950 +)

tin Lizzie (or **lizzie**) *n phr* An early Ford car, esp a Model T: *It is as simple and homely as an old tin Lizzie* [1915 + ; perhaps because such vehicles were sturdy, dependable, and black, like the traditional ideal Southern servant, called *Elizabeth*]

Tin Pan Alley *n phr* The site where popular music was composed, arranged, published, recorded, etc, designating the neighborhood on Seventh Avenue between 48th and 52d Streets in New York City; also, the realm of popular music composition, publishing, etc [1908 + ; fr the late 1800s musicians' term *tin pan*, "cheap, tinny piano"]

tin parachute *n phr*: *A novel type of severance pay that adds a new wrinkle to the takeover game and advances the art of the takeover defense is called the "tin parachute."* A play on the term "golden parachute," which guarantees fat payments to key executives (1980s +)

tinpot *adj* Inferior; petty; TINHORN: *tinpot Napoleons/ individual liberty*

from coercive tin-pot bigots [1838 + ; apparently in part fr the image of a ludicrous military figure wearing a grandiose *tin* helmet, a sort of *tin* soldier]

tinselly *adj* Gaudy; coruscating but insubstantial; FLASHY: *tinselly telecasts from CBS in Los Angeles* (1811 +)

Tinseltown *modifier*: *With familiar Tinseltown inventiveness, the new film has been entitled Grease 2* **n** Hollywood; the Los Angeles-Hollywood movie and TV area and culture: *if he couldn't nab a ride to Tinsel Town in an hour's time/ It sometimes seems that the whole society has spiritually decamped for Tinseltown* (1975 +) [fr *tinsel*, "gaudy, glittering decoration," plus *town*]

tip **n**: *our tip to him would be to behave* (1845 +) **v** (also **tip off**) To give useful information or advice, esp advance information that gives an advantage of some sort: *The room clerk tipped him/ Who tipped Larkin off?* (1749 +, variant 1891 +) [origin uncertain; perhaps fr the notion of *tipping*, that is, tilting something in someone's direction]

tip one's hand (or **mitt**) **v phr** To disclose one's plans, secrets, etc, esp inadvertently: *That would be tipping her mitt too much/ somehow, even with the best intentions, you'd tip my hand* [entry form 1917 +; fr the revealing of one's *hand*, that is, *mitt*, in a card game; *tip*, "give, exhibit," is found in underworld slang by 1610]

tip-off **n** A revealing, esp a warning; a particularly useful clue: *the tip-off on what's ahead* (1901 +)

tip over **v phr** To rob; HEIST, KNOCK OVER: *Ya wanta help us tip over this*

bank? (1935 + *Underworld*)

tipple *n* 1 Liquor, esp strong; also, a drink of strong liquor • Also can be a verb 2 A drinking bout

tippler *n* A relatively restrained drinker of alcohol [1580 +; orig a tavernkeeper]

tippy-toe *v* To walk silently: *Goddamn it, Hubert! Don't tippy-toe around like that* (1901 +)

tipster *n* A person who gives tips, esp on horse races (1862 +)

tipsy *adj* Mildly drunk (1577 +)

tip the elbow *See* BEND THE ELBOW

tip-top *adj* Excellent; first-rate: *He assured me his health was tip-top* (1722 +)

tire *See* FLAT TIRE, SPARE TIRE

◁**tired-ass**▷ *adj* Tedious; overused; tired: *thinking in tired-ass racial cliches* (1970s +)

◁**tit**▷ *n* A woman's breast: *She couldn't make it out there. No tits* [1928 +; a respelling of *teat*] *See* COLD AS HELL, GET ONE'S TAIL IN A GATE, SUCK HIND TIT, SUGAR TIT

◁**tit art**▷ *n phr* Appealing photographs of young women; CHEESECAKE (1970s + *Newspaper office*)

◁**titless wonder**▷ *n phr* A stupid or inane person; JERK

◁**tit man**▷ *n phr* A man whose favorite part of the female body is the breasts (1940s +)

◁**tits**▷ **adj** 1 Excellent; wonderful; GREAT, NEAT: *What a tits car she's got!* (1960s +) 2 Easy; simple: *a real tits quiz* (1960s + College students)

See WITH BELLS ON

◁**tits and ass**▷ **modifier**: *The magazine had a tits-and-ass section purporting to be a review of bathing-suit styles* **n phr** A display of female bosoms and bottoms; also, a show, dance, etc, featuring such a display; CHEESECAKE, TA: *Tits and ass, that's what the attraction is. An Apache team and tits and ass* (1972 +)

◁**tits-and-zits**▷ **modifier** Dealing with teenage love and sex: *yet another entry in the lamentable tits-and-zits genre of teenage sex comedies* [1970s + ; modeled on *tits-and-ass*]

◁**tits up**▷ **modifier** Upside down; on one's back: *battered bread fell tits up*

tittle-tattle **n** Empty chatter; prattle and gossip: *An example is the press in Britain, where the tittle-tattle has lately infected the quality papers* (1542 +)

◁**titty**▷ **n** A breast; TIT: *His dipping titties touched the floor before his chin did* (1746 +) **See** TOUGH SHIT

tizzy **See** IN A TIZZY

TKO (pronounced as separate letters) **n** A technical knockout, declared when one fighter is judged unfit to continue, although still conscious (1940s + *Prizefighting*) **v**: *He was TKO'd in the fourth round*

TLC (pronounced as separate letters) **n** Tender loving care: *some TLC*

for the sick boy

toad *n* A repellent person; ASSHOLE: *The only time you want the guy to ask first is if he's a toad* (1568 +) **See** KNEE-HIGH TO A GRASSHOPPER

to a frazzle *adv phr* Completely; totally; to a ruined condition: *After the marathon I was beat to a frazzle* [1865 +; fr dialect *frazzle*, “frayed end of a rope”]

toast *adj* **1** Excellent; wonderful; COOL, TITS, TUBULAR: *She told me my clothes were real toast* (1970s + *Teenagers fr black*) **2** Ruined; actually or occupationally destroyed; KAPUT: *finished in one's career, as in “He's toast”/ Much of the punditocracy that once embraced Clinton is declaring him dead. Buried. Toast* (1980s +) **v** To talk or chant in the reggae music mode: *not exactly toasting, it was a kind of primitive rapping, consisting mainly of new slang words and an occasional joke* (1970s + *Musicians*)

to a T (or tee) *adv* Precisely; in the smallest detail: *job fits her to a tee*

to beat the band (or the Dutch) *adv phr* In an unrestrained way; to the highest pitch; very much; ALL-OUT: *I hollered to beat the band/ We ran to beat the Dutch*[entry form 1897 +, variant 1775 +; fr the notion that such extreme effort could even drown out *the band*, or, in the mid-1700s version, *this beats the Dutch*, could convince even a stolid, phlegmatic *Dutch* man]

to boot *adv phr* In addition; in extra measure: *She has lots of talent and more to boot* [1000 +; fr Old English, “as profit, to the good”]

toddle off *v phr* To walk away: *toddled off to clean out the bookcases*

to-die-for *adj* Very desirable; extremely attractive; DISHY: *constant companion of the to-die-for Marilyn Montgomery (1990s +)*

to-do *n* A disturbance; fuss; FLAP: *What's all the to-do? (1827 +)*

toe *See* GO TOE TO TOE, TURN UP one's TOES

toehold *See* GET A TOEHOLD

toe jam *n phr* Malodorous matter and filth under and around the toenails (1934 +)

◁**toe-jam queen**▷ *n phr* A male homosexual foot-fetishist (1972 + *Homosexuals*)

toe-tag *v phr* To kill

toe the mark (or the line) *v phr* To behave properly; KEEP one's NOSE CLEAN: *If he doesn't toe the mark, fire him* [entry form 1813 +, variant 1895 +; *fr* the *mark* or *line* indicating the starting point of a race]

toe to toe *See* GO TOE TO TOE

toffee-nose or **toffee-nosed** *adj* Snobbish or pretentious (1925 +)

together *adj* **1** Composed and effective; free of tension and anxiety: *Now they're together, unless they're strung out (1960s + Counterculture fr black)* **2** Stylish and au courant; socially adept (1960s + *Black*) *See* GET IT TOGETHER, HAVE IT ALL TOGETHER

to go *modifier* Packaged up for taking home or off the premises: *want that order to go*

tog out (or up) *v phr* To get dressed, esp in nice clothes (1790s +)

togs *n* Clothing, esp that worn for a specific purpose: *riding togs*

[1779+; fr *tog*, “coat,” ultimately fr Latin *toga*]

to hell *adv phr* **1** (also **to hell and gone**) Thoroughly; irretrievably:
This thing's busted to hell/ The plan's wrecked to hell and gone **2** (also
to heaven or **to high heaven**) Very strongly; fervently; sincerely:
He swore to hell he'd never do it again/ I wish to heaven she'd leave
(1912+)

toity *See* HOITY-TOITY

toke¹ *n* **1** A puff or drag at a cigarette, cigar, etc, esp a marijuana
cigarette: *He still took a toke of marijuana from time to time* **2** A
cigarette, esp a marijuana cigarette: *Elaborately, I lit a toke* *v: to toke*
vigorously on an oversize cigar [1950s+; probably fr Spanish *tocar* in
its sense “touch,” or “tap, hit,” or “get a shave or part,” or a
combination of these]

toke² *n* **1** A gambling chip or token, esp one given to a dealer as a tip
(1961+ *Gambling*) **2** A gratuity given by a gambling casino,
brothel, or other business to cabdrivers for bringing in clients: *Cab*
drivers have long been paid “tokes” when they deliver customers to a
long list of varied business establishments (1971+ *Gambling*)

tokus (TOH kəs, TŌŌ kəs) *n* (also **tokis** or **tuchis** or **tuckus** or **tush**
or **tushie** or **tushy**) The buttocks; ASS, BOTTOM • A frequent
euphemism for *ass*: *knocked him right square on his tokus/ He shakes*
his tushie with elegant languor/ bumps her tush gently along [1914+;
fr Yiddish; *tush* forms are affectionate, used esp with children]

told *See* FUCKING WELL TOLD

◁**Tom** or **tom**▷ *n* A black person who emulates or truckles to the

white majority taste and culture; OREO, UNCLE TOM (1959+ *Black*) **v**:
sleeping, resisting, tomming, killing the enemy/ You too young to be
Tomming See AUNT TOM, MISTER TOM

Tomahawk See UNCLE TOMAHAWK

tomato n An attractive young woman; BABE, CHICK: *I was telling you*
about this kraut and the English tomato [1922+; fr the connotations
of lusciousness, tautness, full color, etc]

tomboy or tomgirl n A young girl who prefers boyish pursuits,
looks, etc, to the presumed feminine ones (1592+)

tomcat n: *In his younger days he was a notorious tomcat* **v** To pursue
male sexual activity avidly [1927+; fr the common name for a
male cat, popularized by the 1760 book *The Life and Adventures of*
a Cat, in which the creature was named *Tom*]

Tom, Dick, and Harry See EVERY TOM, DICK, AND HARRY

tomfool adj Stupid; foolish; NUTTY: *some tomfool scientist* [1762+;
found by 1356 as the actual name of a man, also called Thomas
fatuus, “foolish Tom”]

tommy n TOMBOY: *The red-haired tommy ... she'd put him over the jumps*
(1940s+)

Tommy n A private in the British army: *He met three Tommys in a bar*
(1884+)

Tommy (or tommy) gun n phr A handheld automatic repeating
firearm; a submachine gun; BURP GUN, CHOPPER [1929+; fr the name of
the .45-caliber *Thompson* submachine gun, the earliest well-known

weapon of this sort, and a favorite arm of the gangster era]

tommyrot *n* Nonsense; balderdash; BALONEY, BULLSHIT [1884 + ; origin unknown; perhaps fr British *tommy*, “goods, esp food, supplied to workers in lieu of wages”]

ton *n* **1** A large extent, amount, or number: *I have a ton of work* **2** A speed of 100 miles an hour; a high speed (1954+ *Teenagers & car racing*)

toned *See* HIGH-TONED

tonic *n* Liquor: *tonic will settle you down*

tonk *n* HONKY-TONK

ton of bricks *See* HIT someone LIKE A TON OF BRICKS

tonsil hockey *n phr* **1** Fellatio; oral sex • Euphemistic **2** French or other intimate kissing

tons of modifier A lot of something: *tons of fan mail*

◀**Tonto**▶ *n* Any male American Indian [1980s + ; fr the faithful Indian companion of the cowboy hero the Lone Ranger, who first appeared in a 1930s Detroit radio series]

tony or toney *adj* Stylish; very elegant; RITZY, SWANKY: *the tony St Regis hotel* (1877+) *n*: *St Michael's alley, still inhabited by the tony* [probably fr French *bon ton*, “high fashion, chic”] *See* HIGH-TONED

too-bad *adj* Excellent; good; GREAT, Way Rad: *That was a too-bad game* (1934+ *Black*)

too big for one's breeches (or **britches** or **boots**) *modifier*

Conceited (1830s +)

toodle-oo *interj* A parting salutation • Thought of as a humorous affectation, like “cheerio” [1907 +; perhaps an alteration of French *à tout à l’heure*, “see you soon, so long”]

too hot to handle *adj phr* Very delicate or explosive; very controversial: *The March was rejected by PBS as “not suitable to their programming” (nobody actually said it was too hot to handle)* [1940s +; found in baseball by 1932, designating a very hard-hit ball]

took *See* **be** HAD

tool *n* <1> The penis (1553 +) 2 A pickpocket (1920 + *Underworld*) 3 (also **dull tool**) An incompetent person; also, someone who can be duped or victimized easily (1700 +) 4 A diligent student; Greasy Grind, NERD: *Nerds can also be “goobs” or “tools” (Students)* **v** 1 To do the sex act with or to; BOFF, BOP, SCREW: *Hit the man in the ass with a board while he was tooling your old lady (1980s +)* 2 (also **tool along**) To speed; BARREL: *I climbed into the Buick and tooled it down the ramp (1853 +)* [underworld sense perhaps fr the practice of using a small boy as a sort of *tool* in pickpocketing, or perhaps fr Romany *tool*, “handle, take”; second verb sense fr earlier *tool*, “a whip”]

tool around **v phr** To drive around, esp recreationally: *tooling around with the top down*

tools *See* FIGHTIN’ TOOLS

tools of ignorance, the *n phr* A catcher’s gear [1937 + Baseball; said

to have been coined by the catcher Muddy Ruel or the catcher Bill Dickey]

too many *See* ONE TOO MANY

too many chiefs and not enough Indians *sentence* Nobody wants to work around here, though everybody wants to be a boss; the project suffers from a surplus of directors and advisers

too much *adj phr* **1** Wonderful; superb; the MOST: *The way she blows that horn is too much* **2** Excessively good, bad, wonderful, incredible, etc; prodigious; overwhelming: *You ate 23 hot dogs in one sitting? Man, you're too much* *n* FAR OUT (1930s + *Jazz musicians*)

toon *n* A cartoon: "What are you, man, some kind of visionary?" "No, no, I'm just an ordinary toon" (1990s +) *See* LOONY-TUNE

'toonville *n* The cartoons, esp the regular syndicated series: *And Garfield now ranks at the top in 'toonville* (1990s +)

too rich for someone's blood *adj phr* Exceeding someone's capabilities, purse, desires, etc; too much: *I don't go out with them anymore; it's too rich for my blood* (1884 +)

toot *n* **1** A spree, esp of drinking; BENDER, BINGE, KICK • A tooter is a person on a drinking spree: *It gave me an excuse to go off on a four-day toot/ He got a bonus and went on a shopping toot* (1790 +) **2** Cocaine: *Am I witnessing mere incompetence or too much toot?/ made it easier for the press to imagine him doing a little toot in the basement of Studio 54* (1960s + *Narcotics*) **3** A whiff of cocaine into the nose; SNORT: *I don't suppose you have a toot till pay-day?* (1977 + *Narcotics*) **4** A flatulation; FART (1930s +) **v** **1**: *He was himself tooting cocaine on a*

daily basis (1975+ Narcotics) **2** To flatulate; LAY A FART: “What’s that smell?” “Oh, Andrea tooted again” (1930s+) [the drinking sense is probably fr the image of someone *tooting* on a drinking horn, that is, holding a glass up as if it were a horn one were blowing; *toot* or *tout*, “drink deeply, quaff,” are attested fr the 1600s; narcotics sense probably related to *honker*, “horn, nose,” as something to be *tooted*]

tooth See CLEAN AS A WHISTLE, LONG IN THE TOOTH, SWEET-TOOTH

toothpick *n* A knife, esp a switchblade: *Any of her roomers handy with a toothpick? (1844+)*

tootie fruitie *n phr* A weak and ineffective male; SISSY, WIMP: *We’re all a bunch of Goddamned tootie fruities* [1970s+; fr *tutti-frutti*, “ice cream containing candied fruit,” fr Italian, literally “all fruits,” with a punning on *fruity*, “homosexual, gay”]

tootin’ See ROOTIN’-TOOTIN’, YOU’RE DAMN TOOTIN’

too too *adj phr* Excessive, esp in social elegance, fastidiousness, affectation, etc: *Well, isn’t his caring just too too! (1881+)*

toot (or blow) one’s own horn (or trumpet) *v phr* To praise and flatter oneself; advertise one’s virtues; boast: *I am not ashamed of the text, but of being thought to “toot my own horn”* [entry form 1940+, *blow* 1859+, *trumpet* 1854+; the phrase *sound the trumpet of mine own merits* is found by 1576]

toots (TOOTS) *n* (also **tootsie** or **tootsy** or **tootsie-wootsie** or **tootsy-wootsy**) A woman; DOLL • Often used in address, often disparagingly, and as a nickname: *Not any more, toots, not any*

more, my precious darling angel/ How about one of those tootsie-wootsies?/ He was also paying for a penthouse apartment on Park Avenue for his tootsie [entry form 1936 + , tootsie-wootsie 1895 + ; perhaps fr tootsie]

tootsie *n* A foot • A nursery use: *Pull up a chair and warm your tootsies* (1854 +)

top modifier: *He got the top recommendation* (1714 +) **n** 1 TOP SERGEANT (WWI Army) 2 The best; most superior: *You're the top, you're the Louvre Museum* (1593 +) **v** 1 To hang someone: *A colleague sent to the gallows has been topped* (1718 +) 2 To kill; BUMP OFF someone, HIT (1930s +) 3 To surpass; better; CAP: *I'll top that story with one of my own* (1586 +) 4 To be executed for a capital crime (1960s + *Black*)
See BLOW one'S TOP, CHOPPED TOP, COME OUT AHEAD, FROM THE TOP, GO someone or something ONE BETTER, MUTTON-HEAD, OFF THE TOP, ON TOP OF, POP-TOP, RAG-TOP, TIP-TOP

top banana *n phr* 1 The leading or featured comedian in a burlesque show; the chief comic (1950s + *Show business*) 2 The leader, president, manager, etc; BOSS, BIG ENCHILADA: *refuses its members opportunity to become top banana* (1970s +) [said to have originated fr a burlesque routine having to do with a bunch of *bananas*]

top brass, the *n phr* 1 The highest of military officers: *They went to the top brass at the Pentagon* (1940s +) 2 The highest executives, managers, etc: *The top brass at Xerox liked the idea* (1949 +)

top dog *n phr* The most important person; the chief; BOSS: *Who's top dog around this place?* (1900 +)

top dollar *n phr* The highest sum of money offered or given: *They*

pay top dollar over there (1970+)

top-drawer *adj* Of the highest quality; most superior; TOPS: *The drinks they serve are absolutely top-drawer [1920+; fr a British expression out of the top drawer, “upper-class, well-bred”]*

topless *modifier* **1** Not wearing anything on the upper body; with breasts exposed: *a topless dancer (1966+)* **2** Having to do with entertainment, bars and clubs, etc, featuring women bare from the waist up: *only at bars and only if they were topless (1967+)*

topline *v* To feature as the main attraction: *bio-pic that was expected to topline Elizabeth Taylor and Lauren Bacall [1980s+]*

top-notch *adj phr* Superior; of the highest quality; TOP-DRAWER: *She’s a top-notch racquetball player [1900+; fr notch as representing position, rank, etc; found as a noun phrase, “the highest degree of excellence,” by 1833]*

top of one’s head *See* OFF THE TOP OF one’s HEAD

top of the (or one’s) head *adj phr* Without thought or calculation; impromptu: *the doc’s top-of-the-head opinion (1959+)*

topper *n* **1** A top hat (1820+) **2** Something that surpasses something else, usu a joke, comments, etc; esp, a remark that both surpasses and perfects something already said: *I have a topper for that dirty crack (1939+)* **3** TOPSIDER (1960s+) *See* BLOW one’s TOP

tops *adj* Best; most superior; absolutely first-rate; the TOPS: *I wish you could print Mencken every month; he’s tops/ Sanitation Service Is Tops (1935+)*

tops, the *n phr* The best; the acme: *The English department is the tops here* (1937+)

top sergeant *n phr* **1** A first sergeant; Top-Kick (1898+) **2** A lesbian who takes the dominant, masculine role; BUTCH, DYKE (1950s+ *Homosexuals*)

topsider *n* A high executive, officer, manager, etc: *sighed one Pentagon topsider last week/ and also “delightfully puzzled,” as one topsider put it* [1960s+; related to late 1800s British *topside*, “in control, commanding,” in turn related to the nautical term *topside* by the suggestion that the master of a ship works on the bridge, which is the highest deck of the ship]

top story *n phr* The head (1932+)

topsy-turvy *adj* Disordered; upside down (1528+)

torch *n* An arsonist; an incendiary; FIREBUG: *If your suspicions are right, the torch will be close by* (1938+) **v** To set a fire deliberately; burn a building: *The lumberyard at 12th and C was torched, for the insurance* (1931+) **See** CARRY THE TORCH

torch job *n phr* An instance of arson: *mob-linked torch jobs for a 10 percent cut of insurance proceeds* (1970s+)

torch song *n phr* A popular song bemoaning one’s unrequited love: *If it is unrequited, the song is a torch song* (1927+) **See** CARRY THE TORCH

torchy *adj* In love with someone who does not reciprocate; hopelessly enamored: *Junie, still torchy for the Ragtime Kid* [1941+; fr *carry the torch*]

-torium *See* -ATORIUM

torp *n* A torpedo; TIN FISH (*WWI Navy*)

torpedo *n* **1** A gunman, esp a hired killer; HIT MAN: *the torpedoes who worked for Ciro Terranova (1929 + Underworld)* **2** HERO SANDWICH (1970s +) **v** To destroy; annihilate; SINK: *in an offensive that torpedoed cease-fire talks (1895 +)*

torpedo (or torp) juice *n phr* Liquor made from whatever ingredients were available; improvised alcoholic military drink [WWII armed forces; fr the fact that *torpedoes* were fueled with very pure grain alcohol, and *juice* commonly means “fuel”]

torqued *adj* Angry; upset; PISSED OFF: *She was all torqued because he took someone else out* [1960s + Black; probably somehow fr the sense “twisted,” found by 1572, and hence semantically akin to *bent out of shape*]

to save one’s neck *adv phr* Even in extremity; FOR SHIT, NO WAY: *I couldn’t remember the date to save my neck (1940s +)*

toss **v** **1** To search, esp a person for weapons, drugs, etc; SHAKE DOWN: *How do you think Leo will react to getting tossed in the apartment? (1939 +)* **2** To determine by throwing up a coin for “heads or tails”: *I’ll, toss you for the drinks (1833 +)* **3** To vomit: *tossed after drinking so much* **4** To throw something away: *tossed those old paperbacks* **5** To drink some liquor; take a drink: *tossed a beer and got back to work* *See* THROW

toss one’s cookies (or lunch) *See* SHOOT one’s COOKIES

toss in the sponge v phr THROW IN THE TOWEL

toss off v phr 1 To do something easily and casually: *They sat down and tossed off a couple of limericks (1874 +)* 2 To drink, esp at one gulp; **KNOCK BACK:** *She tossed off three double Scotches (1590 +)*

toss-up, a n An even matter; a case of even probabilities, values, etc: *It's a toss-up between those two candidates/ I don't know which way to bet; it's a toss-up [1809 +; fr the fact that the choice might as well be made by tossing up a coin]*

total v 1 To destroy; totally wreck, esp a car: *It didn't look like much of a wreck, but his car was totaled (1954 +)* 2 To maim or kill; grievously injure; **WASTE:** *Mightn't a tile have fallen off a roof and totaled us by dinnertime? (1895 +)* [first sense fr the phrase *a total loss*, having to do with something insured]

totaled adj 1 Destroyed; wrecked completely: *The totaled car made you wonder how they survived the wreck (1954 +)* 2 Stuporous from narcotics, liquor, etc; **STONED, WASTED** (1960s +)

total loss, a n phr A person or thing that is hopelessly futile; **LOSER** (1940s +)

totally modifier Completely; unquestionably: *totally his fault/ totally awesome*

totally clueless adj phr Uninformed; ignorant; in the dark [1970s + Teenagers; *Clueless* is a late 1930s Royal Air Force term]

tote¹ or tot v Total; add up to: *How much does it tote? (1760 +)*

tote² n (also **tote board**) A totalizator, a machine that displays odds

at a racetrack [1950 + ; *totalizator* is found by 1879]

to the eyes (or the eyeballs) *adv phr* Entirely; thoroughly; UP TO HERE:
Carlotta keeps her doped to the eyeballs on Thorazine all her adult life
(1778 +) **See** STONED TO THE EYES

to the gills *See* SOUSED, STEWED

to the ground *See* BEAT TO THE GROUND, DOWN TO THE GROUND

to the mark *See* UP TO SCRATCH

to the max *adv phr* To the highest degree; utterly; totally: *Many of these were obscure to the max* [1970s+ Teenagers & Army; fr a shortening of *to the maximum*] **See** GROTTY

to the nines *See* DRESSED TO THE TEETH

to the salt mines *See* BACK TO THE SALT MINES

to the teeth *See* DRESSED TO THE TEETH

to the tune of *adv phr* In the amount of; to the extent of: *It'll cost him a bundle, to the tune of sixty grand or so* (1716 +)

to the wall *See* BALLS TO THE WALL

totsie *See* HOTSIE-TOTSIE

touch *n* 1: *a quick ten-or twenty-dollar touch* (1846 +) **2** A small serving of food or drink **v 1** (also **touch up**) To get or borrow money, a loan, etc; HIT: *Who better to touch up than the richest guys in town?* (1760 +) **2** To deal with or handle something or someone • Usu in the negative: *won't touch that one* [*touch up* variant may be influenced by British *touch up*, "to grope a woman"] **See** SOFT TOUCH

touch all bases *v phr* **1** To be thorough; leave nothing undone, esp in matters of consultation, communication, etc: *The plan flopped because you didn't touch all bases on the way* **2** To be very versatile; be apt for various experiences: *Humphrey is a man to touch all bases* [1980s +; fr the necessity of *touching all bases* in baseball when one makes a home run]

touch and go *modifier* Possible but very uncertain; precarious: *touch and go for a while, until she saw the doctor*

touch base with someone *v phr* To consult with or inform as to an impending matter: *Before you sign it you'd better touch base with your lawyer* [1980s +; fr *touch all bases*]

touched *adj* **1** Honored or flattered: *touched that you would think of us*
2 Slightly crazy; eccentric: *Emeril seems a bit touched*

touchie-feelie or **touchy-feely** *adj* Having to do with sensitivity training and other such goings-on where people touch and feel each other: *They're all part of the touchie-feelie movement/ It's not going to be a touchy-feely thing (1970s +)*

touch someone or something with a ten-foot pole, not **See** NOT TOUCH someone or something WITH A TEN-FOOT POLE

tough *adj* **1** Difficult; regrettable; unfortunate: *That's a tough break, pardner (1883 +)* **2** Physically menacing; vicious: *Don't act tough with me, you little jerk (1906 +)* **3** Excellent; superb; the MOST • Sometimes spelled *tuff*: *That's a really tough set of wheels (1937 + Black)* *n* A hard and menacing person (1866 +) **See** TOUGH IT OUT

tough (or hard) act to follow, a *n phr* A challenging or daunting

prelude: *her portrayal of Cat-woman was a tough act for Michelle Pfeiffer to follow* [1980s + ; fr the vaudeville ambiance where one performer succeeded another; one truism was “Never follow a dog act”]

tough call *n phr* A hard decision or prediction: *This next election is bound to be a tough call* [1990s + ; fr the decisions made by sports officials and football quarterbacks]

tough cookie *n phr* **1** TOUGH GUY **2** A stubborn and durable person: *He’s a tough cookie. He isn’t going to talk, threats or no threats* (1928 +)

tough cop *See* GOOD COP BAD COP

tough customer *n phr* A difficult person to deal with: *known as a tough customer*

tough guy (or baby) *n phr* A menacing man; BIMBO, HOODLUM, ROUGHNECK, TOUGHIE: *Bogart used to play tough guys a lot (entry form and baby 1932 +)*

toughie or toughy *n* **1** A menacing person, esp a man; TOUGH, TOUGH GUY: *getting the toughies off the streets/ That servant will talk her out of it. She’s a toughie* (1929 +) **2** Something difficult; a severe test: *This is a toughie/ has 3 toughies barring its way to a perfect season* (1945 +)

tough it out *v phr* To endure something doggedly and bravely; persist and survive against rigors; HANG TOUGH: *He’s never really had to tough it out in this world of ours/ He is toughing out a feeling that since Mom divorced he is essentially homeless* (1830 +)

tough nut (or egg) to crack, a *n phr* A difficult problem; BITCH,
TOUGHIE: *Getting them all here on time will be a tough nut to crack*
(1970s +)

tough row to hoe, a *See* a HARD ROW TO HOE

tough sell *n phr* Something difficult to advocate or “sell”: *High-tech warehousing a tough sell* (1990s +)

◁**tough shit**▷ *interj* (Variations: **luck** or **nibs** or **noogies** or **patootie** or **rocks** or **teabags** or **tiddy** or **titty** or **titties** may replace **shit**) That’s too bad; that’s a terrible shame • Often ironical and mocking: *Lord, what tough luck/ “Tough tiddy,” the Boss said/ to which one has to say, with whatever empathy, “tough nibs”/ “And guess what they had the nerve to tell me.” “Tough patootie”/ That’s tough shit, man, my heart really bleeds/ Well, tough titty* [entry form 1940s +, *luck* 1886 +, *noogies* 1960s +, *tiddy* 1934 +; most forms probably fr black or Southern; the mammary forms seem based on a black folk-saying, “It’s tough titty, but the milk is good”]

tour guide *n phr* A person who aids and supports someone having a psychedelic drug experience or “trip”; GURU (1960s + *Narcotics*)

tourist trap *n phr* A a place that attracts and exploits tourists:
Manchester, Vermont, is a tourist trap (1939 +)

tout *n 1* A person who sells betting advice at a racetrack; TIPSTER
(1865 +) **2**: *He makes a slender living with his touting at Belmont* **v** To advocate aggressively; publicize; BALLYHOO, FLACK: *He’s now touting acupuncture* (1920 +) [ultimately fr Middle English *tuten*, “look around, peer,” by way of *tout*, “be on the lookout”]

towel *See* THROW IN THE TOWEL

◁**towelhead**▷ *n* Any person who wears a turban, esp a person from the Middle East (1985 +)

town *See* GO TO TOWN, HICK TOWN, MAN-ABOUT-TOWN, ONE-HORSE TOWN, ON THE TOWN, PAINT THE TOWN, SHANTY-TOWN, TANK TOWN, TINSELTOWN

Town *See* BEAN TOWN

townie or **towny** *n* A permanent resident of the town one grew up in or went to school in; also, a resident of a college town not affiliated with the college: *townies that graduated from Valley*

toxic waste dump *n* An extremely horrible person or place

toy boy *n phr* Male lover of an older woman or man (1981 +)

TP *n* Toilet paper: *need a roll of TP* *v* To decorate with toilet paper: *got TP'd on Halloween*

track *v* 1 To agree with other information; chime: *What you say doesn't track with what I know (1970s + Army)* 2 To make sense; be plausible; FIGURE: *It does not necessarily track that because Son of Sam sells papers in New York he will sell books in Seattle/ She's practically out of her mind. Like, she isn't even tracking (1970s +)* [probably fr *track*, "the groove of a phonograph record, a continuous line or passage of a tape recording," influenced by earlier *track*, "follow, come closely and directly behind"] *See* FAST LANE, GO ON TRACK, HAVE THE INSIDE TRACK, ONE-TRACK MIND

track, the *See* the TURF

track record *n phr* Any record of performance, esp of success; CHART,

FOOTPRINT, FORM: *I have a lot of relevant experience and a good track record/ Voluntary organizations have a much better track record in the third world* [1965 + ; fr the record of performance of a racehorse on the racetrack]

tracks n 1 RAILROAD TRACKS (*WWII Army*) **2** The scars or puncture marks caused by narcotics injections: *wear long sleeves (to cover their “tracks,” needle marks) (1960s+ Narcotics)* **See** HEN TRACKS, STOP someone DEAD IN someone’s or something’s TRACKS, the WRONG SIDE OF THE TRACKS

trade n: *Most White gay men use it to mean a heterosexual male who has sex with men for money or other consideration (“He can be done for trade”; “Watch out for him; he’s rough trade”)/ flashy, precise, and humpy as decidedly sexy trade in a Czardas with six girls (1935 + Homosexuals)* **See** the RAG TRADE, ROUGH TRADE

trademark n A person’s particular trait or strong point; someone’s MIDDLE NAME: *Shyness is not my trademark (1869 +)*

tragic magic n phr Heroin: *you know, duji, scag, tragic magic (1960s + Narcotics)*

trailer n A preview of a coming movie, a brief travelogue, or another short film shown before or after a feature movie (1928 + *Movie studio*)

◁**trailer trash**▷ **n** A poor, lower-class white person, esp one living in a mobile home with trash in the vicinity • Used in singular or plural: *She’s just trailer trash*

train n: *popularly known as gang bangs or trains* **v** To do the sex act on

a woman serially, man after man, in a gang; GANG-BANG: *announced that they were going to train her (1970s +)* [related to *pull a train*; perhaps influenced by earlier *train*, “romp, carry on wildly”] **See** the GRAVY TRAIN, ON THE GRAVY TRAIN, PULL A TRAIN, RIDE THE GRAVY TRAIN

train with v phr To associate with; consort with; HANG OUT: *the money it required to train with such/ And I don't train with lawyers* [1871 +; probably fr the notion of linking up with or even riding on the *train* with; perhaps influenced by the prizefighter's close association with those he *trains with*]

train wreck n phr 1 (also **crump**) A person with many medical problems and in failing condition (1980s + *Medical*) **2** An extremely harrowing situation or condition: *The special prosecutor's office is a worthy institution, but it will leave behind a legal train wreck/ Demographers refer to collisions between rising demand and diminishing resources as train wrecks (1980s +)*

tramp n A promiscuous woman; a harlot; Punchboard (1922 +)

trank n A tranquilizer; a tranquilizer tablet or capsule (1967 +) **v** (also **trank out**): *Last I heard, still at some pricey Rambler's Retreat, tranked to the tits/ The idea was to keep me tranked out so that everything would sort of stabilize (1972 +)*

trannie or tranny n 1 A transvestite or transgendered person; CROSS-DRESSER, TV: *A slicked-back platinumed, pirouetting trannie takes over the dance floor (1983 +)* **2** An automobile transmission

tranquilizer See ELEPHANT TRANQUILIZER

trans n A car; TRANSPORTATION (1970s + *Black teenagers*)

transportation *n* An old or decrepit car; an unappealing car: *It ain't pretty, but it's transportation (1940s +)*

trap modifier: *to figure out why my trap money was shitty (1970s + Black)* *n* **1** The mouth; YAP: *When she opens her trap she has an accent that is British (1776 +)* **2** A nightclub: *a pretty good East Side trap (1932 +)* **3** An amount of money earned by a prostitute, and usu given to her pimp: *Ray's woman got in the car. Her trap was fat (1970s + Black)* **See** BEAR TRAP, BLOW OFF **one's** MOUTH, BOOB TRAP, BOOBY TRAP, CLAM SHELLS, FLEABAG, FLY TRAP, SHUT **one's** TRAP, TOURIST TRAP

traps *n* The trapezius muscles: *Billitzer's lats, delts, traps and quads are ready for anything. Three or four days a week he runs through a 90-minute workout that has left him tuned and tough (1990s +)*

trash *n* A despicable, ill-bred person or group: *Don't mind them, they're just trash (1604 +)* **v** **1** To vandalize; mutilate or destroy, sometimes as an act of political protest; WASTE: *They have also made it a practice to "trash" (wreck) restaurants, publishing houses, and other businesses that discriminate against the third world of sex/ One year we were trashed three times (1970 +)* **2** To vilify; excoriate; BAD-MOUTH, DUMP ON: *the other mayoralty that Koch likes to trash whenever he gets the chance/ Much given to the rave-pan approach to her craft, she can trash in a flash (1975 +)* **3** To scavenge discarded furniture and other items that have been thrown away (1960s +) [noun sense fr *white trash*, a black term of opprobrium] **See** WHITE TRASH

trashed *adj* **1** Drunk; intoxicated by alcohol or drugs: *got trashed on Friday night (1981 +)* **2** Wrecked or ruined; messed up on purpose: *trashed hotel room of the rockers (1926 +)*

trashing *n* The act or an act of those who trash in the senses of wrecking and vilification: *the Weathermen favoring of trashing was a ridiculous concept/ In my experience the public contributes every bit as much to the trashing of our presidents as we grimy ones do (late 1960s +)*

trash talk (or talking) *n phr* Provocative insults addressed by one athlete to others: *They learn about intimidation, bullying, bad call, trash talk, and that ends justify means/ Trash talking is littering the air at NBA stadiums (1990s + Sports)*

trash talker *n phr* A person who does “trash talk”: *If Muhammad Ali was the first trash-talker in boxing, Floyd Patterson was the last gentleman (1990s + Sports)*

trashy *adj* Despicable; inferior; LOW-RENT, LOW-RIDE (1620 +)

traveler *See* FELLOW TRAVELER

trawler *n* CHANNEL SURFER, GRAZER (1990s +)

treat someone like a doormat (or <like shit>) *v phr* To deal with in a humiliating, haughty, or oppressive manner: *We treated poor old Uncle Bob like a doormat/ and is also a fucking nitwit imbecile who treats me like shit and makes me talk about vultures (1970s +)*

tree *See* CHRISTMAS TREE, LIT UP, OUT OF one's TREE, UP A TREE

tree eater *See* SNAKE EATER

tree-hugger *n* An environmentalist; Duck-Squeezer: *TBS owner Ted Turner is a tree-hugger from way back [late 1980s + ; said to have been used of Celia Harbeck, a Chicago woman who actually*

hugged trees in Jackson Park to prevent their being cut down]

tree jumper *n phr* A sexual molester: *He was, in prison parlance, a tree jumper (1970s + Prison)*

Trekkie or **Trekker** *n* A devotee of the television science-fiction series *Star Trek*: *Star Trek II. The Wrath of Khan. Come, all ye Trekkers/ Trekkies hate being called Trekkies. They call themselves “Trekkers” (1976 +)*

trenches *See* IN THE TRENCHES

trendy *adj* (also **trendacious** or **trendoid**) Following new trends in fashion, art, literature, etc; anxiously au courant: *Fetch a tumbril for these fellows, or at least a trendy tailor/ A trendacious couple wear head-to-toe charcoal black/ Your trendoid older sister gives you all her hand-me-downs on the 5th (1962 +)* *n* (also **trendoid**): *That will undoubtedly have great appeal to all you trendies out there/ and even a few tough trendoids from the East Village and Soho (1968 +)*

trey or **tray** *n* A \$3 packet of narcotics (1960s + *Narcotics*)

trial balloon *n* A test of how someone will react: *set up a trial balloon and got the expected outcome*

tribe *n* One's group of friends or relatives: *dreading the tribe coming for New Year's*

Tribeca or **TriBeCa** (trĪ BEK ə) *n* An area in Manhattan being developed as an artists' and residential neighborhood: *They've traipsed all over Lower Manhattan, from Greenwich Village to Tribeca [1980s + New York City; fr triangle below Canal Street]*

trick *n* **1** A prostitute's client or sexual transaction: *woman walking the streets for tricks to take to her room (1915 +)* **2** A casual homosexual partner; NUMBER (1970s + *Homosexuals*) **3** A shift or duty period: *She doesn't require any breaks at her eight-hour trick (1669 + Nautical)* *v* **1** To serve a customer: *She had tricked a john from Macon (1965 + Prostitutes)* **2** (also **trick out**) To do the sex act, either hetero-or homosexually; FUCK: *They can go "tricking out" with other gay people (1970s +)* **See** CHAMPAGNE TRICK, HAT TRICK, LOBSTER SHIFT, TURN A TRICK

trickledown *modifier*: *The planners counted on a trickledown effect when they relieved the rich of all taxation* *n* The stimulation of a whole economic system by the enrichment and encouragement of those in the upper reaches (1944 +)

trick out *v phr* To ornament or adorn, often garishly • Also **tricked-out** as an adjective: *He tricked out his ride*

tricks **See** DIRTY TRICKS, GO DOWN AND DO TRICKS, HOW'S TRICKS

trigger *n* A gunman; HIT MAN, TRIGGER MAN: *He's a trigger (1935 + Underworld)* *v* **1** To commit a robbery: *Police said Sims has triggered dozens of holdups (1950s +)* **2** To initiate something; provoke something: *My innocent remark triggered a strange reaction (1938 +)* **See** QUICK ON THE DRAW

trigger-happy *adj* Irresponsible in the use of firearms; eager to fire a gun

trigger man *n phr* A gunman; HIT MAN, TRIGGER (1920s + *Underworld*)

trim *n* **1** A woman, esp one regarded as an object of sexual conquest

(1955 +) <2> The sex act with a woman; ASS, CUNT, GASH: *Uou looking for some trim* (1960s +) **v** To defeat utterly; trounce; CLOBBER: *They got trimmed 8-zip* (1950s +)

trip¹ n An arrest; a prison sentence; FALL [1920s + Underworld; *fr trip*, “stumble, fall”]

trip² n 1 A psychedelic narcotics experience: *users like beat poet Allen Ginsberg (30 trips) (1959 + Narcotics)* **2** Any experience comparable with a psychedelic experience: *The park is an icon. A nostalgia trip back into a youth/ I’ve known Chuck for many years and he’s a trip. He’s fun to be around (1966 +)* **3** A truly amazing person or thing: *She’s such a trip* **v 1** (also **trip out**) To have a psychedelic narcotics experience or comparable experience: *That film really tripped me out (1959 + Narcotics)* **2** To act stupidly: *He was trippin’ at the party/ If you’re crazy, east side teens may say you’re “trippin’,” “postal,” or “gerpin” (1980s + Teenagers)* **See** BAD TRIP, EGO TRIP, HEAD TRIP, LAY A TRIP ON someone, POWER TRIP, SKI-TRIP

tripe n Contemptible material; nonsense, worthless stuff; CRAP, JUNK: *What the hell do they have to give us that tripe for?/ anyone who could make money on “such tripe” [1895 +; fr tripe, “animal stomach used as food,” because it is held in low regard]*

tripes n The intestines; GUTS, INNARDS, KISHKES: *He doesn’t put their tripes in an unproar (1529 +)*

triple whammy n phr A three-part attack, difficulty, threat, etc: *Triple Whammy on the Farm (1940s +)*

tripped out adj phr Having or symptomatic of a psychedelic

narcotics experience: *a tripped-out laughing jag (1960s + Narcotics)*

tripper *n* **1** An excursionist; a tourist: *the tripper class (1813 +)* **2** A person who takes psychedelic narcotics (1960s + Narcotics) *See* ROUND-TRIPPER

trippy *adj* **1** Intoxicated with narcotics; dazed; SPACED-OUT, STONED: *allowing the band to be tagged as a “trippy” band* **2** Bizarre; phantasmal; surreal: *a trippy fantasy, the Harvard University Press version of Instant Wingo (1960s + Narcotics)*

Trojan horse *n phr* A kind of computer virus: “Trojan horse” *programing lies in wait to be triggered later, either at a certain day, hour, or minute or when system use or storage reaches a certain level* [1990s + Computers; fr the wooden horse full of soldiers used by the Greeks to end the siege of Troy]

troll¹ *n* A stupid person; a dullard [1970s + Army; probably fr the dwarf or demon of Norse mythology]

troll² *v* **1** To go about looking for sexual encounters; CRUISE: *Women who are out trolling bars do not deserve the protection of the law (1967 +)* **2** To seek respondents on the Internet; SURF: *The firm was trolling for green card applicants in need of legal help (1990s + Computers)* [fr the action of fishing by *trolling*]

trolley *See* OFF one’S TROLLEY, SLIP one’S TROLLEY

trophy child *n* A child whose accomplishments or other attributes are used by the parents to impress others: *The star athlete became the trophy child for the stepfather*

trophy wife (or husband) *n phr* A mate, often a younger person,

chosen for decorative and prestige value: *Apparently the Senator and she have a private vision that might make him as much a trophy husband as she a trophy wife* [1984 + ; said to have been coined by Julie Connelly of *Fortune*]

trot out v phr To produce and display for admiration: *Oh Lord, he's trotting out his war record again* (1845 +)

trots, the n phr Diarrhea; the SHITS (1904 +)

trouble See DOUBLE-TROUBLE, DROWN one's SORROWS, HAND TROUBLE

trough See GREASE TROUGH

trouser See DUST someone's JACKET

truck v 1 To carry; haul; lug: *Why are you trucking all that weight around?* (1681 +) **2** To leave; go along (1925 + *Jazz musicians*) **3** To dance the jitterbug; esp, to do a jitterbug dance called "Truckin" (1930s + *Jive talk*) **See** MACK TRUCK

trucking See KEEP ON TRUCKING

trumped up adj phr 1 False; concocted; fabricated; PHONY: *The indictment was trumped up for revenge* (1728 +) **2** Heavily promoted or overly praised: *backfired that it was trumped up*

try See the OLD COLLEGE TRY

try it on for size v phr To accept or attempt something tentatively: *Let's try this scenario on for size and see if it binds in the crotch* (1956 +)

try-out n A trial, esp of someone's skill, acting or singing ability, etc

(1903 +)

try out *v phr* To apply for something; become a candidate: *I think I may try out for the choir this year (1900s +)*

TS *n* TOUGH SHIT (*WWII armed forces*)

tsatske *See* TCHOTCHKE

tsk-tsk *v* To use a mildly deprecating tone: *Editorial writers have been tsk-tsking over the fact that there are fewer and fewer union members (1967 +)*

tsuris or **tsoris** or **tzuris** (TS^{oo}R əS, TSAWR əS) *n* Troubles; tribulations; anxieties; sufferings: *if Samuels, with all his tsuris, wins the Democratic nomination/ There is a tsoris, which is a kind of trouble spot/ during a long streak of tzuris [1960s + ; fr Yiddish fr Hebrew tsarah, “trouble”]*

tub *See* IN THE TUB

tubby or **tubbo** *n* A fat person: *the ex-tubbies trying to live on lettuce leaves/ Hey, you’re kind of a tubbo, ain’t you? (entry form 1891 + , variant 1980s +)*

tube, the *n phr* **1** Television, as an industry, a medium, a television set, etc: *making a name for herself as a singer on the tube/ not a chance, unless you were back at the hotel watching on the tube (1959 +)* **2** A police shotgun (*1990s + Los Angeles police*) **3** The inner curve of a big wave **4** A can of beer [first sense a shortening of *cathode ray tube* or *picture tube*] *See* the BOOB TUBE, DOWN THE TUBE

tube it *v phr* To fail an examination, course, etc (*1966 + Students*)

tube steak *n phr* 1 A frankfurter; HOT DOG (1963 +) <2> (also **tubesteak of love**) The penis; WEENIE (1980s +)

Tubesville *adj* Rejected; DEAD IN THE WATER, KAPUT: *Looks like your idea is Tubesville* [1980s +; fr *down the tube*]

tub of guts (or lard) *n phr* A fat person, esp a repulsive one: *that tub-o'-guts* (1940 +)

tubular *adj* Wonderful; excellent; AWESOME, GREAT [1970s + Teenagers; fr surfing term describing a wave with a *tube*, that is, a cylindrical space around which the crest is curling as the wave breaks, and inside which the surfer happily rides]

tuchis or tuckus *See* TOKUS

tuck *See* NIP AND TUCK

tucker *See* BEST BIB AND TUCKER

tuckered (out) *adj* Tired (1840s +)

'tude *n* Attitude; view of things; typical reaction • Usually negative, sour, or surly [1970s + Teenagers fr black; fr *attitude*]

tuff *See* TOUGH

tuifu (TOO EE FOO) *n* A totally botched situation; an incredible blunder [WWII armed forces; fr *the ultimate in fuck-ups*]

tumble *n* A response indicating interest, affection, etc **v** To be arrested; FALL, TRIP (1901 + *Underworld*) *See* GIVE SOMEONE A TUMBLE

tumble to something **v phr** To discover; suddenly understand: *I tumbled to what she was really up to* [1846 +; fr the notion of falling]

upon something, perhaps by stumbling over it]

tummy or **tum-tum** *n* The stomach: *eliminating the protruding tummy* [1869 +; fr a childish pronunciation of *stomach*]

tummyache *n* A stomachache: *An elephant died of an outsize tummyache at London Airport (1926 +)*

tumor *See* MILWAUKEE GOITER

◁**tuna** or **tuna fish**▷ *n* or *n phr* **1** The vulva; CUNT **2** A woman; a female [1970s + Black; fr the similarity, recognized esp in black slang, between the odor of the vulva and that of fish or other seafood; perhaps somehow influenced by *Tiny Tuna*, homosexual slang for a sailor as a sex object]

tune *See* FINE-TUNE, LOONY-TUNE, TO THE TUNE OF

tuned *past part* Possessed or practiced upon sexually; be had [1970s + Canadian teenagers; perhaps related to earlier British and Australian *tune*, “beat, hit,” hence semantically to *bang*]

tune in *v phr* To become aware, au courant, involved, etc: *Tune in, turn on, drop out (1960s + Counterculture)*

tune out *v phr* To cease being aware, au courant, etc; the opposite of “tune in” (1960s + *Counterculture*)

tunes *n* Music, esp popular: *new tunes on my iPod*

tune up *v phr* To bring something, esp a car motor, to its best state of effectiveness; tinker with to improve: *tuning up for the race at Santa Ana* [1901 +; fr the process of *tuning* a musical instrument, suggested by the fact that the performance of motors can be

gauged by their sound]

tunnel v To go into hiding (1950s + *Underworld*)

tunnel vision n phr Very narrow and restricted vision or perception; the inability to see anything except what is directly in front (1949 +)

T someone up v phr To call the maximum permissible number of technical fouls: *He had already T'd Barkley up for a technical foul. Now he did the same for Oakley, and summarily threw him out of the arena (1990s + Basketball)*

turbocharge or turbo n: *Grade school kids are introduced to cocaine along with marijuana. "It's called a turbocharge. They think turbo is not addicting (1980s + Narcotics)*

◁**turd**▷ **n 1** A piece of excrement (1000 +) **2** A despicable person; PRICK, SHIT (1518 +) **See** GHOST TURDS

◁**turd face**▷ **n phr** A thoroughly despised person; creep; TURD

◁**turd in the punchbowl**▷ **See** GO OVER LIKE A LEAD BALLOON

turf n 1 The sidewalk; the street (1930s + *Jive talk*) **2** The territory claimed or controlled by a street gang: *I tried to imagine my Deacons pacing the turf or talking about me (1953 + Street gang)* **3** A particular specialized concern; THING: *Counterterrorism is not their exclusive turf/ I never thought of myself as pretty, that was my sister's turf (1970 +) v* To transfer a patient to another ward or service in order to evade responsibility, decisions, irritations, etc (1970s + *Medical*) [*turf*, "the road," in the first sense is found in hobo use by

1899]

turf (or track), the *n phr* The work and venue of a prostitute; the street: *During early years “on the turf,” as the saying went, she was thrifty and ambitious/ I didn’t want to lose her, now that she was ready for the track* [1860 + ; fr an analogy between the prostitute’s work and that of a racehorse]

turf war (or battle) *n phr* A contention over the rights to a certain activity, location, etc: *We get eye-glazing accounts of turf wars between the Council on Economic Policy and the Commission on International Trade and Economic Policy/ Faget suspected a turf battle for control of the Mercury program (1950s +)*

turista *n* Diarrhea; AZTEC TWO-STEP, MONTEZUMA’S REVENGE [1970 + ; fr Spanish, “tourist”]

turk *See* YOUNG TURK

turkey *n* 1 An inferior show, esp a failure; BOMB, FLOP: *Management prudently kept the turkey out of town (1927 + Show business)* **2** Anything inferior, stupid, or futile; LEMON, LOSER: *For all ordinary purposes it was simply a turkey/ calling the bill a turkey, said it would send the wrong signal (1941 +)* **3** A stupid, ineffectual person; JERK: *You’d be stuck with that turkey practically until he died (1951 +)* **4** The victim of a mugging or street robbery: *On an average night, they attacked eight victims or “turkeys,” taking a total of about \$300 (1970s + Underworld & teenagers)* **5** Three consecutive strikes (1940s + Bowling) [fr the common and perhaps accurate perception of the turkey as a stupid creature, an avian loser; the bowling sense

is exceptional] **See** CAPE COD TURKEY, FULL OF SHIT, TALK TURKEY

turkey-shoot *n phr* Something very easy; CINCH, PIECE OF CAKE: *Getting a job is no turkey-shoot anymore* [1970s + ; fr the marksmanship contests where *turkeys* are tied behind a log with their heads showing as targets]

turn someone *v* To cause a suspect to change his testimony and implicate others: *We tried to turn Rowe, but he was too scared. He said he'd do life before he'd hand up his associates* (1980s + Police)
See TALK OUT OF TURN

turn someone around *v phr* To change someone's attitude, behavior, etc: *You fuck it up, that's turning me around* (1970s +)

turn a trick *v phr* To do the sex act for profit; do one piece of work as a prostitute; TRICK: *Many of the prostitutes were students, models, or would-be actresses who turned tricks part-time* (1946 +)

turned off *adj phr* **1** No longer using narcotics; CLEAN (1960s + Narcotics) **2** Indifferent; bored (1960s +) **3** Tired; FED UP (1960s +)

turned on *adj phr* **1** Intoxicated, esp from narcotics; HIGH: *I'm really turned on, man. I'm higher than a giraffe's toupee* (1950s + Narcotics) **2** Stimulated; aroused; excited; switched on: *You are so sexualized, and so turned on* (1960s +) **3** Aware and up-to-date; au courant; HIP, PLUGGED IN: *flower children who flock to New York's turned-on Macdougall Street/ an outlaw lobbyist, a turned-on Nader* (1960s +)

turner **See** PAGE TURNER

turn in *v phr* To go to bed; HIT THE SACK (1833 +)

turnkey job *n phr* A good job that will not need to be done again; a definitive treatment: *Scott has given us something less than a turnkey job* [1934 + ; fr the phrase *that locks it up*, “that ends it and achieves it definitively”]

turn (or knock) someone’s lights out *v phr* To punish someone severely; incapacitate someone: *Man, if I sued every guy who ever turned my lights out, I wouldn’t have time to do anything else/ It looked like we started out with a bang, but then the kid turned our lights out* (1980s +)

turnoff *n* Something that damps one’s spirits; a sexual or emotional depressant; WET BLANKET: *The film is in fact a sexual turnoff* (1975 +)

turn off *v phr* To become indifferent; lose concern: *When he found he couldn’t hack it, he just turned off* (1970s +)

turn someone off *v phr* To depress someone; be a deterrent to someone’s spirits: *It seems like everybody turns you off/ Policies and practices that are not “relevant,” to use his language, “turn him off”* (1950s + *Beat talk*)

turn off someone’s water *See* CUT OFF SOMEONE’S WATER

turn-on *n* **1** Something that arouses and excites; a sexual or emotional stimulant: *which physical attributes of men are a turn-on for women/ Reluctance is often a turn-on* **2** Excitement; ecstasy; elation: *He’d never felt a turn-on like that* (1960s +)

turn on *v phr* **1** To use narcotics, esp to begin to do so: *Tune in, turn on, drop out* **2** To take or inject narcotics: *Do you turn on with any of the local heads?* (1960s + *Counterculture & narcotics*)

turn someone on v phr 1 To excite or stimulate someone; arouse someone: *The professor was trying to find out what turns women on (1903 +)* 2 To introduce someone to something; pique someone's curiosity: *He turned me on to Zen (1960s +)*

turn on a dime v phr To be able to turn around in a very short radius: *That car corners very sweetly, and turns on a dime (1970s +)*

turn on the waterworks v phr To weep; begin to cry; BLUBBER: *I turned on the waterworks (1885 +)*

turnout n 1 An audience, the participants at a meeting, etc: *We always get a good turnout for the council sessions (1816 +)* 2 Clothing; dress; GET-UP, TOGS (1859 +) 3 A heterosexual man who turns homosexual: *A Navy turnout is one who went in heterosexual but came out dreaming of pecker (1970s + Homosexuals)*

turn someone out v phr To introduce someone to something; initiate someone, esp to narcotics, sex, prostitution, etc: *He takes a "square broad" (a non-prostitute) and "turns her out" (1970s +)*

turnover n The eve of one's release from prison: *He told me next Sunday was his turnover and I should meet him at the gate (1934 + Prison)*

turn something or someone over v phr To ransack or rifle, esp to steal: *turned over the tavern after closing (1859 +)*

turn tail (and run) v phr To run away in fear: *turned tail at the first sign of trouble*

turn turtle v phr To turn upside down; capsize: *in the heavier puffs,*

they thought she would turn turtle [1860 + ; fr earlier *turn the turtle*, found by 1818, referring to making a turtle helpless by turning it on its back]

turn up v phr To arrive; SHOW UP: *When do you want us to turn up?* (1755 +)

turn someone up v phr To inform; in effect, to turn someone over to the police; HAND UP: *Maybe you better turn me up/ Somebody turned him up* (1872 + *Underworld*)

turn up one's nose v phr To regard or treat with contempt: *turned up his nose at the new recipe* (1818 +)

turn up one's toes v phr To die (1950s +)

turtle *See* TURN TURTLE

turtledoves n A pair of sweethearts (1940s +)

turtleneck n The foreskin of the penis • Euphemistic: *may get rid of the turtleneck*

tush or tushie or tushy *See* TOKUS

tux n A tuxedo (1922 +)

tuzzy-muzzy n A nosegay or bouquet: *A tuzzy-muzzy is a cone-shaped Victorian decoration with dried flowers* (1440 +)

TV n A transvestite; TRANNIE: *TVs are not as feminine as they themselves think they are* (1965 +)

twaddle n Idle talk; blathering (1782 +)

◁**twat**▷ (TWAHT) **n 1** The vulva; CUNT **2** A woman considered merely

as a sex object or organ; ASS, PIECE OF ASS (1656+)

tweak *v* 1 To adjust a computer program slightly; refine; fine-tune:

Michael's code is elegant stuff, really fun to tweak (1980s+ Computer)

2 To make minor adjustments; perfect: *Is the President going to tweak emissions for seven years and then let them rip?/ He used the core of the President's plan, and from that he did some tweaking (1990s+)* [perhaps a memory of the days when a crystal was *tweaked* with a "cat's whisker" in order to tune a primitive radio receiver]

tweaked or **tweaky** *adj* Odd; crazy; FLAKY: *Julie is tweaked; first she says she loves Doug and then she fully grovels with Bill/ "Twin Peaks" without the dwarves, the demons, and the tweaky humor (1980s+)*

twee *adj* Tiny; dainty; miniature; cute: *no tiny, twee money to dole out [1905+; fr tweet, a childish pronunciation of sweet]*

tweenager *n* A preteenager, generally aged 10--12; also, a youth who has just become a teenager [1949+; blend of (be)tween and (teen)ager]

tweener *n* A person poised between two major categories: *Yes, Bennett is a tweener, too small for fullback in most systems, but not Green Bay's, and too slow for halfback/ "Tweeners" are trapped in a sociological limboland, too big to be considered little kids but not old or mature enough to be looked upon as true adolescents [1990s+; fr between]*

tweeter *n* A small loudspeaker for the higher tones (1934+)

twenty-five *n* LSD [1960s+ Narcotics; fr the fact that 25 is part of its

chemical designation]

twenty-four seven or **24/7** or **24--7** *adv phr* Twenty-four hours a day seven days a week; always: *they founded 24--7: Notes from the Inside. (The title, if you have been living under a rock, refers to being locked up 24 hours a day, 7 days a week)/ If I could I would stay on vacation twenty-four-seven* [late 1980s +; said to have been initiated by street gangs selling crack cocaine, available always]

twentysomething *See* GEN-X

twenty-twenty (or **20--20**) **hindsight** *n phr* Perfect foresight of what has already been seen: *observers empowered with 20--20 hindsight wanted to know* (1962 +)

twerp or **twirp** *n* A contemptible person; JERK, NERD: *ill-mannered, foul-mouthed little twirp/ Wrangel may have been a pretentious twerp* [1874 +; origin uncertain]

twiddle *n* The tilde, a diacritical mark used especially in Spanish **v** To change something in a small way; TWEAK (1980s + *Computer*)

twiddle one's **thumbs** **v phr** To waste time; be forced to sit idly and perhaps rotate one's thumbs about one another: *I was anxious to help, but all I could do was twiddle my thumbs while they debated* (1846 +)

twink or **twinkie** or **twinky** *adj*: *Quentin Crisp croaks in a nasal monotone like a twinkie Mr Magoo* **modifier**: *I found this gorgeous twink carpenter in the Mission* **n 1** A young, sexually attractive person; tempting teenager: *You know, the twink who used to be Fielding's lover/ The Weemawee twinkies troop out to the kickoff line* **2**

A weird or deviant person, esp a homosexual; a social outcast: *They think “twinky” or sissy or something like that/ Rafi comes on strong, but he’s a twink at heart* [1963 + ; origin uncertain]

twirler *n* A pitcher (1883 + *Baseball*)

twist *n* A young woman: *sexy little twist, but a kook/ a tough, smart twist who got away with murder* [1928 + ; perhaps fr rhyming slang *twist and twirl*, “girl,” attested in a poem of E E Cummings]

twist someone’s **arm** *v phr* To induce or persuade someone very strongly; importune someone powerfully, as if by physical force: *You grab this opportunity to twist my arm* (1940s +)

twisted *adj* **1** Very much intoxicated with narcotics; HIGH: *twisted, so high he doesn’t know where the hell he is* (1960s + *Narcotics*) **2** Unusual; perverted: *My Twisted World of Convolutd Music*

twister *n* **1** A tornado (1897 +) **2** A key (1930s + *Jive talk*) **3** A spree; BENDER: *their periods of sobriety between twisters* (1940s +) **See** BRONCO BUSTER

twist slowly (or twist) in the wind *v phr* To suffer protracted humiliation, obloquy, regret, etc: *The second mistake was to let Sherrill twist slowly in the wind/ just letting you twist slowly, slowly in the wind* [1973 + ; perhaps coined by John Ehrlichman, an aide of President Richard Nixon, fr the gruesome image of a hanging body]

twisty *adj* Attractively feminine; SEXY: *Most female doctors aren’t as, uh, young. No, ah, say twisty might be more like it* (1970s +)

twit *n* A contemptible and insignificant person; a trivial idiot: *Craig*

Stevens as her twit of a husband/ I've got the authorization, you fucking twit [1934 + ; origin unknown; rapidly adopted in the 1970s, perhaps because of the popularity of the British television series *Monty Python's Flying Circus*, on which the term was often employed]

two *See* NUMBER TWO, ONE-TWO

two-bagger *n* **1** A two-base hit; a double (1880 + *Baseball*) **2** A very ugly person; DOUBLE-BAGGER: *two-bagger, a girl who needs exactly that to cover her ugliness* (1970s +)

two-bit *adj* Cheap; tawdry; trivial; TACKY: *the two-bit bureaucrats/ Congressmen were panic-stricken, running around like two-bit whores* [1929 + ; literally, worth only *two bits*]

two bits *n phr* A quarter; twenty-five cents [1730 + ; fr the quarter part of a Mexican *real*, which had eight *bits*]

two-by-four or **two-by-twice** *adj* Small; insignificant; inferior; TWO-BIT: *We stopped at a two-by-four hotel near the tracks* (entry form 1896 + , variant 1930s +)

two cents *See* PUT ONE'S TWO CENTS IN

two cents' worth *n phr* A little; a trivial amount: *I'll give you two cents' worth of advice about that* (1942 +)

twofer (TŪŪ fər) *n* **1** A cheap cigar (1911 +) **2** A theater ticket sold at half the normal price (1948 +) [fr the phrase *two for*, in these cases *two for a nickel* and *two for the price of one*]

two-fisted drinker *n* A heavy drinker

two hats *See* WEAR TWO HATS

two hoots *n* Anything at all: *don't give two hoots about them* (1925 +)

two shakes or **two shakes of a lamb's tail** *n phr* A moment; a wink;
a JEFFY: *Hold it, I'll just be two shakes* [1883 +; by 1840 in the form *a couple of shakes*]

two-spot *n* A two-dollar bill (1904 +)

two-step *See* AZTEC TWO-STEP

two-time *v* To deceive and betray someone; esp, to betray one's proper sweetheart by consorting with someone else: *Two-Timing Boy Wrecks Girl's Dream* [1924 +; perhaps fr *two at a time*; perhaps fr *making time with two at once*]

two-time loser *n phr* 1 A person who has been convicted twice and therefore risks a higher sentence another time (1931 + *Underworld*)
2 A person who has been divorced twice: *Nora Ephron, funny two-time loser* (1970s +)

two-timer *n* A person who double-crosses or is unfaithful to another (1927 +)

two-topper *n* A table for two in a restaurant: *only two-toppers at 5 p.m.*

two to tango *See* IT TAKES TWO TO TANGO

two ways *See* WORK BOTH WAYS

two-way street *n phr* A situation that cannot or should not be handled by only one person: *After all, Sam, keeping a marriage*

happy is a two-way street (1951 +)

typewriter *n* A machine gun, esp a submachine gun; TOMMY GUN
(1915 +)

tzuris *See* TSURIS

U

ugly *See* PLUG-UGLY

ugly as sin *adj phr* (Variations: **galvanized sin** or **catshit** may replace **sin**) Very ugly; extremely repellent (*entry form 1821 +*)

ugly gun *n phr*: *Gun lovers call semiautomatic weapons “ugly guns” (1990s +)*

uie or **u-ey** *n* A U-turn (*1976 +*)

ultraswoopy *adj* Very fast: *a down-sized, hitech, ultraswoopy model next year (1970s +)*

ump *n* An umpire (*1888 + Baseball*)

umpteenth *modifier* Of any large unspecified number: *exhausted all the encomia in your vocabulary on umpteenth reviews* [fr WWI; said to have been first used by British military signalers during World War I to disguise the number designations of units]

umpteenth *modifier* The ordinal form of “umpteenth”: *Here’s the umpteenth development in the battle (fr WWI)*

umpty *modifier* Of an unspecified number of the decimal order: *the umpty-fifth regiment (1905 +)*

umpty-umpth *modifier* Of a large and unspecified ordinal number:

making the same speech for the umpty-umpth time/ the umpty-umpth revision (fr WWI)

unc or **unk** or **unky** *n* Uncle (1905 +)

uncle *n* **1** A pawnbroker (1756 +) **2** A receiver of stolen goods; FENCE (1924 + *Underworld*) **3** A federal narcotics agent; NARC (1920 + *Underworld & narcotics*) [last sense fr *Uncle Sam*] **See** SAY UNCLE

Uncle Dudley **See** YOUR UNCLE DUDLEY

Uncle Sam *n phr* **1** The US government; the US as a nation (1813 +)
2 A federal agent or agency; FED (1940s + *Underworld*) [said to have originated during the War of 1812 when Samuel Wilson of Troy, New York, locally known as *Uncle Sam*, stamped US on supplies he provided for the government, and this was jocularly taken to be his own initials]

Uncle Tom *n phr* A black man who emulates or adopts the behavior of the white majority; a servile black man; AFRO-SAXON, OREO [1922 + Black; fr the title character of Harriet Beecher Stowe's novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, who was stigmatized as a dishonorably submissive black]

Uncle Tomahawk *n phr* A Native American who emulates or adopts the behavior of the majority culture; a servile Native American (1970s + *Native American*)

uncool *adj* Not cool; wrong, excited, rude, etc (1953 + *Cool talk*)

under **See** GET OUT FROM UNDER

under one's belt *adj phr* Successfully achieved or survived: *Get a*

couple more months' experience under your belt and we'll talk about a promotion (1954+)

underground *adj* **1** Apart from and opposed to conventional society; esp, advocating and representing the hippie and narcotics subculture: *The Voice started as a sort of underground newspaper (1953+)* **2** In hiding; concealing one's identity and whereabouts, esp to escape arrest (1820+)

underground, the *n phr* Political or cultural dissenters collectively who lead a partly or wholly clandestine life and resist the dominant regime; also, their arena of life and operations [WWII & 1960s+ counterculture; term first applied to the various resistance movements against German occupation in World War II and then adopted by the 1960s counterculture, which saw the US government and culture as analogous with the Hitlerian]

under one's hat *adj phr* Secret; in confidence: *Here it is, but it's strictly under the hat, see? (1885+)*

under one's nose *adv phr* In plain sight, although unnoticed: *I'm afraid I may be missing something that's right under my nose (1548+)*

under one's own steam *modifier* Acting independently (1912+)

underpinnings *n* Legs (1912+)

under the collar *See* HOT UNDER THE COLLAR

under the gun *adj phr* In a position of danger; urgently called on to take action: *Under the economic gun* [1940s+; fr a poker term for the player called upon to open, bet, fold, raise, etc]

under the table *adj phr* **1** Very drunk (1921 +) **2:** *What was the best under-the-table offer you got?* *adv phr* Illegal; secret and illicit; unethical: *He would never make any deals under the table (1940s +)*

under the weather *modifier* **1** Not feeling well; ill **2** Intoxicated with alcohol

under the wire *adv* Done just before deadline; at the last minute: *turned in under the wire*

under someone's thumb *adj phr* Entirely in someone's control: *Our boss likes to keep us under his thumb (1754 +)*

underwhelm *v* To impress very little; be quite insignificant; be less than overwhelming: *Her performance rather underwhelmed the audience (1956 +)*

under wraps *adv phr* In secrecy; in obscurity: *We had better keep this under wraps for a while (1939 +)*

undies *n* Underwear, esp women's panties: *a glimpse of her undies (1906 +)* *See* FUDGE **one's PANTS**

unflappable *adj* Calm; imperturbable; cool: *They admired Mrs Thatcher's unflappable mien (1958 +)* *See* FLAP

◀**unfuckingbelievable**▶ *adj* Unbelievable • A fairly common use of the "fucking" infix: *"Totally unfuckingbelievable," said Duffy (1940s +)*

unglued *See* COME UNGLUED

ungodly *modifier* Horrendous; outrageous: *got in at an ungodly hour*

unhep or **unhipped** *adj* Conventional; unstylish; unimaginative;
UNCOOL: *faith, devotion, and other such unhep subjects (1930s + Jive talk)*

unisex *adj* Intended for or fitting for both sexes: *The unisex trend was launched by the era's pacesetters, the teenagers (1968 +)*

unit *n* The penis

unleaded coffee *n phr* Decaffeinated coffee: *Feel like having a big decaffeinated espresso with lots of milk and no foam? In java jive, that's an unleaded grande latte without (1980s +)*

unmentionables *n* Underwear; undergarments: *required to don upper and lower unmentionables (1910 +)*

uno *See* NUMERO UNO

unreal *adj* Excellent; wonderful; GREAT: *Like great. She's real unreal (1965 +)*

unshirted hell *n phr* Serious trouble: *cold fronts raise unshirted hell with fishing/ Then it's pure unshirted hell (1932 +)*

unstuck *See* COME UNGLUED

until one is blue in the face *See* TILL ONE IS BLUE IN THE FACE

until kingdom come *adv* Forever (1898 +)

until the cows come home *adv* Until a long time in the future (1610 +)

until the last dog dies *adv phr* Until the bitter end: *In Dover, New Hampshire, Clinton promised voters that if they gave him a second*

chance, he would be with them until the last dog dies/ But no—he swore a blood oath that he was one of us, and would stay until the last dog died (1990s +)

untogether *adj* **1** Ineffectual; confused; SCREWED UP: *leading us to think you are so untogether that you want other blacks to go through the same thing* **2** Not fashionable or stylish **3** Not smooth and effective socially (1960s + *Black*)

up *adj* **1** Exhilarated; happy; sparkling; hopeful: *I was feeling up. I thought it had been a very successful evening (1815 +)* **2** Encouraging; hopeful; UPBEAT: *I don't like down movies, I like up movies (1970s +)* **3** Ready and effective; keyed up; in one's best form: *Obviously, Kennedy wanted to be "up" for the meeting (1972 +)* **4** Intoxicated by narcotics, esp amphetamines; HIGH: *as it does when you're up on bennie (1960s + Narcotics)* **5** (also **up and rolling** or **up and running**) Functioning; in operation; active: *English-only a is a phony issue raised only to get folks' bile up and running in time for the presidential race (1980s + Computer)* **n** **1** A source of excitement; a pleasurable thrill; LIFT: *Her words gave me a huge up (1966 +)* **2** An amphetamine dose, capsule, etc; UPPER: *Let's do some ups tonight (1960s + Narcotics)* **v** To raise; increase: *My confidence has upped itself (1925 +)* [first adjective sense is based on *up*, "effervescent, bubbling," used of beer and other drinks; later similar uses, from the 1940s, are based on the "high" produced by narcotics]

up against it *adj phr* In a difficult situation; in serious trouble: *When they saw the gap they knew they were really up against it (1896 +)*

up against the wall *sentence* Prepare to be humiliated, attacked,

robbed, despised, etc; GO FUCK oneself: *our commune motto, “Up against the wall, motherfuckers”/ Up against the wall, IBM and General Electric and Xerox and Procter & Gamble and American Express* [1960s + Counterculture; fr a line in a poem by LeRoi Jones (Amiri Baraka), “Up against the wall, motherfuckers,” fr the command of a holdup man to his victim, or of the police to a person being arrested, forcing him to immobilize himself by leaning forward arched with hands against a wall; probably influenced by the fact that people are executed by being shot against a wall]

up someone’s **alley** *See* DOWN someone’S ALLEY

up-and-coming *adj* Promising and energetic: *I gathered a few up-and-coming young writers for my staff (1848 +)*

up-and-down *n* A close look; scrutiny: *The tray-toter gave me the slow up-and-down* [1924 + ; found by 1820 in Byron’s *Don Juan*, “a survey up and down”]

up and up or **on the up and up** *adj phr* Honest; reliable; STRAIGHT-UP: *It’s an up and up place/ I almost wonder if the whole bunch of ‘em are on the up and up (1863 +)*

up a rope *See* GO PISS UP A ROPE

◁**up one’s ass**▷ *See* SIT THERE WITH one’S FINGER UP one’S ASS, STICK IT

up a storm *adv phr* Very intensively; very diligently; very competently: *and they’re really dancing up a storm (1953 +)*

up a tree *adj phr* In a predicament; faced with a dilemma; helpless

(1825 +)

up beat *adj* Optimistic; encouraging; positive: *They use catchy, upbeat phrases/ A triumph of upbeat pictures over the downbeat* [1947 + ; apparently fr the musical term *upbeat*, “a beat on which a conductor raises his baton,” but since such beats have no emotional connotations, the coiner must have seized on the general positive notion of *up* and taken *beat* to mean “stroke, movement”]

upchuck *v* To vomit; throw up; BARF, RALPH: *It is enough to make one upchuck* [1925 + ; fr *up* plus *chuck*, “throw”]

update *modifier*: *Is this the update material? n: I'll give you a quick update* (1967 +) *v* To give, add, record, etc, the latest information: *He updated me on a couple of gimmicks* (1948 +)

up for *modifier* Ready to participate; eager to do: *up for Chinese food*

up for grabs *adj phr* **1** Available, esp newly available: *“High Haven,” Luke repeated sonorously, “is up for grabs”/ I got two doozies up for grabs* **2** Problematical or undecided, esp newly so: *The whole question of one-man-one-vote is up for grabs again* (1940s +)

up front *adj phr* **1** From the beginning; first; at once: *we knew right up front that if I did the film, I'd be rich* (1980 +) **2** Honest; open; truthful: *very up-front about who she is and what she thinks/ “These people are not being up-front and honest,” the Mayor said* (1972 +) *adv phr* (also **in front**) In advance; before any deductions: *His twin wasn't getting enough cash (something like \$1,000) up front/ Don't pay your money up front* (1972 +)

up in the air *adj phr* Unsettled; undecided; uncertain: *When he left,*

the whole project was up in the air for a while (1933 +)

upmanship *See* ONE-UPMANSHIP

upmarket *adj* Appealing to or created for wealthy people: *a daily newspaper which would make even the Sun look upmarket (1972 +)*

upper or **uppie** *n* **1** An amphetamine; a stimulant narcotic; *the effect of mixing “uppers” and “downers” (1960s + Narcotics)* **2** A source of excitement; a pleasurable thrill; *UP: It may not be the same kind of thrill as winning a hand of poker at a casino, but it’s definitely an upper (1973 +)* *See* PEPPER-UPPER, PICKER-UPPER, WARMER-UPPER

upper crust (or **drawer**), the *adj phr* (also **upper-drawer**): *His manners were silkily upper-crust/ the upper-drawer voters* *n phr* The social aristocracy; the elite (1835 +) *See* ON ONE’S UPPERS, SHATTING ON ONE’S UPPERS

upper story *n phr* The brain; the mind: *definite shortcomings in the upper story (1699 +)* *See* LOOSE IN THE BEAN

uppity *adj* Conceited; arrogant; snobbish; *HINCTY: the most uppity colored fellow I ever ran into in my life/ to estimate if this reporter was going to give her any sass or put on any uppity airs (1880 + Black)*

upscale *adj* Having to do with upper social and economic reaches; wealthy; aristocratic; *RITZY: The killing by Jean Harris was an upscale crime (1966 +)*

◁**up shit** (or **shit’s**) **creek**▷ or **up the creek** *adj phr* (Variation: **without a paddle** may be added) In serious difficulty; very unfortunate; ruined: *Then you guys’ll be up the creek for good* [entry

form 1937 + , perhaps related to the early 1800s term *up Salt River*, of much the same meaning, and which may refer to the Salt River in Kentucky, a legendary abode of violent and brutal people; but the term is attested in British armed forces use without US attribution fr the early 1900s]

upside or **upside of prep** On the side of; in: *He got whacked upside the head with a board (1970 + Black)*

upside, the *n phr* The hopeful aspect; the good news: *The upside is that she's still conscious [1980s + ; both upside and downside originally referred to the fluctuations of the stock market]*

upside one's face *See* GO UPSIDE one's FACE

up one's sleeve *See* ACE UP one's SLEEVE

up-South n The North, esp with respect to its racism (1970s + *Black*)

upstage adj Haughty; aloof; snobbish: "*Upstage*" has taken on the additional meaning of "ritzy," that is, arrogantly proud and vain (1918 +) **v 1** To attract attention to oneself and away from other performers, esp by standing upstage so that they must look at you and turn their backs to the audience (1933 + *Theater*) **2** To demand and receive inordinate attention at the cost of others: *The secretary was trying to upstage the president on this, so he had to act at once (1921 +)*

upstairs adv In the brain; mentally: *became a little balmy upstairs (1932 +)* *See* KICK someone UPSTAIRS, THE MAN UPSTAIRS

upstate modifier In prison • Euphemistic [1934 + ; fr the placement

of prisons in remote areas far from large cities]

uptake *See* QUICK ON THE DRAW, SLOW ON THE DRAW

up the ante *v phr* To raise the price, offer, sum in question, etc; increase; make a higher demand: *I think I may up the ante to a cool fifty/ The trader decides to up the ante* [1970s +; fr the *ante* in poker, which gives one the right to take part]

◁**up the ass**▷ *adv phr* **1** Thoroughly; perfectly well: *I know country music up the ass on the guitar* **2** (Variations: **butt** or **kazoo** or **gazoo** or **gazool** may replace **ass**) To a very great extent; in excess; UP TO HERE: *They want vision? Vision up the kazoo!/ Bob Gottlieb has class up the gazoo/ I've got lawsuits up the gazool, which is one thing that disillusions me about writing (1971 +)* *See* KAZOO

up the flagpole *See* RUN something UP THE FLAGPOLE

up the river *adv phr* In prison [1924 +; fr the fact that Ossining Correctional Facility, formerly called Sing Sing, is *up the Hudson River* from New York City; from 1891 the term referred only to Sing Sing] *See* SEND UP

up the wall *adj phr* Crazy; wild; NUTTY: *It doesn't drive us crazy. At least, I don't know anybody who is up the wall about it* [1951 +; fr the image of insane persons, frantic and deprived drug addicts, wild animals, etc, trying to climb a wall to escape] *See* DRIVE someone UP THE WALL

uptick *n* **1** A rise, esp in stock prices; an increase of value: *the strongest and broadest uptick in the history of the company/ Another 10 percent uptick and you double up again* **2** Improvement; raising:

His apparent uptick in spirit was contagious [1970 + ; fr the use, on boards above stock-market stations, of a plus sign (compare British *tick*, “check mark”) beside a stock of which the last sale represented a rise in price; a minus sign represents a *down tick*; probably influenced by the *tick*, like *click*, or *notch*, representing one degree of change; compare *ratchet up*]

uptight *adj* 1 Tense; anxious: *He was all uptight about student plagiarism* (1934 +) 2 Excellent; COOL, GREAT (1962 +)

up to one’s ass *See* one HAS HAD IT

◁**up to one’s ass (or neck) in something**▷ *adj phr* (Variations: **in alligators** or **in rattlesnakes** may be added for emphasis) Deeply involved; overwhelmed: *Every time I turn around we’re up to our asses in something/ You’re up to your ass in alligators, get a bigger alligator/ We’re going to be up to our necks in soccer* (1940s +)

up to one’s eyeballs (or eyebrows) *adv phr* To a very great extent; totally; UP TO HERE: *one smaller outfit which is in farm equipment smack up to its corporate eyeballs* (1940s +) *See* one HAS HAD IT

up to here *adj phr* Surfeited; disgusted; FED UP: *I’m so up-to-here with the primaries and the TV news interviews* *adv phr* To the utmost; excessively; in great quantity: *Look, my friend, I’ve had it up to here with your bitching* [1940s + ; fr the notion of being fed to excess, fed up, and with the implicit gesture of indicating one’s throat as the place up to which one has had it] *See* one HAS HAD IT

up to par *modifier* Average; standard: *pizza up to par for the area* (1899 +)

up to scratch (or the mark) *adj phr* Satisfactory; acceptable; qualified: *I'm afraid this story isn't quite up to scratch* [1911 +; fr the early custom of drawing a line across a boxing ring and requiring that the able and willing fighter stand with his toe touching the *mark* or *scratch-line*]

up to snuff *adj phr* 1 Satisfactory; acceptable; UP TO SCRATCH: *His work doesn't come anywhere near up to snuff* **2** In good health; feeling well: *I don't feel quite up to snuff this morning* [1811 +; origin uncertain; the original British sense was “shrewd, not gullible,” apparently referring to the fact that one could be blinded with *snuff* in the eyes and victimized; the early 1800s US phrases *in high* (or *great*) *snuff*, “in good form, high fettle, etc,” perhaps having to do with *snuff* as an aristocratic commodity and symbol, may also be related]

up to speed *adj phr* Informed; au courant; aware of the situation: *Ballard was up to speed now (1980s +)* **See** BRING someone UP TO SPEED

up to the wire *See* COME UP TO THE WIRE

uptown *n* Cocaine; the LADY [1960s + Narcotics; fr the aristocratic and wealthy overtones of cocaine as compared with other narcotics, fr the earlier sense of *uptown*, “affluent, swanky,” as distinct fr *downtown*; the topography and demography of Manhattan Island underlie these senses] **See** the BOYS UPTOWN

◁**up yours**▷ ***interj*** (Variations: **you** or **your ass** or **your butt** or **your gig** or **your giggy** or any other synonym of **ass** may replace **yours**) An exclamation of strong defiance, contempt, rejection, etc:

Up yours, sister, he thought tardily as the barbs quivered home
[1950s + ; a shortening of *stick it up your ass*]

use v To use narcotics; take a dose or injection of a narcotic: *I used this morning and I'm still nice* (1950s + *Narcotics*)

use one's head (or one's bean) v phr To think; reason out one's actions: *teaches a man to use his head and to do the best he can/ You certainly used the old bean* (1828 +)

◁**useless as tits on a boar**▷ **adj phr** Absolutely futile (1940s +)

user n A person who uses narcotics, esp an addict (1950s + *Narcotics*)

ush v To be an usher: *the rancid troglodytes who ush at the Knicks' games* (1890 +)

usual See AS PER USUAL

usual suspects, the n phr The persons one would expect: *The amusing Rossini concert was well executed by the usual suspects (Hampson, Marilyn Horne, Samuel Ramey, June Anderson)/ We are given new perspectives on those who are the usual suspects in any consideration of modern lesbian writing: Willa Cather, Virginia Woolf, H.D. and Djuna Barnes* [1943 + ; fr an order given by Claude Rains as the French police official in the 1943 movie *Casablanca*]

ute n A utility or sport-utility vehicle: *The San Clemente is the first sport ute created especially for the mature market/ Sport-utes, which are four-wheel-drive trucks outfitted like boxy station wagons, are being scarfed up by buyers in record numbers* [1943 + ; the dated instance

is from WWII Australia-New Zealand use]

UVs *n* Ultraviolet rays; sunshine: *catch some UVs on the deck*

V

vac *n* A vacuum cleaner: *Bring a vac to clean up the apartment* **v** To use a vacuum cleaner: *vac the apartment*

vacation *n* A prison sentence: *who won a 20 years' vacation in the Big House (1920 + Underworld)*

vag (VAYG) *n* **1** A drifter; derelict; vagrant; vagabond; BAG LADY: *America can almost compete with England in the number of her "city vags" (1859 +)* **2** Vagrancy, as a legal offense: *We'll book him on vag (1877 +)*

vamoose or vamoose (va M^{oo}S) **v** To leave; depart, esp hastily; LAM, SCRAM, SPLIT: *We better vamoose, Moose [1834 + ; fr Spanish vamos, "let us depart"]*

vamp¹ **v** To improvise, esp an accompaniment; play casually and extemporaneously; FAKE, SHUCK [1789 + Musicians; probably fr 1500s *vamp*, "provide with a new (shoe) vamp, renovate," ultimately fr conjectured Anglo-French *vampé* fr Old French *avant-pié*, "foot-sock"; a refooted sock or a *revamped* shoe were felt to be in a way false, or improvised, hence the sense of "fake"]

vamp² *n* A seductive, sexually aggressive woman; a temptress: *The flirt had become the "baby vamp" (1911 +)* **v**: *I haven't tried to vamp*

Sam (1904+) [fr *vampire*, and esp fr the 1914 movie *A Fool There Was*, in which Theda Bara played a seductive woman, the title and concept coming fr Rudyard Kipling's poem "The Vampire"]

vamp³ *n* A volunteer firefighter [1877+; origin unknown; said to be fr *Voluntary Association of Master Pumpers*]

vamp⁴ or **vamp on v** or **v phr 1** To assault; trounce; BEAT someone UP, CLOBBER: *They knew that he'd vamp on them if they got wrong/ Chairman, chairman wake up, the Pigs are vampin'* **2** To arrest; BUST [1970s+ Black; perhaps related to black English *vamp* someone, "come at someone suddenly and aggressively"; perhaps fr *vamp*² reinforced by the murderous aggression of Count Dracula, a genuine and popular *vampire* in Bram Stoker's novel and the movies made from it]

vanilla adj 1 Conventional; usual; bland; WHITE BREADY (1970s+) **2:** *As a self-confessed vanilla-sexual* (1970s+) **3** PLAIN VANILLA (1970s+) **n 1** A white person, esp a white woman (1970s+ Black) **2** A person of ordinary sexual preferences; a usual heterosexual; STRAIGHT: *They called women who did not proclaim joy at being chained to the bedposts or chaining someone else "vanilla"* (1970s+) [fr the white color and the perhaps unimaginative choice of *vanilla* ice cream]

vanilla wafer n phr A very conventional man; STRAIGHT (1990s+)

vanner n A person who drives a van, esp as a symbol of a somewhat alienated and independent social attitude: *A vanner is tough to put your finger on. Some are former bikers* (1970s+)

vaporware n Computer software that is advertised but still

nonexistent: *We have a new name for vaporware (1990s + Computer)*

varnish remover *n phr* Raw and inferior whiskey; PANTHER PISS
(1950s +)

varoom *See* VROOM

Vatican roulette *n phr* The rhythm method of birth control (1962 +)

va-voom or **va-va-voom** *adj* (also **voomy**): *pressing the tits of this va-va-voom sophomore and shtupping her pussy/ Under that icky mask, I think you're the vooMIEST *interj* An exclamation of delight, esp of excited sexual interest [1960s +; probably fr *vroom* and *varoom*]*

V-ball *n* Volleyball: *intramural V-ball*

VC *n* The Vietcong or a member of the Vietcong; VICTOR CHARLIE
[Vietnam War armed forces; fr *Vietcong*]

veejay or **VJ** *n* A person who presents a program of music videos, esp on television [1982 +; fr the pronunciation of the initial letters of *video jockey*, after *DJ* (disc jockey)]

veeno *See* VINO

veep *n* A vice president: *Veep Fresco Thomas, Coach Jake Pitler, and Dressen* [1949 +; fr pronunciation of *vp*]

veg¹ (VEJ) *n* **1** A vegetable (1918 +) **2** A person lacking normal senses, responses, intelligence, *etc.* (1970s +)

veg² (VEJ) *v* (also **vedge** or **veg out**) To relax luxuriously and do nothing; vegetate; GOOF OFF, MELLOW OUT: *I'm going to vanish up to someplace beautiful and just veg for two solid days/ when you could*

escape from the world by vegging out in front of the tube [1980s +
College students; fr *vegetate*]

vegetable *n* A person lacking normal senses, responses, intelligence,
etc; BASKET CASE, GOMER, GORK, RETARD: *He was fine the first couple of years
of marriage, but then he turned into a vegetable*

vegetable patch *See* FRUIT SALAD

veggie modifier: a veggie pal of ours *n* **1** A vegetarian (1975 +) **2** A
person who relaxes and does nothing: *When I finish this paper, I'm
just going to be a veggie* (1980s + College)

veggies or vegies *n* Vegetables (1955 +)

vein *See* JAB A VEIN

velvet *n* Profit, esp an easy and unexpected profit; gambler's
winnings; money in general: *There are substantial money returns,
"velvet," for those who secure places* (1901 +) *See* BEGGAR'S VELVET, BLUE
VELVET, ON VELVET

vent *v* (also **ventilate**) To relieve one's feelings by vehement
expression; LET IT ALL HANG OUT: *Last year the critics vented madly about all
the great shows the networks killed/ Alvin ventilated, complaining
about the prosecutors, his business partners, the intolerance of his wife*
(1990s +)

ventilate *v* To shoot; PLUG [1875 +; fr the notion of letting air into
someone]

vent man *n phr* A homeless drifter who typically sleeps on the warm
sidewalk air-vents from subways and other underground places:

There are the bag ladies and the vent men (1970s +)

verbal (or oral) diarrhea *n phr* (also **diarrhea of the mouth**)

Logorrhea; uncontrollable loquaciousness: *You've got verbal diarrhea (1940s +)*

Veronica *n* A computer search tool (1990s + *Computer*)

verse *See* CHAPTER AND VERSE

vest *n* An important person; SUIT (1976 +) *See* PLAY CLOSE TO THE VEST

vet¹ modifier: *the vet producer of scouting plays* *n* A veteran, esp a former member of the armed forces: *I'm a combat vet (1869 +)*

vet² modifier *Veterinary: the vet school* *n* A veterinarian (1862 +) **v**
To examine closely; scrutinize critically: *Random House plans a review of its procedures for "vetting" or checking a book prior to publication/ The hosts are a carefully vetted collection of bubble brains (1904 +)* [verb sense fr the close examination of an animal by a veterinarian]

vette or **'vette** *n* A Corvette• car (1960s +)

V-girl *n* A woman who more or less freely made love to soldiers, sailors, etc, from patriotic motives [WWII; fr *victory girl*]

vibes¹ *n* A vibraphone or vibraharp (1937 + *Jazz musicians*)

vibes² or vibrations *n* What emanates from or inheres in a person, situation, place, etc, and is sensed; CHEMISTRY, Karma: *The vibes were good that morning for our reunion (1967 +)*

vic¹ *n* A convict (1925 + *Underworld*)

vic² n A victim; MARK, PATSY: *There were no “poppy loves” or “vics” in the car, no white people at all* **v 1** (also **scope a vic**) To look for someone to rob, mug, etc ² To steal: *I told them not to vic the car, because I knew they would get caught* **3** To cheat: *I was vicked by the people that gave me only one dollar for a tip (1960s + Black teenagers)*

vicious adj Excellent; superb; wonderfully attractive (1970s + Teenagers)

Victor Charlie n phr Vietcong; VC [Vietnam War armed forces; fr the military phonetic alphabet words for V and C]

vidaholic n An addict of television: *a lifelong vidaholic, the 33-year-old Simmons* [1970s +; fr *video* plus *-aholic*]

vidiot n A person addicted to television; VIDAHOLIC: *Daytime? That’s when you give America’s vidiots pure junk food (1980s +)*

vidkid n: *Even preadolescent vidkids fused like Krazy Glue to their Super Nintendo and Sega Genesis games, the training wheels of cyberpunk (1990s +)*

vig or vigorish or viggerish n Profits of a bookmaker, a usurer, a criminal conspirator, a casino, etc: *I’m not nailing you no vig for last week/ About 180 percent a year in interest, known in the trade as vigorish, vig, or juice* [1908 + fr gambling; probably fr Yiddish fr Russian *vyigrysh*, “profit, winnings”]

vig ounce n phr An ounce of narcotics; PIECE (1960 + Narcotics)

-ville See -SVILLE

vinegar See FULL OF PISS AND VINEGAR

vino or **veeno** (VEE noh) *n* Wine, esp red jug wine [1919+; fr Italian, “wine”]

vinyl modifier 1: *woman who rides the vinyl grooves* **2** Having to do with discotheques, the dancing done there, etc: *The only vinyl junkies were the nattily-suited variety* *n* Phonograph records; recording: *Now this disco graffiti has found its way to vinyl and created quite a bit of excitement* [1976+; fr the chemical material used for phonograph records, semantically analogous with earlier wax]

VIP (pronounced as separate letters) *n* A very important person; BIG SHOT (1933+)

viper *n* A marijuana dealer or user (1930s+ *Narcotics*)

vision *See* TUNNEL VISION

visit from Flo or **visitor** *n* The menstrual period (1980+)

visit from the stork *n phr* The birth of a baby

visiting fireman *n phr* An out-of-town visitor, esp a dignitary: *He meets a good many distinguished visiting firemen* [1926+; fr the earlier sense *fireman* or *fire maker*, “a Native American ceremonial dignitary who was responsible for lighting the fires”]

VJ *See* VEEJAY

vogue *v* To do the “voguing” dance or performance: *She vogueed in the West Village. Disappeared in San Diego with a porn filmmaker/commenced voguing official International Body-Building Federation poses. Such brazen posing! (1980s+)*

vogueing *n* To do a dance involving poses similar to glamour magazine models: *Vogueing, an unusual dance fad popular in New York's underground clubs (1980s +)*

volume *n* A dose or capsule of Valium™, a tranquilizer: *I'd take maybe five volumes in the morning (1970s +)*

vomity or **vomitrocious** *adj* So nasty as to cause one to vomit: *Gross and even grossening are out. Vomitrocious is in [1970s + ; longer form fr vomit plus (a)trocious]*

voomy *See* VA-VOOM

vote *v* To suggest what one wants: *I vote for BLTs for dinner (1814 +)*

vote with one's feet *v phr* To escape; become a refugee or emigrant: *Nearly three million people voted with their feet (1965 +)*

vroom or **varoom** *modifier* (also **vroom-vroom**): *if you drive a sporty, vroom-vroom model *n* The noise of a powerful car *v* To speed, esp in a roaring car: *as we vroomed up and down the Watchung Mountains (1967 +)**

W

wack or **whack** *adj* Worthless; stupid; “wimpish”: *You’ll have to deal with some really wack people* **n** 1 A crazy or eccentric person; NUT, SCREWBALL, WEIRDO: *Two wacks if I ever saw one/ a father who was so abrasive and married now to such a wack (1938 +)* 2 A drink of liquor 3 A blow or hit made at someone or something *See* WACKY

wack off *See* WHACK OFF

wacky or **whacky** *adj* (also **wacked-out** or **wacko** or **whacked** or **whacked-out**) Crazy; eccentric; NUTTY: *You think I’m going wacky?/ annually collects whacky accidents/ the most wacked-out cop game anybody had ever seen any cops play/ the wacked-out hustler who talks Winkler into running a call-girl service out of the morgue/ She tried to convert me to her religion! She was whacked [1935 + ; fr British dialect whacky, “fool,” attested fr the early 1900s; whacky, “a person who fools around,” is attested in British tailors’ talk fr the late 1800s; perhaps fr being whacked over the head too often; perhaps influenced by whack off “masturbate,” and semantically akin to jerk]*

-wacky combining word CRAZY, NUTTY: *car-wacky/ chick-wacky (mid-1940s +)*

wad **n** 1 A roll of money: *My grandmother’d just sent me this wad about*

a week before (1864 +) <2> An amount of semen: *shoot one's wad*

See SHOOT ONE'S LOAD, SHOOT ONE'S WAD

-wad combining word A disgusting or unpleasant person • Used as second formative in *dickwad*, *dipwad*, *dripwad*, *phlegmwad*, *jerkwad*, *scumwad*, and *tightwad*; *-wad* joins *-bag*, *-ball* and *-head* as very productive elements for forming insults [1980s+ & '90s teenagers; fr several sources: *wad* as defined above; *wad*, “an unattractive or unpopular person,” in late 1800s college slang; *wad*, “a quantum of semen,” fr 1920s; *wad*, “a mass or lump of something”; *wad*, “the male genitals,” recently attested but not widespread]

waddie or cow-waddie n A cowboy (*late 1800s +*)

wader See HIGH WATERS

waffle¹ n: *I was tired of all the candidates' waffle* **v** To speak or behave evasively; tergiversate; equivocate: *When asked for specifics, I demur, I waffle/ unlike the windy, waffling, anonymous editorial writers (1803 +)* [fr northern British dialect, “waver, fluctuate,” perhaps related to another dialect sense, “yelp, yap”]

waffle² v To trample viciously; STOMP: *No player called out at second threatened to waffle an umpire* [1970s+; fr *waffle-stompers*]

waffle-iron n A sidewalk grating

waffle-stompers n Heavy hiking boots; SHITKICKERS [1970s+; fr the pattern of the soles, which make a *waffle* like print]

wag See CHIN-WAG

wag one's chin v phr To talk: *to be seen waggin' your chin with a sleuth*

(1920+)

wagon *n* A naval vessel (*Navy fr WWI*) **See** COVERED WAGON, DEAD WAGON, DOG-WAGON, FALL OFF THE WAGON, FIX **someone's** WAGON, HONEY WAGON, MEAT WAGON, MILK WAGON, OFF THE WAGON, ON THE WAGON, PADDY WAGON, PIE WAGON, RUBBERNECK WAGON, SEX WAGON

wah-wah modifier: *Bypassing his vocal sounds through an amplifier with the aid of a wah-wah pedal, he has achieved spectacular effects/ Mike McCready's wah-wah pedaling?* **n** 1 A pronounced wavering, scooping sound from an instrument, the voice, etc: *imitations of animal sounds such as wah-wahs on trumpets and trombones/ Then Wah-Wah Waddy breaks into his best funkadelic solo (1920s + Musicians)* 2 A pedal-operated electronic device for producing wah-wahs, esp on electric guitars: *the same kind of highly-perfected control over use of the wah-wah, distortion, and amplifier [echoic; interestingly similar to Chinook jargon wawa, "speech, talk," and to Cree wawa, an echoic name for the snow goose, Canada goose, and gray goose]*

wail **v** 1 To play jazz well and feelingly: *We were wailing, but nobody had a tape machine (1930s + Jazz musicians)* 2 (also **whale**) To do very well; perform well (*1950s + College students fr cool talk fr jazz musicians*) [fr the notion of a well-performed blues number, with its melodious lamentations]

wailing or **whaling** **adj** Excellent; wonderful; GREAT (*1954 + Black musicians*)

waist **See** PANTYWAIST

wait up v phr To pause, when well ahead, for someone to overtake one • Often a panting request (1920s+)

wake up and smell the coffee (or something else) *sentence* Become aware before it's too late: *The legislators had better wake up and smell the coffee/ Why Bond Bulls Need to Wake Up, Smell the Coffee/ Wake up and smell where the money's going* (1990s+)

wake-up call n phr A summons to action; clarion call: *The vote should be taken as a wake-up call to the civil rights movement that it better reinvigorate its leadership/ I sure hope this hurricane is a wake-up call* (1970s+)

walk v 1 (also, earlier, **walk free**) To be released from prison (1970s+) **2** To be acquitted of or otherwise freed from a criminal indictment: *more killers walk because of the incompetence of arresting officers/ Actually, I'm gonna cop a plea. A \$15 fine and I'll walk* (late 1950s+) **3** (also, fr 1890s, **walk out**) To go out on strike: *Several more Caterpillar locals have decided to walk* (1970s+ *Labor unions*) **4** To leave someone, esp a spouse or lover; GET LOST, TAKE A HIKE: *She said if he didn't straighten out he could walk* **See** FRENCH WALK, TAKE A WALK, WIN IN A WALK

walk all over someone v phr To intimidate and maltreat someone [1890s+ College students; based on mid-1800s *walk over*]

walkaway or **walk over n** An easy victory; CINCH, PUSHOVER: *It looked like a walkover for Clarence/ The odds were on the Redskins in a walkaway*

walk away from v phr To turn one's back on; fail to respond to

when needed: *The offer promises motorists who switch to a Ford that they can walk away from the lease, no questions asked, after trying the car for six months (1960s+)*

walk away with v phr To win easily: *That year the Tigers walked away with the pennant (1899+)*

walk back v phr To reverse: *These may be developments we have to walk back (1990s+)*

walk back the cat v phr To reexamine a case to diagnose errors: *In walking back the cat to seek the genesis, do we exaggerate the human element? (1980s+ Espionage)*

walkboy n A good male friend; HOME BOY: *to groove on emotional intersubjectivication with a woman more than you groove on hanging with your walkboys (1970s+ Black)*

walker See HOT WALKER

walk heavy v phr To be important and influential; CLOUT *(1960s+ Black)*

walkie-talkie n A small and portable radio transmitter and receiver *(WWII Army)*

walk-in modifier: *He found a walk-in clinic just outside town n* A customer, patient, etc, who enters without an appointment: *Our hair-styling boutique welcomes walkins (1970s+)*

walking-around money n phr (also **street money**) Political petty cash used in promoting party candidates *(1970s+)*

walking papers (or ticket) n phr A dismissal or discharge; esp, a

rejection; PINK SLIP: *Two baseball veterans got their walking papers today (1820s +)* **See** GIVE someone HIS WALKING PAPERS

walking timebomb *n phr* A person who is likely to explode into violence [fr *timebomb*, an explosive device with the detonator set to go off]

walking wounded *n phr* Persons who are injured, esp in a psychological or spiritual way, but still functional; depressed people: *by the end of the year the salesmen are “walking wounded”, just plain going bonkers* [1960s +; fr a WWI military medical term for a *wounded* person who is ambulatory]

walk off with *v phr* To appropriate to oneself something lent or entrusted by another (1727 +)

walk-on modifier: *Since antiquity the figure of the black has played far more than a walk-on part in Western culture* *n* A very minor, usually nonspeaking, role; an insignificant or minimal sort of participation: *looking like last-minute walk-ons in the closing scene of “Götterdämmerung”* (1900 + *Theater*)

walk on *v phr* (also **step on**) To interfere with a radio transmission by transmitting at the same time (1970s + *Citizens band radio*)

walk on air *v phr* To be ecstatic: *for a week after the promotion she was walking on air* (1887 +)

walk on eggs or **thin ice** *v phr* To proceed very carefully; go gingerly and warily: *I always feel as if I’m walking on eggs around her/ walking on thin ice to criticize the government* (1859 +)

walk on water *v phr* To do miraculous things; emulate Jesus Christ:
Not everybody thinks Colin Powell walks on water (1970s +)

walkout *n* A strike: *There's a walkout at the supermarkets right now*
(late 1880s + Labor union)

walk out on someone or something *v phr* To abandon; TAKE A WALK: *She*
was fed up, and just walked out on the whole deal (1890s +)

walkover *See* WALKAWAY

walk soft *v phr* To behave quietly and peacefully; be modest: *I told*
him he was acting like an ass, and he walks a lot softer now (1960s +
Black)

walk Spanish *See* FRENCH WALK

walk the plank *v phr* To be destroyed or sacrificed; be fired:
Rostow's Deputy Walks the Plank; Rostow Hangs In/ If you don't have
the votes, you don't make your friends walk the plank [1835 +; fr the
pirate practice of forcing unwanted persons to walk out on a plank
and plunge into the sea]

walk the talk *v phr* To conform; not rock the boat; GO STRAIGHT: *asks a*
man or woman in prison fatigues if they intend "to walk the talk"
(1980s +)

walk the walk *v phr* WALK THE TALK: *the department is "walking the walk"*
of reengineering government (1980s +)

walk-through *n* A rehearsal, in the theater, sports, etc; DRY RUN
(1959 +)

walk through *v phr* To explain something carefully and gradually;

learn something by going slowly through the steps: *I'll walk you through it one more time; you nearly have it right* [mid-1800s + Theater; fr the practice of learning a role partly by moving about onstage without speaking the lines]

walk-up *n* A room, apartment, building, etc, without an elevator: *second-floor walk-ups above stores (1919+)*

wall *See* BALLS TO THE WALL, BOUNCE OFF THE WALLS, CLIMB THE WALL, DRIVE **someone** UP THE WALL, GO TO THE WALL, HOLE IN THE WALL, NAIL **someone** TO THE CROSS, OFF THE WALL, UP AGAINST THE WALL, UP THE WALL

wallbanger *n phr* **1** A dose or capsule of methaqualone; LUDE: *called wall bangers by the kids (1950s + Teenagers & narcotics)* **n 2** (also **Harvey Wallbanger**) A drink made of vodka or gin and juice (*late 1960s +*) [presumably fr the effect of the drug or potion on the consumer]

wallbangin' *n* Writing one's name on a wall as a form of personal advertising (*1990s + California street gangs*)

wallet biopsy (or **X-ray**) *n phr* Determination of who is to pay for medical services: *the first examination performed is a wallet biopsy/ We don't perform a wallet X-ray before giving treatment (1980s + Medical)*

wall-eyed *adj* Drunk (*1920s +*)

wallflower *n* A person, esp a woman, who is peripheral and uncourted at a dance, party, etc: *the homely and ugly girls who were called wallflowers (1820+)*

wallop *n* **1** A hard blow; a severe and resounding stroke: *She gave him a wallop on the chin* **2** Power; CLOUT, MOXIE: *She'd be good if she had a little more wallop* *v* **1**: *He walloped the ball right over the wall* **2** To defeat utterly; CLOBBER [1823 + ; fr British dialect, "beat, thrash," apparently fr Old Norman French *walop*, "gallop"] **See** CIRCUIT CLOUT

walloper **See** POT-WALLOPER

walloping *adj* Extreme; large: *walloping amount of chili*

wall-to-wall *adj* Total; all-encompassing: *a wall-to-wall nightmare in which society dissolves/ wall-to-wall hookers, niggers, and junkies/ It was wall-to-wall people* [1967 + ; fr the phrase *wall-to-wall carpeting*, found by 1953]

wally or **Wally** or **wallie** *n* **1** Stupid person; moron **2** An awkward person; KLUTZ **3** An unfashionable person: *The Arnolds call anyone who wears conventional clothes, a Wally* <4> The penis; DORK, PRICK: *No wonder men are in awe of their wallies. First thing in the morning, a penis is a pretty magnificent sight* [1990s + Students fr British rock groups; origin unknown; perhaps fr the nickname for Walter or Wallace, suggesting, as Clyde does, someone like a wally; perhaps, improbably, fr British *wally*, "pickle"; *wally* in current senses appears to be borrowed from British use; however, it is attested in the US in the early 1900s meaning "A small-town sport," and in 1915--22 in college (Bryn Mawr) and flapper slang meaning "a goof with patent-leather hair"]

walsy **See** PALSY-WALSY

Walter Mitty *n phr* An unimpressive person who regularly has

daydreams of glory: *Walter Cronkite is a Walter Mitty in reverse*
[1939 +; fr the title character in *The Secret Life of Walter Mitty*, a
story by James Thurber]

waltz *n* Something easily accomplished; CINCH, PIECE OF CAKE (1968 +) *v*
To move in a smooth, unhurried, yet sprightly manner: *Jesse James*
could have waltzed in there and carted off the patio furniture/ someone
waltzing into that wreck that we've grown old with searching (1862 +)

waltz someone **around** *v phr* To evade or deceive: *Have you been*
waltzing me around for three months (1950s +)

waltz off with *v phr* To take something away nonchalantly or with
ease: *waltzed off with the grand prize*

wambulance *n* A hypothetical rescue vehicle to spirit away someone
who whines and complains: *I'm calling the wambulance for that brat*

wampum *n* Money; cash; BREAD [1897 +; short for Algonquian
wampumpeag, “beads made from quahog shells and used as
money”]

◁**wang** or **whang** or **whanger**▷ *n* The penis; COCK, PRICK: *I can see your*
whang. Your dong is visible/ a trigger that was bigger than an
elephant's proboscis or the whanger of a whale [1935 +; probably fr
whangdoodle, “something of uncertain name, gadget”; many such
terms, like *diddlywhacker*, *dingus*, *doodle*, and *thingy*, are
euphemisms for the penis] **See** PULL ONE'S PUD

wang chung *n phr* Going out on the town; going out to have fun
[1983 +; fr song “Everybody Wang Chung Tonight” by the British
group Wang Chung]

wangdoodle *See* WHANGDOODLE

wangle *n*: *made a precise science out of the wangle* *v* To get or arrange by shrewd maneuvering; contrive cunningly: *President Truman has given Ching a free hand in trying to wangle agreements (1880s + British printers' slang)* [origin unknown; perhaps a form of waggles, "overcome, get the better of"; popularized by WWI soldiers]

wank *n* **1**: *He had a good wank as he watched her* **2** A contemptible person; GEEK, JERK, DORK: *He got what he wanted needed. Which was a little badoo-badoo. Ugh. Complete wank (1970 +)* *v* <1> (also **wank off**) To fondle one's own penis; JACK OFF, BEAT one's MEAT (*late 1940s + British*) **2** To have fun; PARTY, HAVE A BALL (*1990s + Canadian students*)

wanker *n* <1> A masturbator, either literally or figuratively; JERK-OFF: *There I was, this clubfooted wanker sitting on the organ seat/ all manner of artsy bubble-heads and academic wankers/ It was just wankers (late 1940s + chiefly British)* **2** A fun-loving person; PARTY ANIMAL (*1990s + Canadian students*) <3> The penis (*1990s + Students*) [origin unknown; perhaps fr British dialect *wank*, "a violent blow," and semantically analogous with *beat one's meat, whack off, pound one's peenie*, etc]

wanna *v phr* Want to: *I wanna get some ice cream* • Purposely mispronounced

wannabe or **wannabee** or **wannabe** or **wanta be** (WAW nuh bee) *n* Someone who aspires to be someone else, esp a star or hero: *Rambo Wannabe's/ A "poser" or a "wanta be" is someone who tries to be like*

someone else [1980s+ California surfers & black street gangs; fr imprecise or dialectal pronunciation of “*want to be*”]

want list *See* WISH LIST

want out v phr To want no association or involvement with: *want out of this stupid town*

war *See* HOT WAR, PSYWAR, SHOOTING WAR

warbler n A woman singer; CANARY [1946+; found by 1633 as “singer”]

war chest n A political campaign’s funding; also, an amount saved for a planned purchase or venture

ward heeler n phr A low-ranking associate or flunky of a political boss; a menial crony [1890+; fr *heeler*, “a loafer, one on the lookout for shady work”; in the 1870s the ward heeler was known simply as *heeler* or as *ward-bummer*]

wardrobe malfunction n phr An embarrassing display of a body part when clothing droops, falls, or is torn • Euphemistic: *Janet Jackson’s infamous wardrobe malfunction (2004+)*

wardrobing n The practice of purchasing clothing to be worn once and then returned for a refund: *finding ways to discourage wardrobing through the Internet*

warehouse n Any large, impersonal institution: *a warehouse for the elds (1970+)*

warhorse n A seasoned and reliable veteran; a grizzled doyen (1837+)

warm body *n phr* A person regarded as merely such, without individual qualities, virtues, vices, etc; an animate person who occupies space; CHAIR-WARMER: *I'll look you up if all I need is a warm body (1960s +)*

warm someone's ear *v phr* To talk insistently and passionately to someone, esp about scandals and the like

warmed over *adj phr* Derivative and only slightly changed; revived unimaginatively: *The president, he wrote, had "offered the poor the Protestant Ethic warmed over"/ out of the mouths of bunnies and gulls, some warmed-over Gibran (1970 +)* **See** LOOK LIKE DEATH WARMED OVER

warmer **See** BENCHWARMER, CHAIR-WARMER

warmer-upper *n* Something that warms or starts: *wonderful warmer-upper, four-button coat sweater/ Now try it as a warmer-upper*

warm fuzzy *n phr* **1** A compliment; a word of praise; also, such praise collectively; STROKE: *You need some warm fuzzy* **2** Pleasant feelings, esp when tinged with nostalgia: *This was the sort of evening that gave you the warm fuzzies, cherished memories, funny lines/ Although foster parenting can provide plenty of warm fuzzies, the job is always challenging [1970s + ; probably fr the notion of a snuggling small animal, like Charles Schulz's warm puppy]*

warm spit **See** NOT WORTH A BUCKET OF WARM SPIT

warm the bench *v phr* To be held in reserve (1907+ *Sports*)

warm up *v phr* To do exercises and preparatory maneuvers before some activity, esp some sports effort (1868+ *Sports*)

warm someone up v phr To induce a receptive and approving attitude in someone, esp by joking and cajoling: *The second banana warmed the audience up before the star appeared (1950s +)*

Warner See MARY WARNER

warp See TIME WARP

war paint n phr Cosmetics [1869 +; fr the facial paint worn by Native American warriors]

warped adj 1 Very odd; eccentric: *warped sense of humor 2*
Intoxicated by drugs; BENT

warp factor n phr A very large factor of multiplication; a high exponent: *We feel it won't increase by warp factor five, either* [1970s +; fr the notion of *warp speed*, a velocity greater than the speed of light, popularized in science fiction and especially by the TV series *Star Trek*; it is necessary to imagine such enormous speeds in order to keep fictional cosmic travel more or less in the realm of the humanly compassable] **See** TIME WARP

warrior See SUNDAY SOLDIER

wart n A flaw; an imperfection: *The new format has some warts, but no integrity warts* [probably from *warts and all*] **See** WORRYWART

warts and all n phr The accurate totality of someone or something, including the imperfections: *Audiences hearing the local orchestra week after week hear it with warts and all/ Your friends see Doherty, warts and all/ Lyndon Johnson, warts and all* [1763 +; fr the putative remark of Oliver Cromwell to his portraitist Peter Lely:

“Remark all these roughnesses, pimples, warts, and everything as you see me”]

war zone *n* A situation or place where there is fighting or crime, such as a rough neighborhood: *the war zone of Bridgeport*

was *See* BE, NEVER-WAS

wash *n* **1** A drink to follow another, to wash it down; CHASER: *What for a wash? (1950s +)* **2** An elaborate justification; WHITEWASH: *It looked like a wash to me (1950s +)* **3** A balance between opposing values, cases, effects, etc; a moot situation; STANDOFF, a TOSS-UP: *The net effect of the medical testimony was a wash/ I'd have to go to bed at the same time as my 6-year-old. So it's pretty much a wash/ the Ferraro factor. Was it a political plus, a minus, a wash? (1870s + Stock market)* **v** To prove acceptable; bear testing • Usually in the negative: *Well, it just won't wash/ The stereotype of gay males as child molesters just doesn't wash any more/ That washes. I'll buy it (1849 +)* [verb sense said to be fr a defective printed calico that could not be washed; third noun sense perhaps fr the notion that equal opposing elements wash each other out or away, or *wipe the slate clean*] *See* HANG OUT THE WASH, WHITEWASH

wash (or air) one's dirty linen **v phr** (Variation: **in public** may be added) To talk or argue about intimate matters in public [1867 +; probably a translation of earlier French *Il faut laver ton linge sale en famille*]

washed out *modifier* Extremely tired; exhausted: *washed out from all this work*

washed up or **all washed up** *adj phr* No longer valid or active as a performer, competitor, worker, etc; AUSGESPIELT, FINISHED: *I'm all washed up/ Borden is all washed up* [1923+ Theater; fr the notion of *washing up* one's hands at the finish of a job or a day's work]

washing *n* A technique of evading surveillance by taking an absurdly indirect route from one place to another (1990s+ *Police*)

wash someone's **mouth out with soap** *v phr* To punish someone for using offensive language: *Ma Gingrich ought to wash Newtie's mouth out with soap. He owes the First Lady big time* (1920s+)

washout *n* **1** A failure; a total fiasco; FLOP: *I'm afraid our big birthday bash was a washout* **2** A student pilot or aviation cadet who fails to complete the course and become a qualified pilot: *the major cause for the large number of "washouts"* [WWI British military; origin unknown; perhaps because the student's name was *washed* or scrubbed from the roster]

wash out *v phr* **1** To fail, esp to fail to finish a pilot-training course and be qualified: *Then I was washed out on a slight technicality (WWI flyers)* **2** To eliminate or cancel; SCRATCH, SCRUB **3** To lose all one's money; TAP OUT: *hustlers who really knew how to gamble. I always got washed out* (1900s+)

WASP or **wasp** *adj*: *Westchester and Darien and places like that, WASP country* *n* A person of non-minority or nonethnic background, ancestry, etc, as conceived in the United States; a White Anglo-Saxon Protestant: *The Republican Party is run largely by "wasps"* (1962+ *Sociologists*) [said to have been coined by the Philadelphia

author E Digby Baltzell]

waspish *adj* Dominated by and characteristic of WASPs: *This town is naughty and waspish and expensive*

waste *v* **1** To defeat utterly; trounce, beat up; CLOBBER (*Teenagers fr 1950s + Street gang*) **2** To wreck; destroy; mutilate; TRASH: *Stallone wastes everything in his path (1450 +)* **3** To kill; BLOW someone AWAY, TAKE someone or something OUT (1964 +)

wasted *adj* **1** Penniless; BROKE (1950s + *Cool talk*) **2** Intoxicated by narcotics or alcohol; STRUNG OUT: *Everybody was getting kind of high on acid, wasted, in fact (1950s + Narcotics & cool talk)* **3** Exhausted; POOPED (*mid-1950s +*) **4** Wrecked; ruined; destroyed: *Like, I'm wasted. I can't lose no more (late 1950s +)*

watch *See* GRAVEYARD WATCH, ON someone's WATCH

watcher *See* CLOCK-WATCHER

watch it *interj* Be careful; look out (1916 +)

watch one's **mouth** *v phr* To be careful of what one says, esp to stop being provocative, obscene, presumptuous, etc • Often an irritated command: *Watch your mouth, white boy (1970s +)*

watch or **read my lips** *sentence* **1** Listen very carefully to me :*Hey, watch my lips. You. Me. Her. That's it (1970s + Army)* **2** Do you read lips? [second sense is a euphemism for a silently spoken obscenity or insult]

watch the submarine races *v phr* To do sex play in a parked car [1980s + Teenagers; fr the fact that no submarine races are in

progress to be watched]

watch this space *sentence* Wait for further developments to be announced [1917 +; orig a note to look regularly at a particular portion of a newspaper for future announcements]

water *See* COME HELL **or** HIGH WATER, CUT OFF **someone's** WATER, DEAD IN THE WATER, FIREWATER, HIGH WATERS, HOLD **one's** WATER, HOT WATER, IN DEEP WATER, IN HOT WATER, JERKWATER, LONG DRINK OF WATER, ON THE WAGON, SUCK CANAL WATER, TEST THE WATERS

water-cooler story *n phr* A piece of gossip; LATRINE RUMOR (1990s +)

waterfront *See* COVER THE WATERFRONT

watering hole (or spot) or waterhole *n phr* or *n* A bar; a saloon; a drinking place: *That place is the waterhole of choice for aspiring actors/ a posh watering hole on Madison Avenue/ gathering for the school's alums and their friends at selected watering spots (1960s +)*

water wagon *See* ON THE WAGON

waterworks *See* TURN ON THE WATERWORKS

wave, the *n phr* A stadium demonstration in which sections of spectators successively stand up and sit in synchronism, for no apparent reason (1980s + *Sports fans*)

wavelength *See* ON THE SAME WAVELENGTH

wave-maker *n* A person who raises questions, imposes difficulties and objections, etc: *said that he is a wave-maker whose troubles arose from his insistence on injecting moral values [1960s +; perhaps from an old joke in which a set of persons in hell, immersed up to their mouths in feces, are heard to chant "Don't make waves," very*

melodiously]

waver *See* FLAG-WAVER, SKIVVY-WAVER

wax *n*: *Play the tune and cut a wax of it* **v** **1** To defeat; outdo; BEAT, CLOBBER, ZAP (1884 +) **2** To assault and maul; injure or kill: *I've always got a few bucks to wax Red Gs (1884 +)* **3** (also **put on wax**) To make a phonograph recording; record: *Louis Armstrong waxed "Beale Street Blues"/ put the Stone Age stuff of jazz on wax (1920s + Jazz musicians)* [the origin of the violent senses is unknown; perhaps semantically analogous with *polish off*, referring to wax as a polish; recording senses fr the material used, as *vinyl* was used later] *See* the WHOLE BALL OF WAX

way *adv* Very; extremely; absolutely; TO THE MAX: *one of the way coolest in the US (1980s +)* **affirmation** Yes; on the contrary • Used as a response to the negative "No way!" (1990s +) [the intensifier may have developed from *all the way*, attested along with *way*, both meaning "very" in prison slang of the 1980s] *See* BEAT **one's way**, the FRENCH WAY, GO OUT OF **one's way**, GO THE LIMIT, the GREEK WAY, the HARD WAY, IN A BIG WAY, KNOW **one's way around**, NOT A ONE-WAY STREET, NO WAY, RUB **someone** THE WRONG WAY, THERE'S NO WAY

way it plays, the **adv phr** According to the usual pattern: *The way it plays in there, you can't plead the Fifth* **n phr** The usual pattern; what is to be expected: *Well, I guess that's the way it plays when you get old*

way off (base) modifier Not even close to correct; on the wrong path: *way off on your account of what happened*

way out **adj phr** **1** Imaginative; original and bold, esp successfully

and admirably so (1940s + *Jazz musicians*) 2 Excellent; wonderful;

FAR OUT, GREAT, OUT OF SIGHT (1950s + *Cool talk fr jazz musicians*) 3

Intoxicated with narcotics; HIGH, OUT OF IT (1960s + *Narcotics*)

[probably fr earlier *out of this world* or *out of sight*]

ways *See* FORTY WAYS TO SUNDAY, HAVE IT BOTH WAYS, SWING BOTH WAYS, WORK BOTH WAYS

way the ball bounces (or the cookie crumbles) *See* THAT'S THE WAY THE BALL BOUNCES

way to go sentence You are doing extremely well; that is splendid •

An exclamation of praise and encouragement: *Ron, stick that old hand out. Way to go, Prez* [a shortening of *that's the way to go*]

way to run a railroad, the wrong *n phr* (Variations: **a hell of a** or **a stupid** or **what a** or other deprecativ modifiers may precede way) Not the best way to do something: *Mfunne blasted the White House for not including the Black Caucus in the formulation of policy: "This isn't any way to run a railroad"/ Arafat's flawed technique in governing Jericho and Gaza is an awful way to run a railroad* (1980s +)

wazoo *n* The buttocks; anus; ASS [1970s + ; perhaps a variant of *kazoo*]

weak sister *n phr* An unreliable person, esp a male (1857 +)

◁**weapon**▷ *n* The penis (1000 +)

wear a wire *v phr* To be fitted with a concealed listening or recording device: *And wear a hidden tape recorder, what do they call it? Wear a wire* (1950s +)

wear cement shoes v phr To be killed and disposed of by the crime syndicate, esp by being sunk in the water (1990s +)

wear goat's horns v phr To be responsible for a defeat or other misfortune: *did miss three free throws and came close to wearing goat's horns* (1980s +)

wearies, the n phr Fatigue and depression; ennui: *I'm getting the evening wearies*

wear the pants (or trousers or britches) v phr To be the dominant one in a marriage, household, etc • Nearly always said of a woman [1931 +; *wear the breeches* can be traced to the 1400s in a French version (*braies*) and to the 1500s in English]

wear two hats v phr To have two separate jobs or functions • The phrase may specify more than two hats: *three hats, several hats: Each of these men wears two hats: one as topbraid officer, the other as a member of the Joint Chiefs/ Rockefeller to Wear Two Hats* (1966 +)

weasel n: Little Joe turned weasel v 1 To evade and equivocate; use deceptive language; deceive: *They told the candidate to stop weaseling and get to the substance/ I was trying to weasel some bank from you* (1956 +) **2** To inform; SING, SQUEAL (1920s + *Underworld*) [the first verb sense is said to be based on the *weasel's* habit of sucking the meat or substance from an egg, leaving only the shell; the other senses reflect the more general nasty reputation of the *weasel*, which has meant “contemptible person” since at least the 1500s]

weasel out v phr To withdraw from or evade, esp a promise or

obligation, in a sneaky, underhanded way: *I coulda cut them loose, coulda made some excuse, even coulda weaseled out* (1956 +)

weasel words *n phr* Language designed to deceive; empty talk; self-serving verbiage [1900 + ; words as empty as an eggshell that a *weasel* has sucked]

web-foot *modifier* Devoted to and advocating preservation of the environment: *Anyone favoring the bottle bill must be a web-foot conservationist* [1970s + ; presumably fr the notion that lovers of wildlife are thus adapted to walking about in swamps; similar to *web-foot*, “a native of the wet state of Oregon,” and British “a dweller in the fens of East Anglia”]

wedding *See* MILITARY MARRIAGE, SHOTGUN WEDDING

wedged *adj* Behaving as if frozen; not responding to the keyboard (1980s + *Computers*)

wedgie or **wedgy** *n* The prank of pulling the underwear upward from behind by the waistband; MELVIN, MURPHY: *the impression of leaping through the camera lens and giving the viewers a wedgie/ by pulling up their underpants to give them “wedgies”* [1970s + Children; presumably fr *wedging* the underpants between the buttocks]

weed *n* **1** (also **the weed**) Tobacco (1606 +) **2** A cigar, esp an inferior one: *Throw that weed away and have a good one* (1847 +) **3** (also **the weed**) A marijuana cigarette; JOINT (1920s + *Narcotics*)

See REEFER

weeder *n* A difficult college course that weeds out weaker students

weedhead *n* A user of marijuana; POTHEAD (1960s + *Narcotics*)

weeds *n* Clothing, esp for mourning (1362 +)

weed tea *n phr* Marijuana (1920s + *Narcotics*)

wee hours *n phr* The hours just after midnight: *the story of what happened in the wee hours of Dec 2, 1985* [1890s + fr Scottish; Scottish *wee sma' hours* is attested in the late 1700s]

week *See* KNOCK someone INTO THE MIDDLE OF NEXT WEEK

weekend warrior *See* SUNDAY SOLDIER

weenie (also **weeny** or **weinie** or **weeney** or **wienie**) *modifier*:

You'd never know that weenie voice belonged to a gorilla **n 1** (also **wiener** or **weener**) A frankfurter; HOT DOG: *this wienie and kraut combination* (1911 +) **2** (also **wiener** or **weener**) The penis; esp, the relaxed penis **3** (also **weeniehead** or **weiner-head**) An ineffectual, despised person; JERK, WIMP: *She plans to be a weenie, is a weenie, asks to be loved anyway, and is loved anyway/ Anybody who zips their coat when the temperature is higher than zero is an automatic weenie* (1960s +) **4** (also **ween**) A very serious student; *Greasy Grind*, THROAT: *Premeds known to their less pressurized campus colleagues as throats and weenies/ Weens are strange creatures with pallid faces, glassy eyes, and calculators strapped to their belts* (1970s + *College students*) [fr German *Wienerwurst*, "Vienna sausage," with pejorative senses developing fr its penile shape] *See* PLAY HIDE THE WEENIE

weenie bin *n phr* An academic library carrel, where a serious student spends time studying (1970s + *College students*)

weenie-wagger or **wienie-wagger** *n* A male who exposes his genitals; FLASHER (1980s + *Police*)

weensy *See* TEENSY-WEENSY

weep *See* READ 'EM AND WEEP

weeper or **weepie** *n* A sentimental or otherwise tearful movie, play, etc; TEAR-JERKER: *It was the weepers that established her as a top Hollywood star/ The daytime weepies have been greatly enriched by a new soap opera (1940s +)*

weevil *See* BOLL WEEVIL

wee-wee modifier: *the Cuomo family dog and her controversial weewee pads* *n* **1**: *specimen of wee-wee* **2** The penis **v** To urinate [1930 + ; perhaps a euphemism for the euphemism *pee-pee* for *piss*, used in talking to small children]

weigh in **v phr** To make a contribution to something, esp to a debate, quarrel, etc; present an addition: *Ellen Goodman and Meg Greenfield also weighed in with women's rights polemics* [1909 + ; perhaps fr the formal *weighing in* of a prizefighter before a match; perhaps fr the notion of bringing weight to bear]

weight *n* The amount of narcotics an addict needs for a week: *I'm going up there to give her her weight for the week, you know (1960s + Narcotics)* *See* CARRY A LOT OF WEIGHT, THROW one's WEIGHT AROUND

weight man *n phr*: *Inside the drug house worked three "servers" and a "weight man" who packaged the cocaine, according to police (1990s + Narcotics)*

weird *adj* Excellent; wonderful; COOL [1940s+ Bop talk & cool talk; also attested as 1920s British upper-class use]

weirdo or **weirdie** or **weirdy** *n* A very strange, eccentric, repellent person; BIRD, CREEP, GEEK: *He's a weirdy, all right* [1955+; *weirdie* is attested from 1894, but was probably Scots dialect]

weird out *v phr* To become or make hallucinatory or intoxicated; to feel a loss of reality because of a strange experience: *Talk to me. I'm weirding out/ You're weirding me out already, Dag*

welcome to the club *sentence* Now you have joined me in adversity; now you see how badly things turn out: *So you've been fired? Welcome to the club, old buddy* (1970s+)

◁**welldigger's ass**▷ *See* COLD AS HELL

well-heeled *adj* **1** Having much money; rich: *the average, fairly well-heeled, middle-aged American male* (1897+) **2** Well-armed: *He's always well-heeled* (1873+)

◁**well-hung**▷ *adj* Having large genitals: *Death takes the innocent young. And those who are very well hung/ A guy with 640K of RAM is the electronic equivalent of well-hung* (1611+)

well-oiled *adj* Drunk: *He happened to be well-oiled, as was usually the case* (1900s+)

well told *See* FUCKING WELL TOLD

welsh or **welch** *n*: *Link can't take a welsh, so he looks around for a way to get his dough* *v* To default on or evade an obligation, esp paying a gambling debt: *Say, are you going to welsh on me?/ Some American*

officials feel that the Syrians welshed on their promise (1857+)
[apparently fr the same bigoted stereotype of the *Welsh* reflected in the English nursery rhyme “Taffy was a Welshman, Taffy was a thief,” although perhaps a borrowing of German *Welsch*, “foreigner”]

West *See* MAE WEST

western or **Western** *n* A book, movie, etc, about the Old West
(1909+) *See* SPAGHETTI WESTERN

wet *adj* **1** Permitting or advocating the sale of liquor: *This is a wet county (1870+)* **2** Inferior, feeble; stupid and unappealing; WIMPISH: *A man is “wet” if he isn’t a regular guy (1916+)* **3** Bloody; gory: *He’s criminally liable even if Willoughby did the wet work (1970s+ Police)* **4** Sexually aroused: *Simon is a smoothie who likes to woo women with fast rides: “The ‘vette gets ‘em wet”/ Elvis dreamed of belting “All Shook Up” for strange, wet women (1940s+)* *See* ALL WET, GET ONE’S FEET WET

◁**wetback**▷ *n* A Mexican who enters the US illegally, esp as a migratory worker • The term may be generalizing to include all illegal immigrants: *An American’s as good as a wetback, who is a Mexican whom we don’t know how he got here [1929+; fr the fact that they get their backs wet in wading across the Rio Grande; the terms wet pony, wet cow, etc, were used earlier for animals brought illegally across the border]*

wet behind the ears *See* NOT DRY BEHIND THE EARS

wet blanket *n phr* A person who dampens and smothers all

enthusiasm; a person who prevents fun; a pessimist; KILLJOY, PARTY-
POOPER (1879+)

◁**wet deck**▷ *n phr* A woman, often a prostitute, who does serial sex
acts (1940s+)

wet dream *n phr* A male's erotic dream during which he has an
orgasm (1851+)

wet hen *See* MAD AS A WET HEN

wet noodle *n* A naysayer; WIMP: *being a wet noodle about the concert*

wet one *n* A cold beer: *could use a wet one after the dig*

wetware *n* The human brain: *Slip a microchip into snug contact with
your gray matter (a.k.a. wetware)/ wetware: the human brain and its
DNA code (1980s+ Computer)*

wet one's whistle *v phr* To have a drink, esp of liquor [late 1300s+;
Chaucer says of a drunken miller's comely wife: "Her pretty whistle
was well wetted"]

whack *n* **1** A hit; blow: *to explore their manhood and give and take a
few whacks (1737+)* **2** A try; BASH, CRACK, SHOT: *He was given a whack at
drama reviewing (1891+)* **3** WACK *v* **1** To strike; hit (1721+) **2** (also
whack out) To kill; execute, gangland style: *the lieutenant took it
personal when they whacked the witness (1980s+ Mobsters)* **3** (also
wack) To dilute a narcotic; cut a narcotic (1960s+ *Narcotics*)
[probably echoic; in second verb sense, the use of *whacks*, "any
form of force," is attested among Chicago gunmen in 1932] *See*

HAVE A CRACK AT **something**, OUT OF WHACK, WACK

whacked or **whacked out** *adj* Exhausted; tired out; BEAT, BUSHED, POOPED:
You were whacked-out. Want to take a hot shower? (1919+)

whacking *adj* Very big; WHOPPING: *After that she got a whacking big raise (1806+)*

◁**whack (or wack) off**▷ *v phr* To masturbate; JERK OFF [1960s+; one of the many terms equating masturbation with *banging, beating, or pounding*]

whack out *v phr* To lose all one's money; GO BROKE, TAP OUT (1950s+ *Gambling*)

whacky *See* WACKY

whale¹ *n* A large or fat person; BEACHED WHALE (1900+)

whale² *n* A heavy blow: *She gave him a hard whale to the nose v 1* To hit; thrash; trounce: *They whaled us six-zip/ She hauled off and whaled him a shrewd blow (1790+)* **2** (also **wail**) To do extremely well; excel (1980s+ *Students*) [fr British dialect spelling of *wale*, "strike, beat," perhaps related to Old English *wæl*, "slaughter, carnage, death"]

whale away *v phr* To attack or do something vigorously and persistently: *I was whaling away at the cleaning job/ He's best when he's whaling away at the other candidates (1897+)*

whale into (or on) someone or something *v phr* To attack vigorously: *He'd barely met me when he whaled into me for not answering his letter/ Instead of whaling on the ball, Agassi should hit low, dipping topspin returns (1790+)*

whale of a someone or something, a **n phr** An excellent or large example; a very superior specimen: *That woman is a whale of a politician* [1900 + Students; fr the prodigious size of the *whale*]

whale (or wail) on something or someone **v phr** **1** To perform extremely well **2** To criticize severely; denigrate; CLOBBER: *and he just wailed on a chunk of code Michael had written* (1980s + Students)

whaling **n** A beating (1852 +) **See** WAILING

wham **interj** (also **whammo**) An exclamation signaling the suddenness, violence, surprise, etc, of a quick, sharp blow: *Wham! suddenly the meaning hit me/ And then—whammo—she was blindsided* (1932 +) **v** To hit; strike; SOCK: *And the whamming continues* [1925 +; echoic, and related in sound symbolism to *whip, whale, whack, whomp, whop*, and other *wh-* words denoting blows]

wham-bam (or **ram-bam** or **slam-bam**) **thank you ma'am** **n phr** A very quick sex act, esp a casual coupling: *And short it was: a regular “wham, bam, thank you, Ma’am”/ He’s not a wham bam thank you ma’am, he’s a thriller/ They’re more slam-bam-thank-you-ma’am type guys* (WWII armed forces)

whambang **adj** Huge; loud and vigorous; WHOPPING (1950s +)

whammy, the **n phr** The evil eye; a crippling curse; HEX, the Indian Sign: *with a whammy of ordinary indebtedness over his head* [1932 +; origin unknown; popularized in the comic strip “Li’l Abner” by Al Capp, beginning in 1941, where a character named Evil-Eye Fleegle can paralyze with a stare; the dated example is spelled *wami*] **See** DOUBLE WHAMMY, TRIPLE WHAMMY

whams *See* the WHIM-WHAMS

whang *v* To hit; WHAM: *She whanged him a shrewd one (1684 +)* *See*
WANG

whangdoodle or **wangdoodle** or **wingdoodle** *n* An unspecified or unspecifiable object; something one does not know the name of or does not wish to name; GIZMO, THINGAMAJIG: *Push in this dingus, step on this wingdoodle* [1931 +; fr mid-1800s sense, “a mythical beast of strange but indefinite traits”]

whanger *See* WANG

whankster (also **wankster**, **whangster**, **wangster**) *n* A pretend or wannabee gangster [probably fr *white* and *gangster*]

whassit *n* An unnamed or unspecified thing [1931 +; casual pronunciation of *whatsit* (what is it)]

what *See* SAY WHAT

what are you giving me? *sentence* What kind of nonsense are you asking me to believe?: *What are you giving me? Don't try to bullshit a bullshitter (1880s + Western)*

whatchamacallit or **what-you-may-call-it** or **what-d'ye-call-it** (WHUT • CAWL it) *n* An unspecified or unspecifiable object; something one does not know the name of or does not wish to name; GIZMO, THINGAMAJIG: *lady in a robe and a white whatchamacallit around her head appeared* [1920 +; *what-d'ye-call-it* is attested from 1573, and *what-ye-call-'em* as London slang in 1710]

what crawled up your ass or **what crawled up your ass and died**

sentence What is troubling you? (1990s + Students)

what do you say sentence How are you? how have things been?:

What do you say, Ed? Long time no see (1900s + Western)

what else is new See SO WHAT ELSE IS NEW

whatever adv Perhaps; possibly • Often a reply to an unanswerable question, with the force of “Could be” or “We’ll see”: *Well, whatever. The point was, he was dead/ Which I can do on my own, or whatever* [1900 +; perhaps a shortening of *whatever’s fair*, attested in 1960 student use]

whatever turns you on or whatever floats your boat sentence

Enjoy whatever you enjoy; *chacun à son goût: You listen to Russ Limburger? Whatever turns you on/ So do I, but there isn’t a wrong way or a right way to do either. Whatever floats your boat, Anatole* (1980s +)

what for n phr A drubbing, either physical or verbal; a thrashing; severe punishment: *a sadistic desire to watch the big shots get what for* [1873 +; fr the startled question *what for? why?* asked by someone being assaulted] **See** GIVE SOMEONE WHAT FOR

what gives sentence 1 What is going on? WHAT’S UP: *What gives, I asked*

her **2** How are you? how have things been with you? WHAT DO YOU SAY

3 What is wrong? I do not understand: *“What gives?” he croaked in an annoyed tone* • Since the early 1960s, this sense is often referred to a person: “What gives with Joe?”; and is often an exasperated inquiry: “What’s bothering you? Why are you behaving this way?” [1940 +; a translation of Yiddish or German *was gibt*, “what’s going

on”]

what goes around comes around *sentence* 1 Retribution follows wrongdoing; justice may take time, but it will prevail: “*What goes around comes around,*” Young said/ Always remember this, what goes around comes around 2 Things have a tendency to recur: So once again in the world of music, everything that goes around comes around (1970s+ Black)

what one is driving at *n phr* What one means; what one is trying to say: *The persons may know what you are driving at* (1762+)

what it takes *n phr* The desirable strength, character, appeal, etc: *I wonder if he has what it takes to get this job done* (1929+)

what makes someone tick (or run) *n phr* Someone’s motives, inner psychology, system of principles, etc: *It’s the gambling instinct that makes me tick/ What Makes Sammy Run?* [1947+; fr the analogy of human motivation with the mechanism of a clock]

whatnot *n* An unnamed or unspecified thing (1964+)

what say *sentence* SAY WHAT, WHAT DO YOU SAY (1825+)

what’s been shaking *See* WHAT’S SHAKING

what’s buzzin’, cousin *sentence* What is happening? WHAT’S COOKING (1930s+ Jive talk)

what’s cooking or what cooks *sentence* 1 What is happening? WHAT’S GOING DOWN: *What cooks, Jimmy?/ “What’s cooking?,” I asked Cardoza* (1930s+ Jive talk) 2 How have you been? WHAT DO YOU SAY

what’s eating (or what’s got into) someone *sentence* What is

troubling someone; why is someone behaving this way; WHAT'S WITH someone: *What's eating you today? I can't get a civil word from you (first form 1893 +, second 1876 +)*

what's going down *sentence* What is happening? WHAT'S COOKING
(1940s + *Black*)

what she wrote *See* THAT'S ALL SHE WROTE

what's-his-name *n* (Variations: **her** or **its** or **your** may replace **his**; **face** or <ass> may replace **name**) An unspecified or unspecifiable person or thing; someone or something one does not know or remember the name of or does not wish to name; WHOOZIS: *What did old what's-his-face have to tell you?/ But aren't you afraid you're going to get on Professor What's-Her-Face's shit list (first form 1757 +)*

what's-it or *whatsis* or *whatzis* (WHUT sit, -səs) ***n*** An unspecified or unspecifiable object; something one does not know the name of or does not wish to name; DINGUS, THINGAMAJIG: *the world's tallest free-standing what's-it/ What's that *whatsis* he's playing with? (1882 +)*

what's it to you *sentence* It's none of your business; don't butt in:
What's it to you if I want to go? (1896 +)

what's shaking or what's been shaking *sentence* What is happening? WHAT'S GOING DOWN: *Hello, what's shakin'?* [1950s + *Jazz musicians; perhaps fr an analogy between *shaking* and being vigorously alive; the *shake* was a jazz dance known fr about 1900]*

what's the big idea *sentence* Why are you being so presumptuous, aggressive, etc? account for your behavior at once (1917 +)

what's the good word *sentence* How are things going with you?
what have you to tell me about yourself? • A cordial greeting
(1920s +)

what's the haps *sentence* What is happening? WHAT'S GOING DOWN, WHAT'S
THE SCAM (1990s + Teenagers)

what's the scam *sentence* What is the latest information? (1960s +)

what's up or wass up *sentence* What is happening? what is the
matter, question, problem, etc? (1881 +)

what's what *n phr* The current state of reality; basic truth (1553 +)

what's with someone or something *sentence* 1 What is the problem,
difficulty, etc?: *What's with this guy? All I did was say hello* 2 What is
the explanation? why is this?: *What's with the free food? Explain*
[late 1930s +; fr Yiddish *vos iz mit*, "what is with"]

what (in) the devil? *interj* What has happened? What is going on?

what the doctor ordered *See* JUST WHAT THE DOCTOR ORDERED

what the hell (or hey) *interj* 1 (also <what the fuck>) An
exclamation of surprise, puzzlement, resentment, etc: *What the hell!*
Who does this clown think he is, anyhow?/ Is five successive base hits
enough? Let's make it seven, what the hey/ What the fuck, Boyce!
(1872 +) 2 (also **what the hay**) An exclamation of resignation,
acceptance, etc: *What the hell, it isn't the greatest, but it'll do*
(1872 +) ***n phr*** (also <what the fuck> or **what in hell**) What? •
Lengthened for emphasis and euphony: *What the hell do you think*
you're doing?/ So what the fuck is this about? (1836 +)

what the Sam Hill *interj* WHAT THE HELL • A euphemistic form (1927+)

what-you-may-call-it *See* WHATCHAMACALLIT

what you see is what you get *sentence* The situation, thing, person, etc, is precisely as it appears to be; no trickery, decoration, glowing promises, etc, are involved here [1980s+; probably fr the supposed statement of a salesperson both assuring and warning a customer about the wares]

whatzis *See* WHAT'S-IT

whee *n* Urine; PISS, WHIZZ: *that will scare the whee out of you* [1980s+; probably fr *wee-wee*]

wheel *See* BIG WHEEL, INVENT THE WHEEL, REINVENT THE WHEEL

wheel and deal *v phr* To make many and frequent arrangements and agreements, esp in business and aggressively [1950s+; perhaps fr the baseball phrase describing a pitcher's windup and throw]

wheeler *See* EIGHTEEN-WHEELER, FOUR-WHEELER, SIDE-WHEELER

wheeler-dealer *n* A person who wheels and deals; BIGTIME OPERATOR, Ganze Macher (1950s+)

wheelhouse *n* A batter's preferred hitting zone over the plate; KITCHEN [1959+ Baseball; probably fr the controlling prominence of the *wheelhouse* on a river-boat or a ship]

wheelie *n* 1 A riding on the rear wheel only, with the front wheel raised off the ground (1960s+ *Motorcyclists & bicyclists*) 2 To ride a skateboard on one pair of wheels (1970s+ *Skateboarders*) ***See*** POP A
WHEELIE

wheeling *See* FREE-WHEELING

wheel man *n phr* The driver of a car used in a robbery or other criminal endeavor: *Like, I'm a pretty good wheel man, you know what I mean? (1930s + Underworld)*

wheels *n* 1 The legs: *His wheels are good. His arm is probably better than it was/ even the veiny old wheels (1940s +)* 2 A car: *He tried to convince them that their wheels belonged to someone else (1950s + Hot rodders)* *See* SET OF WHEELS, SHIT ON WHEELS

wheels fall off, the *sentence* Trouble breaks out; a fearful crisis ensues; things turn nasty; the SHIT HITS THE FAN: *We were in good shape until that play, and then the wheels kind of fell off (1990s +)*

wheeze *n* An old joke; CHESTNUT: *even remembered a wheeze I pulled/ this tired little wheeze [1864 + ; origin unknown; perhaps fr a wheezing delivery used by clowns in telling jokes; the earliest attested use refers to a circus clown's joke]*

when (or if) push comes to shove *modifier* At a time when a situation worsens or intensifies: *if push comes to shove, I will help out*

when the balloon goes up *adv phr* When war, action, etc, begins [Army fr WWI British Army; fr a *balloon* released to signal the beginning of a barrage]

when the bell rings *adv phr* At the beginning; when the time comes: *When the bell rings, we'll work hard and let the chips fall where they may (1990s +)*

when the chips are down *modifier* At a crucial or decisive moment;

when an important point is reached (1945 +)

when the hammer comes down *adv phr* When the decision is made; when all is said and done: *I just hope that when the hammer comes down, that they will look at my performance on the field* [1990s +; probably fr the terminating blow of the auctioneer's hammer]

where does one get off doing something *sentence* How does he or she dare? what right has he or she?: *Where does she get off being so snotty?/ Where does he get off, saying I'd do that?* [1900 +; fr get off, "cease, stop," probably fr the notion of getting off a train; so the question is "When does one desist?"]

where someone's head is at *adv phr* One's mental condition; one's attitudes, thoughts, aberrations, etc: *They have the maturity to understand where a freak's head is at* (1960s +)

where someone is at *n phr* Someone's essential nature, current value system, attitudes, etc: *might make sense in evaluating where you are all at/ everything from Woody Guthrie to the country blues. That's where I was at* (1960s + *Black*)

where someone is coming from *n phr* 1 What someone means; what someone is saying (1977 +) 2 WHERE SOMEONE IS AT

where I sit *See* FROM WHERE I SIT

where it's at *adv phr* At the site of stimulating and modish events, trends, etc; WHERE THE ACTION IS: *Where the important stuff is going on. This is where it's at/ Why should only book writers write books? They're not where it's at/ TV is where it's at* *n phr* The essential locus

of the truth; the core of things: *A lot of cats are finding out where it's at in the joint* (1960+) **See** KNOW WHERE IT'S AT

where someone lives *adv phr* At a vital or crucial place; in one's most essential nature, feelings, etc; profoundly: *Let them hear the click when you cock it. And point it right where they live/ an ability to capture the moment and zap you where you live/ Her appeal hit me where I live* (1860+) **See** HIT someone WHERE HE LIVES

where the action is *adv phr*: *Do you want to live where the action is?*
n phr The site of stimulating and modish events, trends, etc; a place of excitement; *WHEREIT' SAT*: *Don't come here if you're looking for where the action is* [1970s+; probably fr *action*, "gambling"]

where the bodies are buried **See** KNOW WHERE THE BODIES ARE BURIED

where the rubber meets the road *n phr* Where the action is most immediate; the place of the nitty-gritty: *Assembly lines like this one at Northrop are like living things. This is where the rubber meets the road* (1980s+ *Army*)

where the sun doesn't shine *adv phr*: *Put it and all his other contributions where the sun doesn't shine/ Give you a hickey where the sun doesn't shine*
n phr One's anus; ASS, ASSHOLE (1980s+) **See** STICK IT

where to get off (or to go) **See** TELL someone WHERE TO GET OFF

where to put (or shove or stick or stuff) something **See** KNOW WHAT one CAN DO WITH something, TELL someone WHAT TO DO WITH something

wherewithal, the *n phr* Money; the NEEDFUL (1833+)

whew or **whoee** (hw EE OO) *interj* An exclamation of

astonishment, relief, incredulity, etc: *It faces ABC's not-nearly-so-formidable Ellen. Whew/ "Wooooo!" says Dahl in mock terror*
[1890 + ; probably echoic fr the whistling exhalation of a relieved person]

which *See* SAYS WHICH

whiff *n* **1** A swing at and miss of a baseball; also, a strikeout **2** Cocaine; SNOW: *Hey, man, know where I can score some whiff? (1970s + Narcotics)* **v** **1** To strike at a ball and miss (1916 + Baseball) **2** To strike out: *surpassed Sandy Koufax's single-season strikeout record, whiffing 383 batters (1916 + Baseball)* **3** To inhale cocaine into the nose; SNORT, TOOT (1970s + Narcotics)

whimp *See* WIMP

whim-whams (or **wim-wams**), the *n phr* Nervousness; the JIM-JAMS, the JITTERS: *gives Pavarotti the whim-whams before every performance/ Kittenish dames give us the wim-wams (1940s +)*

whingding *See* WINGDING

whip *See* BUGGY WHIP

whip-out *n* Money, esp a first payment, investment, etc: *a whole lot of what you call your up-front whip-out (1980s +)*

whip out *v phr* To pay; expend; FORK OVER: *But if you're waiting for the Yankees' principal owner to whip out some new Ben Franklin \$100 bills, don't hold your breath (1980s +)*

whipped *See* PUSSY-WHIPPED

whipped up *adj phr* (also **whipped**) Exhausted; BEAT, POOPED: *found the*

controllers dangerously whipped up/ Leading one of those late-night bands, I'm whipped when I get off that bandstand (late 1930s + Jazz musicians)

whipsaw *v* **1** To attack or operate by letting rival parties attack one another, to the benefit of the more or less passive manipulator: *pit one plant against another, using interplant rivalries to spur production, a tactic called "whipsawing" (1873 +)* **2** To assault; defeat; CLOBBER: *I'm not trying to sandbag anybody, and I'm not trying to whipsaw anybody/ Tormented? Driven Witless? Whipsawed by Confusion? (1970s +)* [first sense perhaps fr the reciprocal action of the *whipsaw*, a pit saw operated by one person above and one in the pit below; in an earlier slang use *whipsaw* meant "to take bribes from two political sources at once"; second sense probably fr the cutting efficiency of this two-person saw]

whip the dog *v phr* FUCK THE DOG (1950s + *Nautical*)

whip up *v phr* To make hurriedly: *Let's whip up a new policy on this/ Just relax while I whip up dinner*

whirlpool *n* (also **whirlpooling**) A rowdy boys' prank of surrounding a girl in a swimming pool and roiling the water while chanting rap lyrics • The game has often led to sexual violence against the trapped girl (1980s + *Teenagers*) *v* To dispose of someone or something as if by tossing into a whirlpool: *What music was Bill Clinton listening to when he whirlpooled Lani Guinier? (1990s +)*

whirlybird *n* A helicopter; CHOPPER • Along with *egg-beater*, nearly

obsolete (1951 +)

whiskers *See* BET YOUR BOOTS, the CAT'S MEOW

whispering campaign *n phr* An effort at discrediting someone or something, esp by starting false rumors: *start a whispering campaign against your product* (1920 +)

whistle *v* To move very rapidly, as if with a whistling sound; BARREL:
Two bills whistled through the Montana legislature (1813 +) *See* BELLS
AND WHISTLES, BLOW THE WHISTLE, DOODAD, NOT JUST WHISTLING DIXIE, WET one's WHISTLE,
WHISTLE DIXIE, WOLF WHISTLE

whistle blower *n* A person who makes an accusation of wrongdoing, illegality, etc: *Thanks to yet another whistle blower, it is now known that even the cost of the one-inch square plastic caps has flown as high as the planes/ trading inside information with whistle-blowers and publicity seekers* (1970 +)

whistle Dixie *v phr* **1** To say something of no consequence in order to make a positive impression **2** To engage in wishful thinking [1940s +; fr the effect of Dan Emmett's 1859 minstrel song "Dixie," which became the favorite of the Confederates]

whistle in the dark *v phr* To speculate or take a wild guess

whistle stop *n phr* A small town [1934 + Railroad; fr the fact that the train does not regularly stop at such a town, or stops only when signaled by a *whistle*]

white *n* Cocaine (1940s + *Narcotics*) *See* BLACK AND WHITE, BLEED someone
WHITE, CHINA WHITE, LILLY WHITE

white bread or **white bread** or **white-bread** *adj phr* or *adj*

Conventional; bourgeois; PLASTIC, SQUARE: *Some of the sequences are Middle American. Evans calls them white bread/ two normal white bread all-American boys/ He taught them to give up the safe, white-bread types* [1980s + ; fr the marketing fact that most Americans prefer soft, factory-baked *white bread*]

white buck *See* WHITE SHOE

white-collar modifier 1 Employed as clerks, office workers, etc: *The white collar workers don't strike very often/ As early as the 1920s they were called white-collar slaves and by the 1950s nine-to-fivers 2*
Performed by people who work in offices, esp by managers, high executives, etc: *White-collar crime has become a serious problem* (1919 +)

white elephant n phr Something putatively valuable, often a gift, that one does not want; an embarrassing piece of bric-a-brac: *a wonderful collection of white elephants, trash, treasures* [1851 + ; fr the *white elephant* of Thailand, which, although it is sacred and royal, is also a clumsy sort of possession for one's house]

white-face n A clown (1890s + *Circus*)

white-haired boy *See* FAIR-HAIRED BOY

white hat modifier: I told them they were the white-hat guys n phr A law-abiding, morally upright, and heroic person, as distinct from the villainous black hat [1970s + ; fr the conventional dress of heroes in cowboy movies]

white hope or great white hope n A person or thing on which hopes are based [1911 + ; fr a white boxer who might beat Jack

Johnson, the first black boxer to be world heavyweight champion (1908--15)]

white knight *n phr* A person or company that intervenes to thwart a hostile takeover bid: *Miami firm calls \$1.6 billion bid “inadequate”; seeks white knight for rescue* [1981 +; fr the *White Knight* in Lewis Carroll’s *Through the Looking Glass*]

white-knuckle *adj* Marked by tension, suspense, fear, etc: *Invocations of a Soviet threat have become so common. He calls it “the white-knuckle show”/ A genuine white-knuckle road* (1980s +)

white knuckle *n phr* Something tense, uncertain, frightening, very suspenseful, etc; CLIFFHANGER: *It was a white knuckle* (1980s +) *v*: *“Just plain folks” can white knuckle it around Mugello’s tight curves* [fr the pallor of knuckles on an anxiously clenched hand]

white-knuckled *adj phr* Tense; anxious; frightened: *Are you as white knuckled as I am when traveling as an airline passenger?/ Metro’s countless thousands of white-knuckled motorists* (1980s +)

white knuckler *n phr* **1** An airplane flight, esp an anxious one on a commuter airline: *You take a white-knuckler. Smilin’ Jack at the controls* (1980s +) **2** A tense and anxious person; someone or something frightened: *A list of companies in trouble: The white knucklers*

white lightning *n phr* **1** Inferior whiskey; PANTHER PISS, ROTGUT: *He had a pint of bootleg white lightning* (1921 +) **2** ACID, LSD (1970s + *Narcotics*)

white man’s disease *n* In sports, a white person’s inability to jump high

◁**white meat**▷ *n phr* A white person, esp a woman, regarded solely as a sex partner [immediately fr the *white meat* and *dark meat* of cooked fowl; *meat*, “the vulva,” is attested fr the late 1500s]

white money *n phr* Money, esp an illegal political contribution, that has been provided with a legitimate history and provenience (1980s+)

white mule *n phr* Strong bootleg liquor, esp nearly pure grain alcohol [1889+; because it had a kick like a *mule*]

white picket fence *n phr* A comfortable, peaceful, and affluent sort of life; rural paradise: *What do I want after this rat-race? The white picket fence* [fr the frequent depiction of such life in such dwellings by filmmakers of the 1930s and ‘40s]

white shoe (or buck) *adj phr* (also **white-shoe**) Having the attitudes, appearance, etc, of the Ivy League: *Do I look white shoe?/ a Harvard-educated bluestocking who practiced white-shoe corporate law* *n phr* A typical Ivy League student [1980s+; fr the *white buckskin shoes* that were part of that student’s dress]

white stuff *n phr* **1** Grain alcohol used for making bootleg liquor (1920+) **2** Cocaine or morphine; SNOW (1908+ *Narcotics*)

◁**white trash**▷ *n phr* (often **poor white trash**) PECKERWOOD, REDNECK (1855+ *Black*)

whitewash *n*: *Several Republican senators reported that the report was a “whitewash” of McCarthy’s charges* **v** **1** To win decisively, esp not permitting the opponent to score; SKUNK (1851+) **2** To make something unsavory, damaging, etc, seem to be legitimate and

acceptable, usu by falsification or concealment; decontaminate someone's actions or reputation (1762 +)

whitewater *n* Frequent changes in the structure and environment of a company, like mergers, cutbacks, and reengineering: *Some whitewater is fun, but it takes a lot out of you* [1990s + Corporate; fr rafting or kayaking in turbulent and dangerous *white water*]

white wrapper *See* PLAIN WRAPPER

Whitey or **whitey** *n* A white person; MISTER CHARLIE, OFAY (1940s + *Black*)

whiz¹ *n* A very successful performer; an outstanding expert; HUMDINGER: *the town's most promising high school football whiz/ a whiz at exterior (as opposed to psychological) characterization* [1914 +; perhaps a shortened form of *wizard*]

whiz² or **whizz** *n*: *I just came down for a whizz* (1971 +) **v** To urinate; PISS: *exactly twenty-five minutes after whizzing in his pants for the last time/ I gotta whiz. Will you just cover me at the register for a minute?* (1929 +) [perhaps echoic; perhaps related to late 1800s British *hold your whiz*, "be quiet, shut up," similar to *hold your water*]

whiz³ **v** To pick pockets [1925 + Underworld; apparently fr the *whizzing* speed with which an expert pickpocket works]

whiz⁴ *See* GEE WHIZ²

whizbang *modifier*: *definitely has been a whizbang franchise-winning tool* **n** **1** A person or thing that is remarkable, wonderful, superior, etc; BEAUT, HUMDINGER: *It's a whizbang of an idea* (1915 +) **2** A very successful performer; an outstanding expert; WHIZ¹: *In time we'll all*

be varsity whizbangs/ The TV whizbangs were sweating through their pancake makeup (1915 +) **3** A mixture of cocaine and morphine; an injection of this mixture (1920s + *Narcotics*) [fr an intensification of *whiz* either due to or influenced by the echoic use of *whizbang* to designate an artillery shell in World War I]

whiz kid modifier: *Then the whiz-kid lawyers collided with a tougher adversary* **n phr** A very clever young person; a youthful prodigy: *the physics whiz kid (1930s +)* [fr *whiz*¹ blended with *quiz kid*, “very bright child or young person,” used of participants in a 1930s radio quiz program]

whizzer **n** A pickpocket; *WHIZ (1925 + Underworld)*

who **See** SAYS YOU

whoa or **woah** **interj** **1** An exclamation of surprise and delight; *wow* • This interjection appears to be replacing the very popular *wow* of the 1960s: *Unsolicited confession: woah! (1980s +)* **2** (also **whoa there** or **whoa Nelly**) An exhortation to wait, go slow, not be hasty: *Whoa, Nelly. Two aliens are heading this way (1940s +)* [fr *whoa!* “Stop, horse!” attested fr the 1840s]

who died and made someone something **sentence** Where did you get your authority? what makes you presume?: *Who died and made Louis Farrakhan the judge of every other black person’s racial loyalty?/ Who died and made you marriage counselor to the Broncos? (1990s +)*

whodunit **n** A mystery or detective story, play, movie, etc, esp a novel: *a conventional whodunit [1937 + ; fr who done it, “who committed the crime?”; claimed as a coinage by and of various*

persons]

whole bag (or box) of tricks, the *n* Every possible thing; everything (1960s +)

whole ball of wax, the *n phr* The totality; everything; the whole thing; the WHOLE SHEBANG: *For that price you get the whole ball of wax* [1950s +; origin unknown; perhaps fr a manner of distributing the land of an estate to heirs, described in the early 1600s, in which the amount of each portion is concealed in a *ball of wax* that is drawn out of a hat in a sort of lottery. If so, the term went unrecorded for a very long time]

whole enchilada, the *n phr* The totality; everything; the whole thing: *We're talking best seller, mini-series, the whole enchilada*

whole famn damily *n phr* The whole family • An amusing euphemism: *I hate him and his whole famn damily* (1940s +) *See*
FARLEY

whole hog *adv phr* Utterly; without reservation: *He believed me whole hog* [fr early 1800s *go the whole hog*, “act, give, etc, without reservation,” explained in 1852 as fr the butcher’s question whether the customer wants the whole slaughtered animal, at a cheaper price than the prime parts only]

whole kit and caboodle, the (also **whole caboodle**, **whole kit and boodle**) *n phr* Everything (1880s +)

whole lot *n* Everything (1805 +)

whole megillah, the *See* the MEGILLAH

whole new ball game, a *n phr* A totally new situation; something completely different from what has been the case: *Since the government got into it this has been a whole new ball game (1960s +)*

whole nine yards, the *n phr* The totality; everything; the whole thing; the WHOLE SHEBANG: *went with the odd-looking ship, built a press platform in front of it, had power brought in for press lights, “the whole nine yards”/ guys in black tie passing champagne and the whole nine yards/ Floods. Fires. The whole nine yards [1960s + Army & Air Force; origin unknown; perhaps based on the load of a concrete mixing and hauling truck, which normally comes in a nine-yard and a ten-yard size; perhaps based on yard, “one hundred dollars,” rather than on the linear or cubic measure]*

whole ‘nother, a *adj phr* Completely different; new: *getting in would be a whole nother thing/ That’s a whole ‘nother question; we’ll get to it later (1980s +)*

whole schmear, the *n phr* (Variations: **schmier** or **schmeer** or **shmear** or **shmeer** or **shmier smear** may replace **schmear**) The totality; everything; the whole thing; the WHOLE SHEBANG: *names, ages, business they’re in, daily schedules, the whole schmear/ the whole fucking schmeer [1940s + ; fr Yiddish *shmeer* fr *shmeeren*, “spread”; probably immediately fr the spreading out of the hand in a pinochle or rummy game]*

whole shebang, the *n phr* The totality; everything; the whole thing; the WHOLE SCHMEAR: *We could move the whole shebang/ The whole shebang is festive, pleasantly show-offy and communal [1895 + ; fr mid-1800s *shebang*, “hut, hovel,” perhaps fr Irish *shebeen*, “cheap*

saloon,” hence “the house and everything in it”]

whole shooting match, the *n phr* The totality; everything; the whole thing; the WHOLE SCHMEAR [1896 + ; probably fr the crowd that would gather at a frontier *shooting match*, hence, “the whole crowd”; perhaps influenced by earlier British *the whole shoot* of the same meaning, fr *the whole shot*, “the whole cost or price”; noted in 1900 as a favorite expression of children]

whole works, the *See* the WORKS

wholly owned subsidiary *n phr* Someone or something in the complete control of another person or entity: *Public transportation in Boston is practically a wholly owned subsidiary of Bill Bulger’s/ We must put on a happy face and embrace George Pataki, a wholly owned subsidiary of Alfonse D’Amato* [1990s + ; fr the phrase used to describe one company owned by another]

whomp or **whump** *v* **1** To defeat utterly; CLOBBER: *The Tigers got badly whomped* (1952 +) **2** To hit; BASH: *sturdily whumped at the New Deal’s “insane deficit policy”* (1973 +) [echoic fr the sound of a blow, perhaps influenced by dialect *whup* and *whop*, “whip”]

whomp up *v phr* To make; devise or build: *I whomped me up one heck of a nightmare* (1950 +)

whoopde-do (HOOP dee DOO) (also **hoopty-doo** or **hoopty-do** or **hoop-de-doo** or **hoop-a-doop** or **hoop-de-doop** or **whoopde-doo** or **whoopde-doodle**) *adj*: *The racketeering, gossiping, whoopde-doodle thing, it is a piece of stinking fish* (1920s +) *n* **1** Raucous confusion; noisy celebration; jolly fuss: *a gay sense of flossy*

whoopde-doo/ but, in spite of this whoopde-doo/ Cowboys and soldiers created a deafening hoop-a-doop (1929+) **2** A series of ruts or bumps in a road: *A department analysis of the ripples, called whoopde-doo by engineers (1980s+ Motorcyclists & highway engineers)* [echoic]

whoopee (WHOO pee) *interj* An exclamation of joy and approval; hurrah (1862+) **n** Exuberant merriment; wild celebration; WHOOPDE-DO: *“Whoopee” seems to have entered New York with the accent on the first syllable (1928+)* [based on *whoop*, which is found fr late 1300s; popularized and perhaps coined by the columnist Walter Winchell]

whoopee (or **whoopie**) **cushion n phr** A bladder that makes a loud flatulating sound when sat upon: *It’s Grandma’s whoopie cushion. I thought you’d like that, you little fart (late 1950s+)*

whoop it up v phr To celebrate; carouse; have raucous fun: *It’s natural the Boys should whoop it up for so huge a phallic triumph (1884+)*

whoopla *See* HOOPLA

whoops (HOO PS) **n** A blunder; serious mistake; GOOF, OOPS: *“I think we got a whoops,” said a police inspector (1980s+)* **v** (also **whoops up**) To vomit; OOPS: *A man had whoopsed into his National Observer (1980s+)*

whoota joint n phr A marijuana cigarette containing crack: *with these guys smoking that damn whoota joint (1990s+)*

whoosis or **whoosis** or **whoozit** (HOO zəs) **n** An unspecified or

unspecifiable object; something one does not know the name of or does not wish to name; THINGAMAJIG: *Is impotence in the whoozis?/ There should be a whozis over the first n/ What do you call this whoozis on top here?* (1929 +)

whoozit (HOO zət) *n* A person whose name one does not know; What's-His-Face: *Hello to Fred and Whoozit* (1931 +)

whop *n* **1:** *Give a good whop this time* (1440 +) **2** A try or chance; CRACK, POP, SHOT: *politicians, judges, people from out of town, \$50 to \$100 a whop* (1980s +) *v* To hit; WHACK (1575 +) [echoic]

whopper *n* **1** Something huge and powerful: *The Mauritius tortoise must have been a whopper/ You know, come up with the whopper before Election Day* **2** A very bold lie: *He told a whopper and got away with it* [1785 +; fr *whop*] *See* BELLY-WHOPPER

whopping *adj* Huge; very impressive: *It was a whopping idea she had* (1706 +)

whore (or **whore's**) **bath** *n phr* A very perfunctory washing of oneself: *Living conditions on the front were brutal—filthy clothes, cold food, “whore's baths,” in which we rinsed ourselves off with frigid water* (1940s +)

◁**whorehouse**▷ *adj* Of a gaudiness or bad taste befitting a cheap brothel; HONKY-TONK: *The room is painted a sort of whorehouse pink* (1940s +)

◁**whose names end in vowels**▷ *adj phr* Having Italian surnames, hence members of organized-crime families: *a contractor whom Tooley desperately wanted to testify against two gentlemen whose*

names ended in vowels (1980s +)

whosis (also **whoosis**, **whosit**, **whoosit**, **whoozit**) *n* Used for referring to someone whose name is not known or remembered [1923 +; casual pronunciation of “who is this” or “who is it”]

who’s on first *n phr* The most basic facts; WHAT’S WHAT: *With the energy tax seemingly changing every few minutes, many corporate executives say they don’t know who’s on first* [1950s +; fr a confusing comedy baseball routine of Bud Abbott and Lou Costello]

who’s your daddy *interj* Who is your friend or caregiver? I am that person

whump *See* WHOMP

wicked *adj* **1** Impressive; prodigious; MEAN: *He can shake a wicked spatula/ Look at the wicked bat he swings!* **2** Excellent; wonderful; BAD, GREAT (1920 +) *See* SHAKE A WICKED CALF

wicked bad *adj* Extremely good: *wicked bad cheese fries*

wicket *See* STICKY WICKET

wickey *See* ICKY

wide *See* HIGH, WIDE, AND HANDSOME

wide ones *See* FOUR WIDE ONES

wide open *adj phr* **1** Free of police hindrance; hospitable to profitable vice: *Phoenix City was a famous wide-open town (1892 +)* **2** Vulnerable; open to attack (1915 + *Boxing*) **3** Going at full speed; FLAT OUT, LIKE SIXTY *adv phr:* *He always drove his bike wide open* [third

sense from *wide-open throttle*, probably fr railroading]

wide place (or spot) in the road *n phr* A small town; JERK TOWN: *A Wide Place in the Road (1930s + Truckers fr Western)*

widget or widgit *modifier*: *as though it were read aloud from the press release of a widget manufacturer* *n* A mechanical, electrical, or electronic device; GADGET, GIZMO: *It's three floors of sights, sounds, illusions, movements, gadgets, widgets, and gizmos/ not an activity I would recommend to anyone daunted by a widgit more complicated than a stapler (1920 +)* [an alteration of *gadget*, perhaps based on hypothetical *whizit* on the model of *whatzit* and *whoozis*]

widow *n* **1** A short line of type, esp an isolated one at the top of a column or page (*1904 + Print shop & publishing*) **2** A spare hand dealt in certain card games (*1891 + Cardplaying*) *See* GOLF WIDOW, GRASS WIDOW

widow-maker *n* Anything that is lethally dangerous, esp a falling bough or a dead tree (*1945 + Loggers*)

wiener *See* WEENIE

wiener dog *n phr* A dachshund; SAUSAGE HOUND: *For wiener dogs across Wisconsin (1990s +)*

wife *n* **1** A member of a pimp's group of prostitutes: *She is his favorite "wife" at the moment (1900 + Prostitutes)* **2** The more passive of a homosexual couple (*1883 +*)

◁**wife-beater**▷ *n* A sleeveless undershirt worn by men • Fr regarding this as the attire of a male who would do this

wiff or **wif** (WIF) **n** 1 A wife 2 WHIFF

wig **adj** Excellent; wonderful; GREAT, NEAT: *a real wig rock trio (1960s + Teenagers)* **n** 1 One's head; one's mind (1930s + *Jive talk*) 2 A cool jazz musician (1950s + *Jazz musicians*) **v** 1 To talk, esp casually and freely; RAP: *We stood around wiggling (1930s + Jive talk)* 2 To annoy someone; BUG: *She ordered me to stop wiggling her (1930s + Jive talk)* 3 To play cool or progressive jazz (1950s + *Jazz musicians*) 4 To behave more or less hysterically; FLIP, FREAK OUT, WIG OUT: *I realized my goddamn father wasn't there, again, and I wiggged (1950s + Cool talk)* 5 To be happy and in harmony; DIG (1950s + *Cool talk*) **See** BLOW one's TOP, FLIP one's LID

wiggled out or **wiggled** **adj phr** 1 Out of touch with reality; deluded; OUT OF IT: *one of whom is comically wiggled out on cleanliness and ecology/ if you're really feeling wiggled out by any and all contact (1950s + Students)* 2 Intoxicated with narcotics; HIGH (1950s + *Narcotics*)

◁**wigger**▷ or **yo-boy** **n** A white person, esp a teenager, who imitates the style and behavior of inner-city blacks: *When I was wearing my permanent-press Lees with matching Adidas sneakers, kids I went to school with were calling me a wigger [1990s + ; apparently a shortening of white nigger; perhaps influenced by wigger, "a very crazy person," fr jazz talk]*

wiggling **modifier** Crazed; out of control: *wiggling over the big spider*

wiggle **See** GET A MOVE ON

wiggle room **n phr** Space, either real or figurative, in which to

maneuver; ELBOW ROOM: *Clinton's health plan gives Congress wiggle room (mid-1980s +)*

wiggle one's way out v phr To extricate oneself from difficulty, often by devious means: *men who are just trying to wiggle their way out of their obligations (1685 +)*

wiggy adj 1 Exciting and up-to-date; COOL, FAR OUT: *But I have some really wiggy experiences (1960s + Cool talk)* **2** Intoxicated on or using narcotics; OUT OF IT, SPACED-OUT, WIGGED OUT: *one of whom is so wiggy that she got fired from her job* **3** Crazy; weird; strange: *Things were wiggy/ neither a wiggy sexual penitent, nor a kohl-eyed tough cookie*
See WIG OUT

wig out n phr To become mentally unbalanced; lose one's sanity: *whose guiding genius, Brian Wilson, spent years wiggling out in a sandbox* **v phr** To become ecstatic; enjoy oneself hugely; FLIP, FREAK OUT, WIG: *The first time I read The Collected Stories I wiggled out [1950s + Cool talk fr jazz musicians; fr a complex set of jazz uses, mostly based on the idea of flipping one's wig, "losing one's head"]*

wild adj Excellent; exciting; wonderful; COOL (1950s + *Cool talk*)

wild about (or over) adj phr 1 Enthusiastically approbatory of; CRAZY ABOUT: *the new lemon flavored cough drop everyone's wild about (1879 +)* **2** In love with

wild and woolly adj phr Crude and raucous; untamed; uncouth: *a couple of good old country boys having a wild and woolly time [1884 +; fr an alliterating phrase wild and woolly West, the woolly perhaps referring to range steers, to range horses, or to the*

unkempt heads of cowboys and frontiersmen]

◁**wild-ass** or **wild-assed**▷ *adj* Madly exuberant; untamed; CRAZY, WILD:
*Shepard tops himself as a wild-ass country boy/ and for goddamned
sure a wild-assed warrior/ Ijah was a kind of wild-ass type* [1960s+ ;
an example of the use of *ass*, “the whole person”]

wild card modifier: *the wild-card slot/ last year’s wild-card team* *n phr*
1 Something outside of the normal rules, category, etc; an
unpredictable thing, event, etc: *Being from Princeton wasn’t like
being from Jersey, it was a wild card* (1920s+ *Card games*) **2** A team
picked for a playoff by some more or less arbitrary method, not
having won its championship during the season: *We can always
hope the Lions will be the wild card* (1950s+ *Sports*) [fr poker and
other games, where in some cases one or more *wild cards*, having
any value the player desires, may be designated]

wildcat modifier Done or ventured individually, apart from ordinary
corporate structures: *a wildcat well/ a wildcat cab* (1883+) *n 1* A
mixture of the drugs cat (metcathenone) and cocaine (1990s+
Narcotics) **2** (also **wildcat strike**) A strike not authorized by the
union authorities (1937+ *Labor union*) *v* To drill for oil, esp
without strong corporate and financial backing (1877+) [fr the
independent behavior of feral felines; in the 1840s a Western bank
issued banknotes picturing a *wildcat* and then suspended payment;
in early 1900s show business, to *wildcat* meant to book a theater
tour day-by-day]

wilding *n* Concerted violent behavior by groups of usu black
teenagers: *A pack of 33 teenagers swept out of Harlem for a night of*

wilding, attacking anyone who looks vulnerable [late 1980s + Urban black; the word became widespread after a particular attack in April 1989]

wild out v phr To go on a damaging rampage; riot; go wilding: *Some brothers is like "I'm going to wild out, cause I have nothing positive to look for"* (1990s + Urban black)

willie or willy n <1> The penis; WEENIE • Adopted in US slang fairly recently: *The notion that some small part of the cosmic order hung on our teenage willies was a heavy load for us young soldiers in St. Ignatius' Army of Christ/ The plethysmograph, basically a strain gauge wrapped around the willy, electronically registers the pulls and tugs of arousal and then draws them as jagged peaks and valleys on a line graph* (1905 +) 2 Corn Willie **See** DOODAD

willies, the n phr Acute nervousness; a spell of uneasiness; the JITTERS: *The thought of an intense daily association with this troglodyte gave me the willies/ The willies or the creeps. Call it what you like/ For years her friends' shoptalk gave him the willies* [1896 + ; perhaps fr *the woollies*, a dialect term for nervousness and uneasiness, perhaps suggested by the itchy sensation of wool on the skin]

willikers See GEE WHIZ

will the real someone please stand up question May the actual claimant now be identified: *After listening to Mr. Brown and Mr. Christopher, it was tempting to ask: Would the real Secretary of Commerce please stand up?* [1950s + ; fr a television panel show, *To Tell the Truth*, where three different people claimed to have a

certain identity, and the real one was finally asked to stand up]

wilma *n* An ugly or stupid woman [1980s+ College students; fr the name of a character in the television show and movie *The Flintstones*]

wimp or **whimp** *n* An ineffectual person; a soft, silly person; a weakling; DRIP, NEBBISH: *Unmacho. Short hair, glasses, awkward, uncertain. WIMP/ his unfortunate and unfounded charge that Thompson portrayed him as a “wimp”/ Apparently whimps complained it was too hot* [1960s+ College students; origin unknown; perhaps fr J Wellington Wimpy, a relatively unaggressive character in the comic strip “Popeye”; perhaps fr the early 1900s British university *wimp* “young woman,” perhaps fr *whimper*; occurs in a 1920 George Ade story, which may be the source of the term, used more in intervening years in the adjective form *wimpish*]

wimpish or **wimpy** or **wimpo** or **wimpoid** *adj* Having the traits of a wimp; soft; weak: *less wimpy version of the husband she leaves/ seats that go wimpo during cornering/ a wimpoid ballad with the refrain “the doggone girl is mine” (entry form 1925 +, first variant 1967 +, others 1960s+ and later)*

wimp out or **wimp** *v phr* To cancel or withdraw from an action or place because of fear; CHICKEN OUT: *I could feel for my friend because I’ve wimped out on the assertive front/ “I know it seems disrespectful to you,” I wimped (1980s+)*

Wimpy *n* A hamburger sandwich [fr J Wellington Wimpy, an obsessive lover and seeker of such sandwiches in the *Popeye* comic

strip] **See** WIMP

win a few lose a few or win some lose some *sentence* One cannot always be victorious or successful; YOU CAN'T WIN 'EM ALL: *Manning fought from within Luce's empire against the Republicanizing of the news, and as Theodore White predicted in urging him to take the job, he won some and lost some*

wind **See** BAG OF WIND, BREAK WIND, PISS AND WIND, TWIST SLOWLY IN THE WIND

windage **See** KENTUCKY WINDAGE

windbag *n* A person who talks too much, esp a pompous prater; BAG OF WIND, GASBAG: *a windbag who shoots the gab (1827 +)*

wind down *v phr* **1** To come or bring to a gradual halt or conclusion: *The campaign has begun to wind down/ Shall we wind down our collection drive? (1952 +)* **2** To relax gradually: *Let me sit here for a few minutes, to wind down (1958 +)* [modeled on the winding down of a clock or other machine]

winder **See** SIDEWINDER, STEM-WINDING

window *n* A time period when something may be accomplished; a critical period: *We now have a window of opportunity to try for peace in Bosnia again/ They're worried about a window of vulnerability [1967 +; fr the 1960s astronautics term for the exact time and directional limits governing the launching of a rocket to achieve a certain orbit or destination, which were pictured as a window through which the rocket must be shot]* **See** BAY WINDOW, OUT THE WINDOW

wind up *v phr* To finish: *We wind up learning less (1825 +)*

wind something **up v phr** To finish; bring to a conclusion: *I suggest we wind this discussion up and go home* (1825+)

windy adj Given to talking too much; overly garrulous, esp pompously so: *It's another one of his windy orations* (1513+)

Windy City n Chicago (1887+)

wine See JUG WINE, POP WINE

win for losing See someone CAN'T WIN FOR LOSING

wing n An arm, esp a baseball pitcher's throwing arm (1297+) **v 1** To shoot someone, not necessarily in the arm: *You were winged by something big, 45 maybe* (mid-1800s+) **2** WING IT (1885+) **See** PING-WING

wingding or whingding n 1 An epileptic or drug-induced fit, esp as counterfeited to attract sympathy (1927+ *Hoboes, prison, and narcotics*) **2** A fit of anger; a violent outburst of feeling: *going to throw a wingding they'll hear in Detroit* (1933+) **3** (also **wingdinger**) An energetic celebration or commotion; a noisy party; RUCKUS: *Then they did their wingding out in front of the West Wing* (1949+)

wingdoodle See WHANGDOODLE

wing it or wing v phr To improvise; extemporize; act without sufficient preparation; FAKE IT: *Winging It, Coping Without Controllers/ He was confident of his ability to wing it, adjusting to counter her responses* [first form 1933+, second 1885+; fr the notion that an actor could learn his lines in the stage's wings, or be coached while standing there; *wing the part* is found by 1886]

wingman *n* Someone who backs up or supports a friend, esp in a social setting: *I'll be your wingman tonight*

wingnut *n* A weird or insane person; WEIRDO, Nutcase: *Too weird for me. You guys are wingnuts* [1980s +; probably fr *wingy* and *nut*]

win going away *v phr* To win easily, increasing one's lead to the end; WIN IN A WALK: *We saw the results in Pennsylvania—the Democrat won going away* (1840s + Horse racing)

wingy *adj* Intoxicated with narcotics; HIGH [1980s +; fr *wings*, “cocaine, heroin, or morphine”]

win hands down *v phr* To win easily [1880s +; orig referring to a jockey dropping his hands and relaxing the reins when victory appears certain] *See* HANDS DOWN

win in a walk *v phr* To win easily; be a confident victor (1896 +)

winkie *n* 1 (also **winky**, **winkle**) The penis: *Had Kaufman discovered a bump on his winkie, he probably would have shared that with us, too* (1970s +) 2 (also **winker**) The vulva (1916 +) [both the penis and vulva have been likened to eyes: *upright wink* is recorded as a fanciful term for the vulva, and *one-eyed snake* for the penis]

winks *See* FORTY WINKS

winner *n* A very promising and successful person or thing; HOT SHOT: *Your new poem is a winner/ Hire this guy, he looks like a winner/ That passing shot was a winner*

wino *n* A habitual drunkard, esp a derelict who drinks cheap wine; STUMBLEBUM: *a couple of “winos” who had been drinking cheap sherry in*

the bar/ patronized largely by vagrants, winos, dehornes, grifters
(1900s + Hoboes)

win out v phr To win; prevail: *De Bird of Time will win out in a walk*
(1896 +)

win-win modifier A success for both sides: *win-win situation*

wipe n A killing, murder

wiped adj Exhausted; POOPED, BEAT (1950s +)

wiped out adj phr 1 Drunk: *Everybody had been too wiped out to watch* 2 Tired; exhausted: *At the end of that hearing she felt wiped out*

wiped out, be v phr To be wrecked, ruined, finished; GET IT IN THE NECK,
SHOOT someone DOWN

wipe it off v phr To force oneself to stop smirking or joking; stop larking • Very often a stern command: *Wipe it off, Mister, this is no comic routine (WWII armed forces)*

wipeout n 1 A fall from the surfboard, esp a spectacular one (1960s + Surfers) 2 (also **wipe**) A killing, esp a gangland execution; RUBOUT: *I don't know a goddam thing about this goddam Covino wipe (1925 +)*

wipe out v phr To lose control of the surfboard during a ride and be thrown off into the water: *About six of them wiped out on one big wave (1960s + Surfers)*

wipe someone out v phr To kill; ICE, OFF, RUB OUT (1577 +)

wipe the slate clean v phr To cancel or ignore what has gone

before; begin anew; GO BACK TO SQUARE ONE: *Let's just wipe the slate clean and pretend it never happened (1921 +)*

wipe (or clean or mop) up the floor with someone *v phr* To defeat utterly and abjectly; trounce easily; CLOBBER (*first form 1875 +*)

wire *n* **1:** *Send me a wire if you get the job* **2:** *They checked to see whether she was wearing a wire* **3** An overstimulated person; an anxious, excitable person: *You know I'm a natural wire. What I need is a drink to calm me down* *v* **1** To send a telegram: *Wire me when you get there (1859 +)* **2** To place eavesdropping devices in a room, office, etc, or concealed on someone's body; BUG: *She quietly checked to see if her bedroom was wired/ The FBI wired me before they sent me to see the suspect (1950s +)* **See** COME UP TO THE WIRE, DOWN TO THE WIRE, GO TO THE WIRE, HAYWIRE, HOT-WIRE

wired *adj* **1** (also **wired up**) Intoxicated by narcotics, esp cocaine or amphetamines; HIGH, SPACED-OUT: *"If you're wired, you're fired," is how Willie Nelson warns band members about cocaine usage/ That night Elvis was wired for speed (1970s + Narcotics)* **2** (also **wired up**) Eagerly excited; overstimulated; HIGH, HYPER, JACKED UP: *Keeping the people wired with a mix of Sixties vines and Eighties technology/ They have him wired up tight with the slogans of TV and the World Series (1970s +)* **3** Anxious; nervous; UPTIGHT: *I got wired when Myrt was sneaking a break and Jerry showed up (1970s +)* **4** (also **wired up**) Certain and secure; totally under control; assured; RACKED, TAPED: *Mention of all those other top contenders is just a smokescreen and Brown's got it wired/ Then I get this wired up and I think, well (1950s + fr poker)* **5** Wearing an eavesdropping device; having

such a device planted; **BUGGED**: *He's wired. He's wearing a tape recorder (1957+)* [fr *wire* as conducting an electrical charge or stimulus, or as used for binding; *wired up* is recorded as a US term for "irritated, provoked" in the late 1800s and may be related to the sense "anxious, nervous"] **See** COOL AS A CHRISTIAN WITH ACES WIRED, HAVE something CINCHED

wired into *adj* Intimately involved in; closely and sympathetically connected with; **INTO**: *"I'm wired into Marin Transit right now." "That's cool if you get off on buses"/ for the first time, I really felt wired into that poem [1970s+; fr *wire* as creating a close connection]*

wirehead *n* A nearly obsessional computer user: *a cross-country quest in search of the wirehead's answer to an amusement park (late 1980s+ Computer)*

wire-puller *n* A person who exerts influence, esp in a covert way; **OPERATOR**: *Grunewald, bigtime wire-puller in the tangled Washington bureaucracy (1833+)*

wires **See** PULL STRINGS

wise *adj* Aware; cunningly knowing; **HEP**: *Get wise, son!/ He's close-mouthed and wise, stir-wise (1896+)* **See** GET WISE, PUT someone WISE, STREET-SMART

◁**wiseass**▷ *modifier*: *And I don't need any big-deal Boston wiseass dick to come out here and piss all over my town, you understand* **n** SMART-ASS (1970s+) **See** NOBODY LIKES A WISEASS

wisecrack *n* A witty remark, esp one with a knowing, sarcastic edge; a joke; **GAG, ONE-LINER**: *at least two wisecracks in the first paragraph/*

makers of wars and wisecracks, a rum creature [1924 + ; perhaps fr the theatrical term *crack a wheeze*, “tell a joke”]

wise guy or **wiseguy** *n phr* **1** (also **wise apple**) A person who is ostentatiously and smugly knowing; smart aleck, SMART-ASS: *My little brother is an irrepressible wise guy* (1896 +) **2** (also **wise hombre**) A shrewd and knowing person; a person who is “wised up”: *The wise guys said Frank didn’t stand a chance* (1896 +) **3** A professional criminal, esp a mob member: *The wiseguys like places they’re known/ Hanging out at a neighborhood restaurant in the Italian section of Queens, the first thing he learned is that the wiseguys never talk about what they do* (1970s + *Underworld*)

wisenheimer (WĪ ə) *n* A person who is ostentatiously and smugly knowing; smart aleck, SMART-ASS: *the way an old-time carny handles a tough wisenheimer with the aid of a hammer* [1904 + ; fr *wise* plus the German or Yiddish element *-heimer* found in surnames based on German place names ending in *-heim*; the coinage may be motivated by the humorous attempt to add weight to the term and is perhaps tinged with anti-Semitism]

wise to *adj phr* Aware of, esp of something shady or forbidden: *They soon became wise to his little deceptions* (1915 +)

wise up *v phr* To become shrewdly aware; GET SMART, GET WITH IT • Often an exhortation: *Wise up or you’ll lose this opportunity/ Now, however, the industry is wising up* (1914 +)

wise someone up *v phr* To give useful and usu covert particulars; PUT someone WISE: *My adviser was a good scout and wised me up* (1905 +)

wishbone *n* A football formation in which the quarterback and three other backs line up in a Y pattern with the quarterback at the base and directly behind the center (1970s+ *Football*)

wish book *n* A shopper's catalog; mail-order catalog

wish (or want) list *n phr* A presumed list of things one wants: *intent on buying every weapon the generals and admirals put on their wish lists*

wishy-washy *adj* Marked by imprecision and vacillation; inconstant; uncertain: *The wishy-washy player keeps putting off the evil day/ It's not overpowering like Opium and not wishy-washy* [1873+; fr a rhythmic reduplication of *washy*, "weak, diluted, watered-down," probably influenced by *wishy* as suggesting vacillating desires; the original sense was "weak, insubstantial, trashy," found by 1703]

wit *See* NITWIT

witch *n* A vicious woman • A euphemism for *bitch*: *She's being very nasty about it, a real witch* (1940s+)

witch's tit *See* COLD AS HELL

with *adj phr* Having the usual accompaniment, that is, onions with hamburger, cream with coffee, etc: *We ordered two coffees with, to go* (1930s+ *Lunch counter*)

with something and a dime I can get a cup of coffee *sentence* The honor, award, compliment, etc I have received is not worth much: *She likes me? With that and a dime I can get a cup of coffee* (1970s+)

with a ten-foot pole *See* NOT TOUCH someone or something WITH A TEN-FOOT

POLE

with bells on *adv phr* (Variations: **on** may be dropped; **knobs** or **tits** may replace **bells**) Very definitely; without any doubt; emphatically • Used especially in affirming that one will be present at a certain time and place: *Don't worry, I'll be there with bells on/ I'll be here Thursday. With bells* [1900s+ Theater; perhaps the suggestion is that one will be very conspicuous, like a train or a fire engine *with bells*]

with (one's) eyes (wide) open *modifier* Fully aware: *went into the project with eyes wide open*

with one's feet *See* VOTE WITH one's FEET

◁**with one's finger up one's ass**▷ *See* SIT THERE WITH one's FINGER UP one's ASS

with flying colors *adv phr* In a bold and assured way; grandly; HIGH, WIDE, AND HANDSOME: *She won nicely, in fact with flying colors* [1706+; probably fr the image of a naval vessel with the national flag bravely *flying*]

with one's hand in the till (or the cookie jar) *adv phr* With no possibility of escape or evasion; in flagrante delicto; DEAD TO RIGHTS: *Most people think all members of Congress have their hands in the till. Last week's indictment of Rostenkowski simply confirms it/ I got caught with my hand in the cookie jar* [1970s+; fr the situation of a thief caught *with his hand in the money-box* or *cash register*]

within an ace *See* COME WITHIN AN ACE

with it *adj phr* 1 Coolly cognizant; absolutely in touch; stylish and

au courant; HEP: *He affects clothes that carefully cultivate the “with-it” image/ to spend less time attempting to be “with it” and to exert greater effort to communicate with our deprived and our outcast/ Shadows of course there are, Porn-Ads, with-it clergy (1930s + Black) 2 Working in a carnival as a full-time professional: had previous short experiences traveling with carnivals before becoming fully “with it” (as carnival workers describe the fully-initiated member) (1920s + Carnival & circus) See GET WITH IT*

with one’s left hand *adv phr* At less than full efficiency; more or less casually: *Talese said, “The Frank Sinatra piece is something I dashed off with my left hand”* [the *Oxford English Dictionary* in the 1903 volume lists *work with the left hand*, “implying inefficiency of performance,” as obsolete, without dates or examples]

with one hand tied behind one’s back (or behind one) *adv phr 1* Very easily; readily and neatly: *I can do that job with one hand tied behind my back* • The phrase originally referred to fistfights (1890 +) **2** At a great disadvantage; under a handicap: *This is what Lord Owen calls “negotiating with one hand tied behind your back”* (1990s +)

◁**without a pot to piss in**▷ *See* NOT HAVE A POT TO PISS IN

without skipping (or missing) a beat *adv phr* With no pause or discontinuity; smoothly: *She segued to the tricky point without skipping a beat/ Without missing a beat, she plucked the pipe from Dolan’s mouth* [1940s + ; fr *heartbeat* and musical *beat*]

with the bark on *adv phr* Unedited; unaltered: *President Johnson*

read news right off the teletype because he wanted the news with the bark on (1870s+)

with the punches *See* ROLL WITH THE PUNCHES

with the territory *See* GO WITH THE TERRITORY

witless *See* SCARED SPITLESS, SCARE **someone** SHITLESS

wizard *adj* Excellent; GREAT, TITS, SUPER [1922+; first recorded in Sinclair Lewis, but afterwards chiefly British]

wobble weed *n* ANGEL DUST (1970s+ *Narcotics*)

woe *See* TALE OF WOE

◀**wog or Wog**▶ *n* A native of India, esp a laborer [WWII armed forces fr British; the British usage, “any native of an Eastern country,” is said to derive fr an arch acronym for *Worthy Oriental Gentleman* or *Westernized Oriental Gentleman*; some think it is more likely to be a shortening of *golliwog*, “a black doll with wild frizzy hair and staring eyes,” fr the name of such a doll in late 1800s children’s stories by Bertha Upton, and a popular toy in British nurseries]

wolf *n* 1 A sexually aggressive man; an ardent womanizer; COCKSMAN: *Mary considered him quite a wolf (1847+)* 2 An aggressive male homosexual; a homosexual rapist: *the sodomist, the degenerate, the homosexual “wolf” (1915+ Prison & hoboese)* *v*: *I give with the vocals and wolf around in a nite club* *See* LONER

wolf something down *v phr* To eat voraciously; gobble: *wolfed down the grilled cheese*

wolf whistle *n phr* A two-note whistled expression, esp of male appreciation for the sexual attributes of a woman (1940s +)

woman *See* BAG LADY, BOTTOM WOMAN, **the** LITTLE WOMAN, OLD WOMAN

woman-chaser *n* A womanizer; LADIES' MAN, SKIRT-CHASER, WOLF (1890s +)

wombat *n* An eccentric person; FREAK, NUT [1980s + Teenagers; probably fr the inherently amusing name of the *wombat*, a pudgy Australian marsupial, and the occurrence of *bat*, “crazy person, nut,” as an element of the name]

wonder *See* NINE-DAYS' WONDER, NINETY-DAY WONDER

Wonder Bread *adj phr* Conventional; WHITE BREADY: *Of course, the president's a little too Wonder Bread* [1980s + ; fr the trademark of a popular brand of white bread]

wonk *n* **1** An overstudious student; an intellectual; Greasy Grind: *I had a real wonk of a roommate. The guy drove me bats/ Along come these wonks with slide rules sewn into their sports jackets* **2** A flunky; a stupid person [1990s + College students; origin unknown; perhaps fr British *wanker*, “masturbator”; in British sailor slang, *wonk* meant “midshipman”; the term became suddenly common in the phrase *policy wonk* during the first year of the Clinton administration, 1993]

wonkily *adv* In a halting and unsteady way: *We commended him on his performance and sent him wonkily tottering back onto the floor* (1990s + College students)

wonkish *adj* Redolent of policy, theory, discussion, etc: *Greenberg felt*

that a wonkish tone had pervaded the transition (1990s +)

wonky¹ *adj* 1 Badly done or made; ineffective; weird; COCKEYED: *the wonky clutter of a Victorian parlor/ Only the steering feels wonky to me (1923 +)* 2 Out of order; needing repair; DOWN (1990s + *Computer*) [fr British dialect *wanky* or *wankle*, “weak, unsteady”; perhaps related to *wanky*, “spurious, doubtful,” said of coins and attested by 1913]

wonky² *adj* Tedious and serious, esp anxious and overstudious in an academic situation: “*Jenny Cavilleri,*” answered Ray. “*Wonky music type*”/ *a class which I have long dismissed as hopelessly wonky* [1970s + *Students*; fr *wonk*]

won’t eat you, someone *sentence* Don’t worry, that person will not harm you: *Answer the question; we won’t eat you (1738 +)*

woo *See* PITCH WOO

◁**wood¹**▷ *n* A white person; PECKERWOOD, REDNECK: *just because they find some cum in that wood’s ass* [1970s + *Black*; fr a shortening of *peckerwood*]

◁**wood²** or **woody**▷ *n* An erect penis; BLUE-VEINER, HARD-ON (1980s + *Prison*) *See* SAW WOOD

◁**woodchuck**▷ *n* CRACKER, REDNECK (1980s +)

woodenhead *n* A stupid person; BLOCKHEAD, KLUTZ

wooden kimono *n phr* PINE OVERCOAT (1926 +)

wooden nickels *See* DON’T TAKE ANY WOODEN NICKELS

wooden overcoat *n phr* PINE OVERCOAT (1903+)

wood-pusher *n* A chess player, esp an unskilled one; PATZER: *enough to make any parlor wood-pusher loosen his collar and roll up his sleeves* (1950s+)

wood-pussy *n* A skunk; a polecat (1920s+)

woods are full of someones or somethings, the *sentence* The named things or persons are in plentiful supply; these things are cheap and available: *Look, the woods are full of computer programmers; I want one that's a real whiz* (1940s+)

woodshed or **shed** *v* To rehearse; practice one's part, role, etc, esp to do so alone and rigorously: *Bix did plenty of woodshedding, playing alone/ I just learned a new technique and I've got to shed on it* [1930s+ Jazz musicians; fr the *woodshed* as the traditional place where one could be alone to work, think, smoke, etc]

woodwork *See* CRAWL OUT OF THE WOODWORK

woody *n* 1 A station wagon with wooden outside trim: *Get your woody working* (1950s+ *Surfers, orig a wooden surfboard*) <2> An erect penis

woof *v* 1 To talk idly; chatter meaninglessly: *I ain't woofin'. I'm not fooling* (1934+ *Black*) 2 To boast, esp menacingly; bluff: *The extreme of arguing is "woofing," like Ali and Frazier* (1934+ *Black*) 3 To vomit: *woofed in the backroom* [echoic fr the idle or menacing barking of a dog]

woofer *n* 1 A person who woofs (1934+ *Black*) 2 A loudspeaker

designed to reproduce bass notes faithfully (1935 +)

woofy *adj* Unkempt; shaggy, like a dog: *I need a haircut. I look awfully woofy* [1990s +; probably fr *woof*, “dog’s bark”]

wool *See* PULL THE WOOL OVER someone’s EYES

wool hat *n phr* A rural person; a bumpkin; REDNECK (1828 +)

woolies or **woollies** *n* Long woolen underwear; LONG JOHNS (1940s +)

woolly *See* WILD AND WOOLLY

woolly-headed *adj* Inclined to idealism and hopeful fantasy; impractical: *She dismissed it as another woolly-headed scheme of mine* (1883 +)

wootsie or **wootsy** *See* TOOTS

woozily *adv* In a woozy manner: *I balanced myself woozily on the flats of my hands/ tottered woozily off a plane from Tripoli* (1911 +)

woozy *adj* 1 Not fully alert and conscious; half-asleep; befuddled: *You’ll just get woozy if you stay up any longer/ some woozy tourist* 2 Dizzy; faint; unwell [1897 +; origin unknown; perhaps fr *oozy*, suggesting the insolidity and limpness of mud]

◀**wop** or **Wop**▶ *adj*: *big wop tenor n* An Italian or a person of Italian extraction; DAGO (1912 +) [apparently fr southern Italian dialect *guappo*, “dandy, dude, stud,” used as a greeting by male Neapolitans]

word *interj* 1 An exclamation of agreement and appreciation, used when someone has said something important or profound: *If it’s*

really meaningful, “Word, man, word” should be used (1980s + Black teenagers) **2** WORD UP **See** EAT one’S WORDS, FIGHTIN’ WORDS, FROM THE WORD GO, WEASEL WORDS, WHAT’S THE GOOD WORD

-word combining word Used in real or mock euphemisms to avoid saying a taboo or repulsive word: *C-word, “cancer”/ F-word, “fuck”/ L-word, “liberal”/ T-word, “taxes” (1980s +)*

word hole (or cake hole or pie hole) n The mouth

word up interj An exhortation to listen, to pay attention: *Word up, fool. We be fresh tonight [1980s + Black; probably based on listen up]*

work v 1 To go about a place begging, selling, stealing, etc; ply one’s often-dishonest trade: *She did not deserve charity. She worked the town (1851 +)* **2** To exert one’s charm, power, persuasiveness, etc, esp on an audience; manipulate: *To watch Dick Engberg work the crowd and Al McGuire tossing peanuts to the spectators/ We watched him work the room a bit (1851 +)* **See** BULLWORK, DIRTYWORK, DONKEYWORK, GRUNTWORK, NICE WORK IF YOU CAN GET IT, NOODLEWORK, SCUT

workaholic modifier: *I made a hardy attempt to suppress my workaholic tendency n* A person whose primary and obsessive interest is work; a compulsive worker: *This type of person is a work freak, a workaholic (1968 +)* [coined fr *work* plus *-aholic* (fr *alcoholic*) by the pastoral counselor W E Oates]

◁**work one’s ass (or buns or tail) off**▷ **v phr** To work very hard; BUST one’S ASS: *They work their ass off all year/ The dead acoustics of the room force the students to work their tails off/ Complains one Apple staffer, “People are working their buns off” (1940s +)*

work blue v phr To use obscene language; peddle smut: *Deane does not, in the parlance of stand-up comics, “work blue” when he bench coaches (1990s +)*

work both sides of the street v phr To take two contrary positions at once; HAVE IT BOTH WAYS: *Most politicians have a good instinct for working both sides of the street [1930s + Politics; probably fr the notion of a hoboes’ or beggars’ agreement to parcel out the territory]*

work both ways or cut two ways v phr To suggest or entail a necessary contrary; have double and opposite application: *Most often the claim of mental cruelty works both ways in a marriage/ I see your point, but don’t you see it cuts two ways? [originally fr the notion of a two-edged sword]*

worked up adj phr Angry; excited; distraught: *The whole town was worked up over the shooting incident (1883 +)*

working See HAVE something GOING FOR someone or something

working girl n phr A prostitute; HOOKER: *an old white pimp named Tony Roland who was known to handle the best-looking “working” girls in New York/ The customer was a working girl just like Jenny (1960s + Prostitutes)*

working stiff n phr A common working man; an ordinary worker: *made good cars cheap and paid working stiffs \$5 a day/ The author has been a novelist. He has also been a movie and TV working stiff (1930 +)*

work it v phr To behave in a blatantly seductive way; engage in

high-pressure salesmanship: *Meanwhile, De Luca and Saperstein are working it hard from the conference room* [1980s+; propagated from a scene in the 1990 movie *Pretty Woman*, in which one prostitute urges another to *Work it, girl*, “activate your derriere,” as she approaches a possible client]

work it into the ground *See* RUN something INTO THE GROUND

work like a charm *v phr* To achieve the objective with perfect success (1880+)

work one's nerves *v phr* GET ON someone's NERVES: *More energy going nowhere. It's working my nerves* (1990s+)

workout *n* **1** A session of strenuous physical exercises, practice of athletic efforts, etc: *He came in sweating after his morning workout* (1909+) **2** A hard job; an exhausting effort: *She told us that handling that kid all day is one hell of a workout*

work out *v phr* **1** To end; eventuate; PLAY OUT, RUN, SHAKE OUT: *How's this plan going to work out?* (1885+) **2** To do strenuous exercises; have a hard session of physical conditioning: *The president works out every day in the palace gym* (1909+)

work something out *v phr* To achieve an agreement, esp by compromise: *We'll just stay at it until we work something out* [1970s+; found by 1849 in the sense “to solve”]

work someone over *v phr* To beat someone, esp cruelly and systematically; MESS someone UP: *He tells me to work this guy over, do a number on him* (1927+)

works *n* The devices used for injecting narcotics; drug paraphernalia;
FIT: *When he awakes in the morning he reaches instantly for his
“works,” eyedropper, needle, and bottle top (1930s + Narcotics)*

works, the, or the whole works *n phr* Everything; the totality of
resources; the WHOLE SCHMEAR, the WHOLE NINE YARDS: *the works, shave,
haircut, massage, and tonic [1912 + ; perhaps like kit and caboodle in
referring to an entire outfit of equipment, conceived as a works,
“factory, workplace and equipment”; perhaps referring to the
entirety of a mechanism like that in gum up the works]* **See** GIVE
someone THE WORKS, GUM UP, IN THE PIPELINE, SHOOT THE WORKS

work up *v phr* To devise; WHOMP UP: *We’ll have to work up a good story
to explain this one (mid-1800s +)*

work oneself up *v phr* To allow oneself to get very upset: *worked
herself up for nothing*

world **See** DEAD TO THE WORLD, FREEWORLD, GO AROUND THE WORLD, HAVE THE WORLD BY THE
BALLS, I’LL TELL THE WORLD, OUT OF THIS WORLD

world-beater *n* A very effective person; a winner; a champion:
Sometimes I think you’re a world-beater (1893 +)

world-class *adj* Very superior; outstanding; super-excellent: *a few of
the nasties are scenery-chomping world-class scum/ took one look at
me and bolted off in world-class time!* [1950 + ; fr the superiority of
an athlete who competes successfully in the Olympic Games or
other worldwide events]

world is one’s oyster, the *sentence* The person referred to is doing
very well, is prosperous, is happy, has great prospects, etc: *Before*

the crash his rich grandfather figured the world was his oyster

worm *n* <1> A despicable person; BASTARD, JERK: *Cut that out, you little worm (fr 800s)* 2 (also **tapeworm**) A program that copies itself from one computer to another in a network, does not destroy data, but can clutter up a system: *which is now classified as a “worm” because the writer of the program did not mean to do damage/ A worm, in computerese, is one of the many varieties of viruses that infect computers (late 1980s + Computer)* **See** CAN OF WORMS

worm-burner *n* A fast-moving ground ball in baseball, golf, etc

worm-food *n* A dead body; corpse

wormhole *n phr* An unauthorized way into a computer system: *an unknown hacker burrowed electronically through a “worm hole” of the World Wide Web (late 1980s + Computer)*

worm out of something *v phr* To evade or avoid an unpleasant situation, esp by ignominious means: *This time we have him dead to rights, and he won’t worm out of it (1893 +)*

worm one’s way *v phr* To enter or penetrate stealthily, like a worm or snake: *has used his sophisticated skill to worm his way into many of the nation’s telephone networks (1845 +)*

worry **See** NOT TO WORRY

worrywart *n phr* A person who worries excessively; a constantly apprehensive person [1956 +; fr the designation of such a person in the comic strip “Out Our Way” by J R Williams]

worship the porcelain god(dess) *v phr* To vomit, esp in the toilet

See HUG THE PORCELAIN GOD(DESS), PRAY TO THE PORCELAIN GOD

worst-case scenario *n phr* A speculation or prediction as to what would happen if everything turned out as badly as possible: *our worst-case scenario in Western Europe (1960s + Armed forces)*

worth **See** TWO CENTS' WORTH

worth one's salt *adv* Worth what it costs to keep: *anyone worth their salt will be kept*

would you buy a used car from this man *question* Can this person really be trusted; is this an honest face [1960s+ ; fr the belief that used-car salesmen are notoriously dishonest; popularized as applied to President Richard M Nixon]

wound or wound up *adj phr* Tense; anxious; on edge: *She was a tall, angular woman, tightly wound, with a Nefertiti profile and hands made for scratching (1788+)*

wounded **See** WALKING WOUNDED

wounded duck *n phr* **1** In baseball, a short looping fly that falls for a hit; TEXAS LEAGUER **2** In football, a wobbling forward pass, which might be intercepted (1980s+ *Sports*)

wow¹ *interj* (also **wowee-kazowee** or **wowie-kazowie**) An exclamation of pleasure, wonder, admiration, surprise, etc • This old interjection had a new popularity in the early 1900s and again during the 1960s and later: *Wow, what a nice voice you have! / Oh, wow, far out! / Hey, wow! / I have a PhD in communications from UCLA. Well, wowee-kazowee! / Big rock-'n'-roll concerts are often as*

much about wowie-kazowie production values, video, neon, fireworks, suggestively costumed young men and women, as music (entry form 1513 +, variants 1990s +) **n** 1 Something very exciting and successful; a sensation: *It would be a wow of a scrap/ a wow of a line!* (1920 +) 2 A theatrical success; BOFFOLA, HIT (1920s + *Show business*) **v** To impress someone powerfully and favorably; KNOCK someone DEAD, LAY THEM IN THE AISLES: *wondering whether he'll make a fraternity and whether or not he'll wow the girls/ all self-proclaimed poets who, to wow an audience, utter some resonant line (1920s + Show business)* [echoic of a bark or howl of approval] **See** POWWOW

wow² **n** An intrusive wavering sound from a record player, usually caused by uneven running of the turntable [1930s + Electronics; echoic of a howl or yowl]

wowser¹ **n** Something very successful and impressive; a sensation; **wow¹**: *It would make a wowser of a movie/ The four-beat peroration is a wowser* [1928 +; fr *wow*, perhaps influenced by *rouser*]

wowser² **n** A stiff and puritanical person; a prude and prig; KILLJOY, PARTY POOPER • Now outdated and sure to be confused with **wowser¹**: *men of letters, who would swoon at the sight of a split infinitive, such wowsers they are in regard to pure English* [1899 +; origin unknown; claimed in 1899 by John Norton, an Australian muckraking publisher, as his coined acronym for the name of his organization *We Only Want Social Evils Righted*]

wrap **n**: *Well, it's a wrap on the squash* **v** To complete; finish; **WRAP UP**: *Filming, based on Bob Randall's 1977 thriller, wrapped last summer/ Because when it wraps, they strike the sets and you're stuck* (1970s +

Movies and television) [possibly fr the shrouding of a corpse]

wrapped *adj* Under control; in hand; TOGETHER: *got everything wrapped, whole fuckin' world on the half-shell (1980s +)*

wrapped up *adj* Busy with someone or something: *wrapped up with a customer*

wrapper *See* PLAIN WRAPPER

wraps *See* UNDER WRAPS

wrap-up *n* A completion; a final treatment, summary, etc; RECAP: *This is the 11:30 pm wrap-up of the news (1950s +)*

wrap up *v phr* To complete; finish: *Let's wrap the matter up now and call it a day (1926 +)*

wreck *n* **1** An old car or other vehicle; HEAP, JALOPY (1930s +) **2** An exhausted or dissipated person; a human ruin: *He's pretty smart, but physically a wreck (1795 +)*

wrecked *adj* Intoxicated with or addicted to narcotics (1960s +
Narcotics)

wriggle out *v phr* To avoid or evade something (1848 +)

wringer *See* GET ONE'S TAIL IN A GATE, PUT SOMEONE THROUGH THE WRINGER

wrinkle *n* **1** An idea, device, trick, notion, style, etc, esp a new one: *Wearing that thing sideways is a nice wrinkle (1817 +)* **2** A defect or problem, esp a minor one; BUG: *The plan's still got a few wrinkles, nothing we can't handle (1643 +)* [origin of first sense unknown; perhaps fr the same semantic impulse as *twist* in a similar sense,

referring to a quick shift in course; perhaps a reference to a lack of plain simplicity in dress or decoration, and the prevalence of stylish pleats, folds, etc, since the earliest form is *without all wrinkles*; second sense fr the notion of *ironing the wrinkles out of something*]

Wrinkle City *n phr* 1 Old age; the golden years: *Women live with an unspoken fear of Wrinkle City/ I mean, 45 isn't exactly Wrinkle-City* 2 (also **Wrinkle Village**) A place inhabited or frequented by old people: *I'm not quite ready to dodder around Wrinkle Village* (1980s +)

wrinkly or **wrinklie** *n* An old person: *I tried to help this wrinkly cross the street* (1972 +)

wrist *See* GIVE someone A SLAP ON THE WRIST, LIMP WRIST

write someone a blank check *See* GIVE someone A BLANK CHECK

write home about *See* NOTHING TO WRITE HOME ABOUT

write the book *v phr* To be very authoritative or seasoned; be an expert • Usu in the past tense: *Can she sing? Hell, she wrote the book* (1980s +)

write-up *n* A written article, news story, etc: *I figure you have seen the write-ups/ The papers gave his book a good write-up* (1885 +)

wrong guy (or gee) *n phr* A man who cannot be trusted; a devious and corrupt man: *You're guilty the second that spotlight hits you 'cause you're a wrong guy* (1920s + *Underworld*)

wrongo *adj* 1 Prone to error; inept: *an almost endearingly wrong-o,*

sloppily managed outfit **2** Undesirable: *That's the wrongo car for her* **n**
1 A wicked or criminal person; a villain **2** An undesirable person or
thing; a person of the wrong sort: a "closet for wrongos" on the
second floor that "looks like an attic decorated by a cross-eyed paper
hanger in a hurry" **3** Something wrong or improper; an error, lie,
misstatement, etc: *They haven't hit me with a wrongo yet, although
they did miss a whopper this morning (1937+)*

wrong side of the bed *See* GOT UP ON THE WRONG SIDE OF THE BED

wrong side of the tracks, the *adv phr* A socially and economically
inferior neighborhood; the slums: *He did very well for a boy from the
wrong side of the tracks/ I was born on the wrong side of the tracks* [fr
the fact that poor and industrial areas were often located on one
side of the railroad *tracks*, partly because prevailing wind patterns
would carry smoke into them and away from the better-off
neighborhoods]

wrong way, the *See* RUB SOMEONE THE WRONG WAY

wrote *See* THAT'S ALL SHE WROTE

wuffo *n* A person who annoyingly asks "why" or "what for"
questions

wuss or **wussy** (*WOO* see) *n* A weak person; PUSSY-CAT, WIMP: **6** *Ways Not
to be a Wuss/ "Wussy" was a particularly expressive word, the handy
combination of wimp and pussy [1960s+ Teenagers; perhaps a
shortening of hypothetical pussy-wussy]*

wussiness *n* Weakness; ineffectuality: *Paglia wants to get the wussiness
out of culture (1980s+)*

X

X¹ n A person's signature: *Just put your X on this and we're in business*
[fr the custom of an illiterate person to make an X in place of a written signature]

X² n Ecstasy, a variety of amphetamine narcotic (1990s+ *Narcotics*)
v To use the narcotic ecstasy: *Many of us have had the experience of being around someone who is X-ing*

X amount n phr An indefinite number: *There's always X amount of people out there laughing and talking* [1970s+; fr the algebraic symbol X]

X'd out modifier Eliminated; crossed-out: *X'd out items on the to-do list*

X-er n A member of Generation X: *a 25-year-old self-proclaimed champion of the X-ers* (1990s+)

X marks the spot sentence This is the place; here is the exact location: *I pointed to the map and told her "X marks the spot"*
[1813+; fr the graphic convention of designating a precise location on a picture, map, etc, with an X; the date refers to the earliest example found where a particular place is marked with an X]

X-rated *adj* Lewd; obscene; pornographic; BLUE, DIRTY: *He uttered a few well-chosen X-rated words* [fr the now-superseded early 1950s system of rating movies according to the amount of sex, verbal obscenity, violence, etc, they contain, X being the most censorious rating]

Xs and Os *n phr* Symbols used to chart plays with Xs and Os representing players: *He gets the job done; he's a great "X" and "O" guy/ "You coach a mentality," Kotite said before today's game. "It's not just Xs and Os" (1990s + Sports)*

XX (duh ə EKS) *n* A betrayal; DOUBLE CROSS: *I know you gave me the XX (1930s +)* **XYZ** *interj* Examine one's zipper; make certain one's fly is zipped up

Y

-y *See* -IE

Y, the *n phr* One of the recreational, social, and athletic organizations or facilities for young persons, such as the YMCA, the YMHA, the YWCA, etc: *He lives in a room at the Y (1915 +)*

yada, yada, yada *n phr* Talk, talk, talk: *the BS of her yada, yada, yada*

yadda yadda *adv phr* And so on; so they say repeatedly: *Snyder is too old, too abrasive, yadda yadda, on and on (1990s +)*

yahoo *n* An oaf; an uncultivated or boorish person; JERK: *look, you yahoo, take a seat*

yak (also **yack** or **yack-yack** or **yack-yack-yack** or **yackety-yack** or **yackety-yak** or **yak-yak** or **yak-yak-yak** or **yakitty-yack** or **yakkity-yak** or **yock** or **yock-yock** or **yock-yock-yock** or **yok** or **yok-yok** or **yok-yok-yok** or **yuck** or **yuck-yuck** or **yuck-yuck-yuck** or **yuk** or **yuk-yuk** or **yuk-yuk-yuk**) *n 1* Talk, esp idle or empty chatter; mere babbling: *All they can talk about, yack-yack-yack, is their own specialty/ I don't care how owlsh you look, how convincing you sound, this is just yak yak yak until you do it/ in the midst of all the political yuk-yuk that dins around us/ if the State*

Department would stop its incessant yakitty-yak (1958 +) **2** A laugh; a guffaw: “Take off your clothes.” Pause for audience yuks/ *It makes me furious when I have a corny line and it gets a yock (1938 +)* **v 1** (also **yack it up** or **yak it up** or **yock it up** or **yuk it up**): *Everybody is yakking out an opinion on whether he should now reconsider his candidacy/ sparing the rod and yak-yak-king and explaining all the time/ The students were seated on the floor, still yocking away/ I’ll be 75 and hanging around bars yocking it up (1950 +)* **2** (also **yack it up** or **yak it up** or **yock it up** or **yuk it up**): *Ken Gaul is yukking, tugging at his pointy satyr’s beard/ There’d be Don, yockin’ it up like crazy. He’s so hysterical with laughter/ former senator George McGovern, yukking it up with Paul Volcker (1938 +)* [echoic, perhaps of Yiddish origin]

yakky *adj* Talkative; garrulous; noisy **n**: *a welcome antidote to the yakkies who can’t be bothered by anybody else (1950s +)*

yak show *modifier*: *despite what you may have heard from Ralph Nader or some radio yak-show host* **n phr** A radio talk show (1980s +)

Yale *See* JOE YALE

yammer **n** Talking: *He kept up his tedious yammer (1500 +)* **v 1** To talk loudly; **YAK**: *They were yammering away about taxes (1513 +)* **2** To complain; whine and nag; **BITCH**: *They are always yammering about mere details (1786 +)* [fr Scots dialect, related to German *Jammer*, “lamentation, misery”]

yang or **yang-yang** **n** The penis; **JANG, WANG**: *A macho machine, a*

celebration of the yang, bang, whang/ Like I need a three-foot yang-yang (1970s +) See YING-YANG

yank *v* To victimize or harass; dupe; mislead: *The detective uses expressions like “You gotta be yankin’ me” [1970s + ; an alteration and shortening of yank someone’s chain or jerk someone around or jack someone around]*

Yank *n* **1** A US citizen; an American: *inquiring after the “Yank” and swearing to have his life (1778 +)* **2** A US soldier: *Some Tommies resented the Yanks for being overpaid (WWI British army) [a shortening fr Yankee for both senses]*

yank someone’s chain *See* JERK someone’s CHAIN

yantsy *adj* Excited; nervous; aroused; ANTSY [1970s + ; probably an alteration of *antsy*]

yap¹ *n* **1** A stupid person; a half-wit; BOOB: *just a no-account yap (1894 +)* **2** A rural person; HICK, YOKEL (1900 + *Hoboes*) **3** A criminal’s victim; MARK, PATSY (1912 + *Underworld*) [probably fr British dialect, “half-wit”]

yap² *n* The mouth; BAZOO: *every time you open your yap to say something (1900 +)* *v* To talk, esp idly or naggingly; YAMMER: *You’ve been yapping away (1886 +)* [probably echoic, and similar to the sense “yelp,” esp as a small dog does] *See* BLOW OFF one’s MOUTH, OPEN one’s YAP

YAP (pronounced as separate letters) *n* A young person in one of the learned and well-paid professions [1970s + ; fr *Young American Professional*]

yard¹ n A hundred dollars; a \$100 bill: “*Mac, what you payin’ for this?*” *Stony looked around the room. “A yard and a half”* [1926 +; fr the unit of measure] **See** HALF A YARD

yard² v To be sexually unfaithful; CHEAT: *She told him she didn’t like to yard on her man* [1960 + Black; said to be fr the phrase *backyard woman*, “mistress, illicit sex partner”] **See** the BACK YARD

yardbird n 1 A convict (1956 +) 2 A recruit; a basic trainee (*WWII armed forces*) 3 A soldier who because of ineptitude or misdemeanor is confined to a certain area, and often ordered to keep it clean and neat (*WWII armed forces*) [fr the fact that convicts exercise in the *yard* of the prison, and that neophyte soldiers are confined to the grounds of the training post during their first weeks; the basic metaphor is probably based on the behavior of urban pigeons]

yard dog n A disgusting or despicable person whom one does not want around

yards **See** the WHOLE NINE YARDS

yarf v: *The kid was yarfing at me, I mean, Pete was whining and complaining about the shift. Kid complained a lot, ma’am* (1990s +)

yatata (YA tə tæ) **n** Talk, esp idle talk and chatter; **YAK v:** *Mustn’t yatata yatata yatata in the public library* [1940s +; echoic]

yatter n 1 Incessant talk; chatter; **YATATA** (1825 +) 2 Talk, esp loud talk; chatter; **YAK, YAMMER:** *the yatter against a military man in the White House* (1827 +) [echoic]

yawn *See* TECHNICOLOR YAWN

yawner *n* Something boring; a tedious account: *Most of the time, stories about child care are a snooze, total yawners (1940s +)*

yawn in Technicolor *v phr* To vomit; BARF, RALPH: *John was sick. He yawned in Technicolor all over Mary's lap (1980s +)*

yay or yea (YAY) *adv* To this extent; this; so • A sort of demonstrative adverb used with adjectives of size, height, extent, etc, and often accompanied by a hand gesture indicating size: *Dorsey almost did him in yea years ago/ Helen Venable said she'd swear on a stack of Bibles yea high [1950s + ; perhaps fr yea, "yes," specialized fr an earlier sense "even, truly, verily" to something like "even so, truly so, verily so"; perhaps fr Pennsylvania German, based on German je]*

yazzihamper *n* An obnoxious person

yea big *modifier* About this big • Said with a hand gesture to explain size: *been here since he was yea big*

yeah (YE, YE ə) *affirmation* Yes; certainly; right: *Don't say "yeah."*
It's common (1905 +) *See* OH YEAH

yeah man *interj* An exclamation of agreement, pleasure, affirmation, etc (1934 +)

yeah, right *interj* I don't think so • Said with complete disbelief and sarcasm: *You'll clean the house? Yeah, right*

year *n* One dollar; a dollar bill (1935 + *Underworld*) *See* OUT YEAR

yecch or yech *See* YUCK

yegg *n* A thief or burglar, esp an itinerant thief or safecracker
[1903+ Underworld; origin unknown; said to be fr the name of John Yegg, a Swedish tramp and safebreaker; perhaps fr German *Jäger*, “hunter,” applied to a safecracker’s advance scouts, but originally *yeggman*]

yell bloody (or blue) murder *v phr* To shout and complain loudly:
The crowd in the kitchen was yelling bloody murder [entry form 1931+, variant 1859+; *scream bloody murder* is found by 1882]

yell one’s head off *v phr* To complain loudly and persistently;
express oneself forcefully (1940s+)

yellow *adj* 1 Cowardly; faint-hearted; CHICKEN: *Don’t get into this race if you’re yellow* (1856+) 2 Having light skin for a black person: *You know that baker we hired. The yellow boy* (1808+) *n* Cowardice; poltroonery; excessive timidity • Most often in the expression “yellow streak” or “streak of yellow”: *I’m afraid he has a streak of yellow in him* (1896+) [the origin of the coward sense is unknown; perhaps it is derived fr the traditional symbolic meanings of *yellow*, among which were “deceitfulness, treachery, degradation, the light of hell”] **See** HIGH YELLOW

yellow-bellied *adj* Cowardly; YELLOW: *You yellow-bellied jerk* (1924+)

yellow-belly *n* A coward; a poltroon: *He is a contemptible yellow-belly, scared of his own shadow* [1930+; probably a rhyming expansion of *yellow*; influenced by the early 1800s sense, “a Mexican, esp a Mexican soldier,” perhaps fr the color of their uniforms]

yellow-card *v phr* To punish someone for a stupid action: *We yellow-*

carded him for leaving the beer in his drunk where we could find it [fr a soccer penalty]

yellow dog n phr 1 A contemptible person; scoundrel; cur; BASTARD (1881 +) 2 An informer; RAT (1980s + *Underworld*)

yellow jacket n phr A capsule of Nembutal™, a barbiturate narcotic (1960s + *Narcotics*)

yellow sunshine n phr ACID, LSD (1960s + *Narcotics*)

yelper n The screaming and wavering warning signal used on police cars, ambulances, and other emergency vehicles: *two police cars going north with yelpers wide open* (1970s +)

yen n A strong craving; a keen desire; a passion: *He's got a yen for faro/ a yen to put on paper what I was saying in class* (1906 +) **v:** *I yenned to own a Rolls Royce* (1919 +) [fr a Peking dialect Chinese word, “smoke,” hence opium, perhaps reinforced by *yearn*; found by 1876 as “the craving of a narcotic addict”]

yenta or yente (YEN ə) **n** A garrulous and gossipy person, usu a woman; BLABBERMOUTH: *Terrible Tom and Rampaging Rona stopped talking to each other, which is something small-screen yentas should never do* [1923 +; fr a Jewish woman's given name perhaps derived fr Italian *Gentile* or French *Gentille*, degraded by its association with a humorous character *Yente* Telebende in a regular column of the New York Yiddish newspaper the *Jewish Daily Forward*]

yentz v 1 To cheat; swindle; EUCHRE, SCAM: *Don't trust him, he'll yentz you* (1930 +) <2> To do the sex act with or to; SCREW 3 To abuse (1950 + *Prison*) [fr Yiddish fr German *jenes*, “that thing, the

unmentionable thing”]

yep affirmation Yes; certainly; sure; YEAH (1891 +) **See** NOPE

yesca n Marijuana; POT (1950s + *Narcotics*)

yes-man n An obsequious and flattering subordinate; ASS-KISSER: *Joe*

Davies, Roosevelt’s yes-man at the Kremlin/ This president doesn’t want

yes-men [1913 +; said to have appeared first in a 1913 drawing by the sports cartoonist T A Dorgan, showing a group of newspaper assistants, each labeled *yes-man*, all firmly agreeing with their chief; perhaps fr German *Jaherr*, cited in 1941 as “long current”]

yes siree or yes siree bob affirmation: *I’ll take that, yes siree bob, I’ll take that any day of the week* (1846 +)

◀**Yid or yid**▶ (YID) **n** A Jew • Not felt to be offensive if pronounced (YEED) by Jews themselves: *Some boy was not admitted to a secret society because he was a “Yid”* [1874 +; fr Yiddish, ultimately fr Hebrew *Yehuda*, “Judea”]

yike or yikes interj An exclamation of alarm or surprise: *“There are people next door,” she said. “Yikes,” Hawk said (first form 1940s +, variant 1971 +)*

ying-yang or yin-yang n 1 The anus; ASS, ASSHOLE, WHERE THE SUN DOESN’T SHINE

• Nearly always in the expression *up the ying-yang*, “in great abundance”: *A mother-jumper of a winter. Snow up the yin-yang*

(1970s +) **2** The penis; PRICK: *a peek at one of my troopers with tubes up his ying-yang* (1960s +) **3** A stupid or foolish person (1970s +

Army) [origin uncertain; perhaps coined because of the increasing currency of the Chinese term *yin and yang*, “the female and male

principles in nature,” influenced by *wang*, “penis”; perhaps fr Louisiana French *yan-yan*, “ass”]

yin-yang or **ying-yang** *n* Nonsense; cant; BULLSHIT: *talking all this yin-yang about us women (1990s +)*

yip *v* To talk in an insistent, petulant, and annoying way: *Will you please stop yipping about your rights?* [1907 +; echoic of the high-pitched bark of a small dog]

yipe or **yipes** or **yikes** *interj* An exclamation of dismay, alarm, emphatic response, etc: *Yipes, it's a rattlesnake! Yipe, that hurt!* [esp teenagers; probably fr the spontaneous interjection *yi*, a cry of pain or dismay, with the *p* or *k* stop intruding after lip closure, as it does in *nope* and *yep*]

yippee (yip EE) *interj* An exclamation of pleasure, approval, triumph, etc: *Yippee, all my candidates won!* (1920 +)

yippie *n* A member of the Youth International Party, a left-wing group espousing values of the counterculture movement of the 1960s and early '70s [1969 +; fr the acronym of the name of the group, reinforced by the rhyme with *hippie*]

yips *n*: *The president mused about his “yips,” anxiety when putting (1963 + Golf)*

YM *v* To send a message via Yahoo Messenger: *He YMed me (1990s + Computer)*

yo *interj* A greeting or said to get someone's attention; HEY: *Yo, dudes and babes!* [1859 +; even though *yo* and *yoho* are very old

utterances, found by 1420, the recent revival of *yo* as a primarily black interjection has spawned comment; Ernest Paolino of Philadelphia, indignant because a New York writer had claimed the syllable for New York, recalls it from the 1930s as shortening of *walyo*; in the WWII Army it was the common form of *here!* used in responding to roll-calls]

yo-boy *See* WIGGER

yock *See* YAK

yok *See* YAK

yoke *v* To rob with violence; rob and mutilate; MUG: *They decided to “yoke” the old man with the hearing aid* [1900s + ; said to be fr the seizing of the *yoke* of a sailor’s collar from behind in order to subdue and rob him]

yokel *n* A rural person; a bumpkin; HAYSEED, HICK [1812 + ; perhaps fr a dialect name for a woodpecker, hence semantically similar to British dialect *gowk*, “cuckoo, simpleton”] *See* LOCAL YOKEL

yo mama *interj* **1** Hey, you **2** So you say

yonder *See* DOWN YONDER

Yooper *n* A resident of the Upper Peninsula of Michigan: *Michigan’s distant Upper Peninsula, aka “The Land Above the Bridge” or home of the “Yoopers”* (1990 +)

you *See* SAYS YOU

you ain’t seen nothing yet *sentence* What follows is much better than what you have had before: *put her mouth lightly against mine*

and said “You ain’t seen nothing yet” [1920s + ; this was a catch-line of the singer and comedian Al Jolson, and the first words in his 1927 movie *The Jazz Singer*]

you and what army or you and who else *interj* Who is daring to threaten me?

you bet (or betcha) *affirmation* Yes; certainly; surely; BET YOUR BOOTS [1857 + ; *betcha* form fr *you bet you* or *you bet your life*]

you (or you’d) better believe something *sentence* Something is absolutely certain; something is assured; you are absolutely right: *Am I ready to try? You better believe it/ You’d better believe she’s the best* (1856 +)

you can say that again *sentence* That is absolutely right; I totally agree with you (1941 +)

you can’t fight city hall *sentence* It is futile to pit yourself against the political or other chiefs and their establishment; it is foolish to take on a battle you cannot possibly win (1970s +)

you can’t get there from here *sentence* **1** The place referred to is very remote and the route hard to describe (1930s +) **2** The problem described is insoluble

you can’t make an omelet without breaking eggs *sentence* One must sometimes do evil or cause damage and inconvenience to accomplish good; the end justifies the means [1898 + ; in the form “an omelet cannot be made without breaking eggs” found by 1859]

you can’t take it with you *sentence* You’d better use it because after

you die it's not useable

you can't win *interj* It is hopeless (1926 +)

you can't win 'em all *sentence* One cannot always be successful; WIN
A FEW LOSE A FEW • Often said ruefully after one has failed, or
comfortingly to someone else who has failed [1910+ Sports;
attributed to a pitcher named Clifton G Curtis after losing his 23rd
game of the season]

you don't have to be a brain surgeon *sentence* (Variations: It
doesn't take or You don't need may replace you don't have to
be; Harvard MBA or rocket scientist may replace brain surgeon)
This problem is not very difficult; superintelligence is not required:
*It doesn't take a brain surgeon to realize that some viewers might be
uncomfortable with this subject/ You don't need an MBA from Harvard
to understand the long-term consequences/ We didn't have to be rocket
scientists to understand that this would put us on the leading edge*
(1990s +)

you foul *n phr* Your fault or mistake (1990s + Teenagers)

you go *See* THERE YOU ARE

you got a problem with that *question* Does something about my
true and useful statement bother you • A very truculent response:
*So she's not Mother Teresa in a tut, you got a problem with that?/
Evander Holyfield, who'll defend his heavyweight title this week,
loosens up with ballet exercises. You got a problem with that?*
(1990s +)

you got it *interj 1* I agree; I will give you what you requested: *Double*

order of fries? You got it 2 You are right: You got it. I'm finished

you-know-what (or -who) *n* Something or someone one does not wish to name, usu because it is both obvious and indelicate or taboo; WHAT'SIS: *They were knocked on their you-know-what/ A Rhodes scholar, he earned his law degree at Yale (like you-know-who) (1605 +)*

◁**you must have mistaken me for someone who gives a shit**▷
sentence I do not care at all and you know that; what makes you think I care

you name it *sentence* You cannot designate anything not included here; the WHOLE SCHMEAR: *Casinos, giant water slides, aquariums, old-time steam engines, wine tasting, you name it: attracting tourists has become the gold rush of the '90s [1962 + ; fr the retailing locution you name it, we got it]*

young squirt *See* SQUIRT

Young Turk *n phr* A person, usu a young one, who threatens to overthrow an established system or order; an active rebel or reformer: *He scrutinizes the new staff very carefully, and is dreadfully fearful of potential Young Turks [1908 + ; originally, a member of Young Turkey, a revolutionary party of late 1800s Turkey, which finally established constitutional government in 1908]*

you pays your money and you takes your choice *sentence* The proposition is very uncertain; take a good guess: *How many shots were fired at the OK Corral? No one knows. Just pay your money and take your choice (1883 +)*

your basic *adj phr* Definite; unquestionable • Used with a negating irony or slight sense of disbelief: *Now that would be your basic clue, right?/ He had your basic heart of gold (1980s +)*

you're another *sentence* A contemptuous response to an insult: *Oh yeah, big shot? Well, you're another! (1534 +)*

your ear *See* PUT IT IN YOUR EAR

you're damn (or darn) tootin' *affirmation* That is emphatically true; you are absolutely right: *Did I run? You're damn tootin' I did (1932 +)*

you're telling me *interj* I strongly agree (1932 +)

you're the doctor *sentence* I defer to your authority: *You're the doctor. But I wouldn't do it that way (1920 +)*

you're (or you) the man *interj* Congratulations: *Good work. You the man*

your money is no good here *sentence* You are our guest; you get everything free • Modified to a clause in the example: *The FBI agents began to discover that their money was no good in Wright City, and this made them uncomfortable (1900 +)*

yours truly *pron phr* I; me; myself: *Both of whom are repped by yours truly* [1844 +; fr the conventional parting salutation of a letter]

you said it *affirmation* You are absolutely right; that is correct; DEF, RIGHT ON (1919 +)

you scratch my back, I scratch yours *sentence* Let us cooperate; let us be reciprocally and mutually helpful: *I'd love the whole country to*

get a good gander at how a labor union's supposed to run! You scratch my back, I'll scratch yours! [1858 +; *scratch me and I'll scratch thee* is found by 1704]

yowza or **yowsah** *affirmation* Yes, sir; certainly: *Recycling tax. Camping fees. State park fees. License plate renewal tax. Yowza* [1934 +; popularized by the band leader Ben Bernie]

yo-yo *n* 1 A vacillating person; one who has no firm convictions: *Feldstein's sudden turnaround makes the president look like a yo-yo* (1958 +) 2 A stupid and obnoxious person; JERK, NERD: *Some yo-yo yells "What happened, you bum?"* (1970 + *Teenagers*)

yuck (also **ech** or **yecch** or **yech**) *interj* An exclamation of disgust: *"Those women on the PBS specials seem to love it." "Yuck," Connie mugged* (1969 +) *n* A disgusting substance, person, or thing; someone or something nasty: *precipitation in the form of rain, snow, and assorted other atmospheric yuck/ clean all the yecch out of her system/ Mario is an intellectually dishonest person. He's just yecch* (1943 +) [perhaps echoic of gagging or vomiting] **See** YAK

yucky or **yecchy** or **yucko** *adj* Disgusting, esp in a filthy and viscous way; thoroughly nasty: *Some of it is awful yucky/ Cripes, what's that yucko bulging overhead object?* (1970 +)

yuk **See** YAK

yukdom *n* The realm of comedy; humor: *Their credits run the gamut of TV yukdom* (1990s +)

yukmeister or **yukster** *n* A comedian: *every yukmeister, including Prior, starts somewhere/ scored some points as a yukster during his pre-*

meal prayer Thursday (first form 1990s +, variant 1980s +)

yummy *adj* Pleasant, esp sensually; delicious; delightful: *What a yummy cake! / a yummy prospect (1899 +)*

Yumpie *n* YUPPIE: *the highly desirable “Yumpies,” young, upwardly mobile professionals [1984 +; fr young upwardly mobile professional]*

yum-yum *interj* An exclamation of pleasure, esp of sensual delight (1878 +) *n* Something sweet or pleasant, esp to eat (1889 +) [perhaps fr a locution used with children, hence contextually as well as phonetically related to *tummy* or *tum-tum*]

yup *affirmation* YEP (1906 +)

Yuppie *n* (also **Yup** or **yuppoid** or **yupster**) An affluent, usu city-dwelling, professional in his or her 20s and 30s; a prosperous and ambitious young professional: *Yuppies are dedicated to the twin goals of making piles of money and achieving perfection through physical fitness and therapy / The narrow dance floor is soon crammed with “Yuppies,” young urban professionals taking time out from social climbing / The Yups discover that the locals have been putting up with this for years / His death must have made more than a few Madison yupsters check their calendars / photos of two generically cheerful yuppoids holding scotch glasses [1984 +; fr young urban professional, and modeled on *yippie*; perhaps coined for a 1983 book called *The Yuppie Handbook*, which was modeled on the earlier book *The Official Preppy Handbook*]*

yuppify *v* To change a place, clothing, etc, to be characteristic of or welcoming to yuppies (1984 +)

◁yutz▷ **n 1** The penis; COCK, PRICK, SCHLONG: *as I was sticking my yutz into her Dark Place (1980s +)* **2** (also **yotz**) A fool; LOSER: *My ex-boyfriend was such a yutz/ some sweaty, exhausted, dignity-free yutz in a grotesquely unnatural pose (1980s + Students) [origin unknown]*

Z

Z¹ or Zee *n* Some sleep; a nap: *If he wants a few zees we can go on automatic* **v** To sleep; snooze; COP ZS: *Gotta Z a little while* [1960s + ; fr the conventional sibilant or buzzing sound attributed to a sleeping or snoring person]

Z² *n* An ounce of a narcotic: *trips to the rundown neighborhood to purchase Zs (ounces) and even Ks (kilograms) of cocaine* [1960s + Narcotics; fr the conventional abbreviation of *ounce*, “oz”]

za or **‘za** (ZAH) *n* Pizza: *Rents are parents. Za is pizza* [1968 + Teenagers; a shortening of *pizza*]

zaftig *See* ZOFTIG

zany *adj* Amusingly or ridiculously strange (1918 +)

zap *interj* An exclamation imitating sudden impact; WHAM: *It’s a gradual thing. It ain’t zap, you’re healed* (1929 +) *n* Vitality; force; PIZZAZZ, ZIP (1968 +) **v** **1** To kill or disable; strike violently; CLOBBER, WASTE: *Sitcom Zaps Boardroom Bozos* (1942 +) **2** To administer electroshock therapy (1980s + *Medical*) **3** To cook or heat in a microwave oven; NUKE: *Zap one minute, open the microwave door, stir and break up the meat pieces with a fork* (1990s +) [fr the echoic word used to convey the sound of a ray gun in the comic strip

“Buck Rogers in the Twenty-Fifth Century”]

zapper *n* A remote control, esp for a television (1981 +)

zappy *adj* Having force, impact, energy, etc; PUNCHY, ZINGY: *black outlines, comic book blonde, and zappy words* (1969 +)

zarf *n* A repulsive person, esp male

zazzy *adj* Energetic; stylish (1961 +)

zebra *n* **1** A referee or other sports official who wears a striped shirt on the playing field: *Pro football zebras point immediately toward the offending team/ a crooked Zebra (also known as an umpire)* (1978 + *Sports*) **2** An unlikely, arcane, or obscure diagnosis (1980s + *Medical*) **3** A person of mixed black and white race: *I’ve been called a “zebra” and an “Oreo”* (1980s +) [the medical sense is fr the saying “If you hear horse’s hoofbeats going by outside, don’t look for zebras”]

zerking *adj* Behaving in a strange way; GOOFY, WACKY (1970s + *Teenagers*)

zero *n* A truly insignificant person: *That zero will never get her to go to the dance*

zero cool *adj phr* Extremely aware, alert, up-to-date, relaxed, etc; COOL [1980s +; probably fr the concept of *absolute zero*]

zero in *v phr* To aim at or concentrate on a specific person, thing, etc; single out: *We’re trying to zero in on the problem* [1944 +; fr the *zeroing* of the sights of a rifle, that is, adjusting the sights so that the round hits the exact point aimed at and the shooter needs to

make no, or *zero*, estimated correction in aiming]

zero out *v phr* To eliminate; reduce to nothing: *When Gingrich threatens to zero out all funding for public broadcasting, there's every reason to believe he can make good on the threat (1990s +)*

zero-tolerance *adj* Allowing no exceptions to a rule or law: *His parents have zero-tolerance policy on drugs* *n* Extreme intolerance of antisocial behavior; a policy of no exceptions to a rule or law: *The schools urge zero tolerance of smoking among minors*

zhlub *n* (also **schlub** or **shlub** or **shlubbo** or **zhlob** or **zshlub**) A coarse person; a boorish man; JERK, SLOB: *the presence of fine wines and the absence of shlubs/ replied Angela as she glided off to cut the poor schlub out of her will/ Lieberman was the worst. Lieberman was a real zshlub [1964 +; fr Yiddish fr Slavic, "coarse fellow"]*

zhlubby *adj* Having the qualities of a "zhlub"; coarse; boorish: *booze station for the zhlubby middle-aged boat owners from the other side (1964 +)*

◀**zig or zigabo or zigaboo**▶ *See* JIGABOO

ziggety *See* HOT DIGGETY

zig-zig *See* JIG-JIG

zilch *modifier*: *York has close to zilch industry* *n* **1** Nothing; zero; ZIP: *The city has turned its smaller islands into zilch/ got the jeep for practically zilch (1960s +)* **2** STORCH (1970s + *Teenagers*) **3** A minor skin lesion; ZIT (1970s + *Teenagers*) *v* To hold an opponent scoreless; BLANK, SKUNK (1960s + *Sports*) [probably fr *zero*, and like

*zip*¹, primarily a variant coined from a familiar word beginning with *z*; notice, in this regard, how *zilch* has become a variant of *zit*; in British use, but not US, *zilch* might be reinforced by *nil*, “zero”; all senses may derive fr the early 1900s US college use *Joe Zilsch*, “any insignificant person,” popularized during the 1930s by ubiquitous use in the humor magazine *Ballyhoo* with the spelling *Zilch*, an actual German surname of Slavic origin] **See** JOE BLOW, NOT KNOW BEANS

zillion **See** JILLION

zillionaire *n* An enormously rich person; a super-tycoon: *and Larry Dunlap will become an instant zillionaire/ his earlier piece about how the Hong Kong zillionaires are buying up San Francisco (1940 +)*

zine modifier: *Marr, 32, has been a part of San Francisco’s zine scene n*
A magazine (1965 +)

-zine (ZEEN) **suffix used to form nouns** Magazine: *teenzine/ fanzine* (1949 +)

zing *n* Energetic vitality; power; vigor; OOMPH, PEP, PIZZAZZ, ZIP: *Rock adds zing/ with plenty of zing in both the V-8 engine and the powerful Six (1918 +)* **v** **1** (also **zing along**) To move rapidly and strongly; ZIP: *The movie zings right along (1961 +)* **2** To throw; inject, esp rapidly and strongly: *like the Beatles every once in a while can zing it in there (1960s +)* **3** To insult; assault verbally, esp with bitter humor: *King Caen, who zings everyone, gets a taste of his own medicine/ A woman on the editorial board merrily zinged the winking minister (1974 +)*
[probably echoic of the whishing sound of rapid movement, like *zip* and *zoom*]

zinger *n* **1** A quip, esp one that is somewhat cruel and aggressive; a funny crack or punch line: *Watt's off-the-cuff zingers have been a frequent source of pain for the Reagan Administration/ The plump little actor is polished and funny; his zingers stay zung* **2** A quick and sharp response; a sturdy retort: *get right in there with Williams, stand eyeball to eyeball, and plant the zinger on him, bang, or else you would be dismissed (1950 +)*

zingy *adj* Full of energy and vigor; PEPPY, ZIPPY: *written by no less than the zingy Nora Ephron/ Zingy Zeroes, Wall Street's hot bonds (1948 +)*

zip¹ or **zippo** *n* **1** A mark or grade of zero **2** Zero; nothing; a score of zero; ZILCH: *People aren't exactly beating down the doors to buy California port. "The market is zip, zero, and not too much"/ dipped into your moneybag and found zippo [1900 + Students; like zilch, probably coined from a familiar word beginning with z] **See** NOT GIVE A DAMN, NOT KNOW BEANS*

zip² or **zippo** *n* Energy; vitality; vim; PIZZAZZ, ZING: *There is a zip and a zing here/ bounced back with the real zippo [1900 + ; echoic of the sound of something swishing rapidly through the air, giving an impression of force, and also of the tearing of cloth; such a use is attested fr 1875]*

◀**zip**³▶ *n* A Vietnamese; DINK [Vietnam War; said to be fr zero intelligence]

zip gun *n phr* A homemade pistol: *a zip gun, the kind kids make themselves (1950 +)*

zipless *adj* Denoting a sexual encounter that is brief and passionate

[1973+; coined by Erica Jong, “because when you came together, zippers fell away like petals”]

zip one's lip (or one's mouth) v phr To stop talking, esp abruptly and completely; SHUT UP: *I just had to zip my mouth and do what I could* [1942+; fr the notion that one has a *zipper* fastener *on one's mouth*]

zippo v To set something on fire; ignite something [1970s+ Army; fr *Zippo*, trademark of a cigarette lighter, probably fr the sound made as one turns the sparking wheel, and the speed with which the lighter ignites]

zippy adj Energetic; PEPPY, ZINGY: *the zippy pacing by Russell* [1904+; fr *zip*²]

zit n 1 A minor skin lesion; a pimple; a blackhead: *First Arnie's zits mysteriously clear up* **2** A mark left by a love-bite, a strong kiss, etc; HICKEY: *She tried to conceal the big zit on her neck* [1966+ Teenagers; origin unknown; perhaps echoic of the squishy pop made when the pus is squeezed from a blackhead]

zit doctor n phr A dermatologist (1960s+ *Medical*)

zits See TITS-AND-ZITS

zizz n: *She stretched out for a short zizz* **v** To sleep; snooze; nap; COP ZS (1920s+ *British armed forces*) [echoic of the sibilance or buzzing of one who sleeps, hence semantically akin to the notion of *sawing wood*]

zizzy¹ n A sleep; a nap; a snooze [WWII armed forces fr British; fr

zizz]

zizzy² *adj* Showy and frivolous; light; frothy [1966 + ; perhaps a thinning of *zazzy*; perhaps an alteration of *fizzy*]

zod *n* An eccentric and obnoxious person; CREEP, NERD [1970s + Teenagers; origin unknown; perhaps related to the alligator represented on *Izod*TM apparel]

zoftig or **zaftig** (ZAWF tik, ZAHF-) *adj* Sexually appealing or arousing to males, esp in a plump and well-rounded way; CURVACEOUS; BUILT LIKE A BRICK SHITHOUSE: *zoftig, pleasantly plump and pretty/ The legs of the Red Suit are cut so high and deep, even the leanest female bum looks like a zaftig peach* [1937 + ; fr Yiddish, literally “juicy”]

zoid *n* A nonconforming person; a misfit: *Andie doesn't “fit in” she's an outsider, a “zoid”* (1970s +)

zombie (ZAHM bee) *n* **1** A very strange person, esp one with a vacant, corpselike manner; WEIRDO (1930s + *Students*) **2** An unresponsive person; a mentally numb or dead person: *My students are all zombies this term* (1936 +) [origin uncertain; perhaps fr an African word akin to *nzambi*, “god”; perhaps fr Louisiana Creole, “phantom, ghost,” fr Spanish *sombra*, “shade, ghost”; popularized by horror stories and movies featuring the walking dead persons of voodoo belief]

zombie someone **out v phr** To make someone stuporous like a zombie: *The medication I received for a couple of years “zombied me out” so bad I couldn't work* (1980s +)

zone¹ *See* IN A ZONE, OZONE

zone² *n* (also **zoner**) A person intoxicated with narcotics, esp habitually so; SPACE CADET (1960s + Narcotics) *v* To be inattentive; be hazily preoccupied: *He zoned so bad he didn't even hear the teacher call his name/ I was kind of zonin', checking things out* (1980s +) [fr *ozone*, "a very high level of the atmosphere"]

zoned or **zoned out** *adj* or *adj phr* Intoxicated with narcotics; HIGH [1960s + Narcotics; fr *zone*; influenced by *spaced out*]

zone something **out** or **zone out** *v phr* To omit from consciousness; shut out of the mind: *I can just zone everything out and keep going* (1960s +)

zonk or **zonk out** *v* or *v phr* **1** To lose consciousness, esp from alcohol or narcotics; fall asleep; become stuporous: *He suddenly zonked and went rigid* (1968 +) **2** To strike a stupefying blow; CLOBBER: "We've been zonked," said Jim Robbins (1950 +) [fr *zonked*]

zonked or **zonked out** or **zonkers** *adj* or *adj phr* **1** Intoxicated by narcotics or alcohol; HIGH, STONED: *zonked, one step past being stoned/ Either while I was still zonked out or in the shower* (1960s + Narcotics) **2** Very enthusiastic; excited; HIGH: *Rene Carpenter remembers Gilruth as "a kindly, wonderful man who was zonked on this project"* (1970s +) **3** Exhausted; BEAT, POOPED: *After just an hour of that I was zonked* (1972 +) [echoic of a heavy blow; a 1929 *Bookman* article on sound effects is entitled "Socko, Whamo, and Sonk!"]

zonky *adj* Odd; strange; FREAKY, WEIRD (1972 +)

zoo *n* A crowded and chaotic place: *Opening Day is always a zoo/ The*

emergency room at Bellevue was usually a zoo (1935 +)

zooley *adj* Like a zoo; nasty; barbaric: *It's been zooley down here. It's been hectic (1970s +)*

zoom in (on) *v phr* To concentrate or focus on something or someone to the exclusion of other things: *zooming in on the question of decency*

zoot suit *n phr* A man's suit with a jacket having very wide lapels, heavily padded shoulders, and many-buttoned sleeves, with very high-waisted trousers full in the leg and tapering to narrow cuffs • Such garments were worn as symbols of status and defiance, esp by urban black hipsters and Los Angeles Chicanos: *Some were garbed in short sleeve shirts, others in zoot suits/ Jelly got into his zoot suit with the reet pleats [1942 +; origin unknown; probably in essence a rhyming phrase of the sort common in black English and slang; perhaps related to other jive and cool-talk terms like vootie]*

zorch *v* To convey or transfer quickly: *This file transfer program really zorches those files through the network (1980s + Computer)*

zowie *interj* An exclamation imitating sudden impact; POW, WHAM: *I ducked, but zowie, it caught me on the nose (1913 +)* **n** Energy; vitality; vim; ZING, ZIP: *full of zing, full of zest, full of zowie (1940s +)*

Zs, some **See** COP ZS

zshlub **See** ZHLUB

APPENDIX A

Words for “Drunk,” “Intoxicated,” and “Intoxicated by Drugs”

Words in SMALL CAPITAL LETTERS are defined in the book.

Drunk

activated

alkied (up)

ALKIED, ALKEYED

annihilated

antifreezed

APED

aped

apeshit

BAGGED

bagged

baked

balmed

balmy

bamboozled

banjaxed

barreled (up)

bashed

BASTED

basted

bats

batted

battered

batty

belly up

belted

bent

bent out of shape

bewottled

binged

bladdered

blimped

BLIND

BLIND DRUNK

blind drunk

blind(ed)

blissed (out)

BLITZED

blitzed (out)

BLOATED

blocked

blooey

BLOTTO

blotto

blowed (away)

blown (out)

blown (up)

blown away

BLUE

blue

blue around the gills

bobo

BOILED

boiled

BOMBED

bombed (out)

BONGO, BONGOED

bonkers

boozed

BOOZED, BOOZED UP

BOOZY

boozy-woozy

both sheets in the wind

BOWZED

BOXED

boxed (up)

brewed

bruised

bunked

BUNNED

busted

BUZZIN'

buzzing

BUZZY

CANNED

canned

carrying a (heavy) load

chucked

clear

CLOBBERED

clobbered

COCKED

cocked

COCKEYED

comboozelated

commode-hugging drunk

cooked

CORKED

corked (up)

corky

CORNED

corned

country drunk

CRASHED

crashed

creamed

CROCKED

crooked

CRONK

cross-eyed (drunk)

crumped (out)

crunk

crying drunk

cut

DAGGED

DAMAGED

damaged

DEAD DRUNK

dead drunk

DEAD TO THE WORLD

dead to the world

DECKS AWASH

dinged out

DIPSY

dipsy

discombobulated

discomboobulated

down

DRUNK

DRUNK AS A SKUNK

drunk back

EDGED

edged

electrified

ELEVATED

elevated

eliminated

EMBALMED

embalmed

faced

faded

FALLING-DOWN DRUNK

falling-down drunk

far gone

far out

feel groovy

feeling no pain

feshnushkied

FIRED UP

fitshaced

fixed

flaked

flaked out

flako

flaky

flash

FLATLINED

FLOATING

flooey

floored

folded

foozlified

four sheets (to the wind)

four sheets in the wind foxy

FRACTURED

fractured

FRAZZLED

FRIED

fried

FULL

funked out

funky-drunk

fuzzed

FUZZLED

fuzzled

fuzzy

GAGED

gargler

GASSED

gassed (up)

GEEZED, GEEZED UP

giffed

GINNED, GINNED UP

glad

glass(y)-eyed

glazed (drunk)

glazed (over)

glued

goggle-eyed

gone

goofy

googly-eyed

gooned

grape shot

greased

GROGGED

groggified

groggy

GUYED OUT

guzzled

HALF CROCKED

HALF IN THE BAG

half in the bag

HALF SEAS OVER

half up the pole

HALF-BAGGED

half-baked

half-blind

half-canned

half-cocked

HALF-CORNED

half-crooked

half-lit

HALF-SHOT

half-sprung

HALF-STEWED

half-stewed

half-under

HAMMERED

hammered

HAPPY

happy

hard up

heeled

heister

hepped (up)

HIGH

high

hit under the wing

HOARY-EYED, ORIE-EYED, ORRY-EYED

honked

honkers

hooched (up)

hooted

hootered

horizontal

hot

howling (drunk)

illuminated

impaired

in a bad way

in a heap

IN ONE'S CUPS

in orbit

in rare form

in the bag

in the grip of the grape

in the gun

in the ozone

in the pink

in the suds

inside out

JAGGED

jagged

jambled

JAMMED

jammed

jazzed (up)

jiggered

jingled

jolly

jugged (up)

juicy

jungled

Kentucky fried

keyed (up)

keyed up to the roof

killed (off)

kited

KNOCKED OUT

knocked out

knocked up

KOed

laid

laid back

LAID OUT

laid out

laid to the bone

lathered

layed

lifted

light

liquefied

LIQUORED UP

LIT

lit

LIT TO THE GILLS

lit up

LIT UP, LIT UP LIKE A CHRISTMAS TREE

LOADED

loaded

loaded for bear

loaded to the barrel

loaded to the gills

loony

looped

LOOPED, LOOPING

loop-legged

loopy

loose

lost in the sauce

LUBRICATED

lubricated

LUSHED, LUSHED UP

maggot(ty)

mashed

maxed out

MELLOW

mellow

messed up

Mickey finished

milled

mixed (up)

moist around the edges

moonlit

mopped

moppy

muddled (up)

muggy

nipped

non compos

non compos poopoo

obliterated

off

OILED

oiled

on the blink

on the fritz

on the sauce

OSSIFIED

ossified

Otis

out

out cold

out like a light

out of it

out of one's skull

out of sight

out of the way

overserved

packaged

pafisticated

paid

PARALYZED

PARBOILED

parboiled

pee'd

peonied

pepped (up)

perked (up)

perking

perma-fried

PETRIFIED

petrified

phfft

PICKLED

pickled

PIE-EYED

pie-eyed

piff(1)icated

piffed

PIFFED, PIFFLED

piffled

PIFFLICATED

pigeon-eyed

pilfered

pinked

pipped (up)

pissed

PIXILATED

pixilated

pixolated

PLASTERED

plastered

plastered to the wall

pleasantly plastered

PLONKED

plonked (up)

plootered

PLOTZED

plotzed plowed (under)

polished (up)

POLLUTED

polluted

pooped (out)

poopied

pop-eyed

popped

potted

POTTED, POTTED UP

powdered (up)

preserved

primed

psyched (out)

puggled

pummelled

pushed

put to bed with a shovel

putrid

quartzed

queer

queered

racked (up)

ratted

rattled

raunchy

riffed

ripe

ripped

ripped (off)

ripped (up)

roasted

ROCKY

ROSY

rotten

rumdum

RUM-DUM

rummed (up)

rummy

SATURATED

sauced

sawed

scammered

schicker

schickered

schnockerred

SCHNOCKERED, SNOCKERED

schnoggered

scorched

screeching (drunk)

SCREWED

screwed

screwed tight

screwy

scronched

SCROOCHED

seeing pink elephants

sent

sewed up

SF

shagged

shammered

SHAVED

shaved

SHELLACKED

shellacked

shicker

SHIKKER, SHICKER

shined

SHIT-FACED

shit-faced

shitty

shnockered

SHOT

shot

shot in the neck

shot-away

shot-up

shredded

sizzled

skulled

skunk-drunk

skunked

slaughtered

SLEWED

slewed

slewy

slightly rattled

SLOPPED

slopped

SLOSHED

sloshed (to the ears)

sloughed (up)

slued

SLUGGED

slugged

slushed (up)

SMASHED

smashed

smearred

snapped (up)

snoggerred

snooted

snoozamorooed

snotted

snozzled

SNUFFY

snuffy

SOAKED

soaked

socked

soft

soggy

sopping (wet)

soppy

so-so

sossled

soupy

SOUSED

soused

southern-fried

SOZZLED

sozzled

sozzly

spanked

SPIFFED

SPIFFLICATED

spifflicated

spificated

spiked

SPRUNG

squiffed

squiffy

SQUIFFY, SQUIFFY-EYED, SQUIFFED

stale drunk

starched

starchy

steamed (up)

stew

stewed (up)

stewed to the ears

stewed to the gills

STEWED, STEWED TO THE GILLS

STIFF

stiff

stiffed

stinking

stinking (drunk)

STINKING, STINKO

stone blind

stoned (out)

stoned out of one's squash

stoned silly

stonkered

stozzled

stuccoed

stung

stunned

stupid

SWACKED

swacked

swamped

swigged

swiggled

swizzled

SWIZZLED, SWOZZLED

swoozled

swozzled

tacky

tanked

tanked up

TANKED, TANKED UP

TANKY

tanky

tanned

teed (up)

TEED UP

that way

thawed

three sheets (to the wind)

three sheets in the wind

THREE SHEETS TO THE WIND, THREE SHEETS IN THE WIND

tiddled

TIDDLY

tiffled

TIGHT

tight

TIGHT AS A TICK

tight as a tick

tippily

tipsy

top-heavy

tore (up)

tore down

torn (up)

torqued

totalled

touched

toxicated

toxy

trammeled

trashed

tubed

tuned

tweased

tweaked

twisted

two sheets to the wind

under the affluence of incohol

UNDER THE TABLE

under the table

under the weather

up the pole

upholstered

varnished

vegetable

vomatose

w(h)acked

w(h)acked (out)

waa-zooed

walking on rocky socks

WALL-EYED

wall-eyed

waxed

way out

well-fixed

WELL-OILED

well-oiled

wet

whack

whazood

whiffled

whittled

whooshed

wigged (out)

wiggy

wing heavy

wiped (out)

WIPED OUT

wiped over

wired

wired up

woofled

woozy

wrecked

zagged

zissified

zoned (out)

zonked (out)

zonker

zoobang

zooed

zooted

zootied

zorked

zosted

zounked (out)

zozzled

zunked

Intoxicated

BENT

BENT OUT OF SHAPE

BLASTED

BUZZED

HIGH AS A KITE

JUICED, JUICED UP

OUT, OUT COLD

RIPPED

SLAP-HAPPY

STONED TO THE EYES

STONED, STONED-OUT

TOTALED

WASTED

ZONKED, ZONKED OUT, ZONKERS

Intoxicated by Drugs

amped

backed up

BAKED

baked

beaming

beaned up

belted

bent

bent out of shape

blind(ed)

blissed (out)

blitzed (out)

blixed

blocked

blowed (away)

blown (out)

blown away

BLOWN-OUT

bombed (out)

BOMBED OUT

bonged

BONGED-OUT

BOOTED

boxed (up)

BOXED OUT

charged (up)

CHARGED UP

CHOKED OUT

COKED, COKED-UP, COKED-OUT

cooked

CRANKED UP

crisp

destroyed

dopey

DOPEY, DOPY

edged

enhanced

faded

far out

feel groovy

fixed

flaked out

FLOATING

FOGGED OUT

foxy

fried

FUCKED UP

funked out

GAGE, GAGED

gassed (up)

GBed

GEED, G'D

GEEZED, GEEZED UP

girked

GONE

gone

GONGED

gonged

GOOFED

goofed (up)

GOONED, GOONED OUT

GOWED UP

groovy

HIGH

high

HOPPED UP

horsed

hurt

hyped (up)

in orbit

in the ozone

IN THE POCKET

jacked

jacked up

jazzed (up)

keyed (up)

keyed up to the roof

killed (off)

KNOCKED OUT

knocked out

KOed

laid

laid back

laid out

layed

LIFTED

LIT UP, LIT UP LIKE A CHRISTMAS TREE

LOADED

loaded

LUDED OUT

MAXED

mellow

messed up

MOHASKY

monolithic

numbed out

off

oiled

OSSIFIED

ossified

out

out of it

out of sight

out of this world

over the hump

overamped

perking

perma-fried

PETRIFIED

phased

phazed

phumfed

plowed (under)

plugged in

polluted

popped

POTTED, POTTED UP

primed

psyched (out)

racked (up)

RED

riffed

ripped

ripped (off)

ripped (up)

scattered

schnockerred

schnoggered

scorched

sent

shot-up

skagged out

skating

skulled

smashed

smearred

SMOKED OUT

snaved in

SNOWED IN, SNOWED UP

SPACED-OUT, SPACED, SPACEY, SPACY

spiked

stoned (out)

stoned out of one's gourd

stoned out of one's gourd (or head)

stoned out of one's head

stoned out of one's squash

stoned silly

strung (up)

STRUNG OUT

strung out

taken

TEA'D UP

teed (up)

trashed

TRIPPY

TURNED ON

turned on

TWISTED

UP

w(h)acked

w(h)acked (out)

warped

WAY OUT

way out

wide

wigged (out)

WIGGED OUT, WIGGED

WIGGY

wiggy

WINGY

wiped over

wired

wired up

WIRED, WIRED UP

WRECKED

wrecked

zerked (out)

zipped

zoned (out)

ZONED, ZONED OUT

zonked (out)

zootied

zounked (out)

zunked

APPENDIX B

Guide to Text Messaging Abbreviations

404	I don't know
86	Out of, Over
411	Info
@TEOTD	At the end of the Day
2NITE	Tonight
4EVER	Forever
A or S or L	Age or sex or location
A3	Anytime, anywhere, anyplace
AAF	As a friend
AAP	Always a pleasure
AAR	At any rate
AAR8	At any rate
AAS	Alive and smiling
ABT2	About to
ACK	Acknowledgment
ADBB	All done bye-bye
ADD	Address

AND	Any day now
ADR	Address
AEAP	As early as possible
AFAIK	As far as I know
AFC	Away from computer
AFK	Away from keyboard
AIMB	As I mentioned before
AISB	As it should be
AKA	Also known as
ALAP	As late as possible
AMAP	As many as possible
AML	All my love
AOTA	All of the above
ASAP	As soon as possible
ASL	Age or sex or location
ASLMH	Age or Sex or Location or Music or Hobbies
AT	At your terminal
ATM	At the moment
ATST	At the same time
AWOL	Absent without leave
AYEC	At your earliest convenience
AYK	As you know
AYOR	At your own risk
B or C	Because

B or F	Boyfriend
B4	Before
B4N	Bye for now
BAK	Back at keyboard
BAU	Business as usual
BBIAF	Be back in a few
BBIAM	Be back in a minute
BBL	Be back later
BBS	Be back soon
BBT	Be back tomorrow
BC	Because
BCNU	Be seein' you
BCOZ	Because
BD	Big deal
BF	Best friend
BFD	Big f***ing deal
BFF	Best friends forever
BFG	Big f***ing grin
BFN	Bye for now
BG	Big grin
BGWM	Be gentle with me
BLNT	Better luck next time
BM&Y	Between me and you
BOL	Best of luck

BR	Bathroom
BRB	Be right back
BRT	Be right there
BTA	But then again
BTDT	Been there, done that
BTHOOM	Beats the hell out of me
BTSOOM	Beats the sh*t out of me
BTW	By the way
BW	Best wishes
C or P	Cross post
CID	Consider it done
CMIIW	Correct me if I'm wrong
CMON	Come on
COB	Close of business
COS	Because
CR8	Create
CRAT	Can't remember a thing
CRB	Come right back
CRBT	Crying really big tears
CSL	Can't stop laughing
CU	See you
CUA	See you around
CUL	See you later
CUL8ER	See you later

CUL8R	See you later
CUNS	See you in school
CWYL	Chat with you later
CYA	See ya
CYL	See you later
CYO	See you online
CYT	See you tomorrow
D or L	Download
DEGT	Don't even go there
DGA	Don't go anywhere
DGT	Don't go there
DIKU	Do I know you?
DIY	Do it yourself
DKDC	Don't know don't care
DL	Download
DMI	Don't mention it
DNC	Does not compute
DQMOT	Don't quote me on this
DRIB	Don't read if busy
DTS	Don't think so
DUST	Did you see that?
DV8	Deviate
E123	Easy as one two three
EAK	Eating at keyboard

EBKAC	Error between keyboard and chair
EG	Evil grin
EL	Evil laugh
EM?	Excuse me?
EMA	E-mail address
EMFBI	Excuse me for butting in
EOD	End of day
EOM	End of message
EWI	E-mailing while intoxicated
EZ	Easy
EZ	Easy
F2F	Face to face
F2T	Free to talk
FAB	Features, attributes, benefits
FAWC	For anyone who cares
FBM	Fine by me
FC	Fingers crossed
FF	Friends forever
FICCL	Frankly I couldn't care a less
FISH	First in, still here
FITB	Fill in the blank
FO	F*** off
FOAF	Friend of a friend
FOFL	Falling on floor laughing

FOMCL	Falling off my chair laughing
FRT	For real though
FTTB	For the time being
FUD	Fear, uncertainty, disinformation
FWIW	For what it's worth
FYA	For your amusement
FYEO	For your eyes only
FYI	For your information
G	Grin
G or F	Girlfriend
G2CU	Good to see you
G2G	Got to go
G2R	Got to run
G9	Genius
GA	Go ahead
GAL	Get a life
GB	Goodbye
GBH	Great big hug
GBU	God bless you
GD or R	Grinning, ducking, and running
GDR	Grinning, ducking, and running
GFI	Go for it
GG	Gotta Go or Good Game
GGN	Gotta go now

GIAR	Give it a rest
GIGO	Garbage in, garbage out
GL	Good luck
GLHF	Good luck, have fun
GLNG	Good luck next game
GMTA	Great minds think alike
GOI	Get over it
GOK	God only knows
GOL	Giggling out loud
GR&D	Grinning, running and ducking
GR8	Great
GT	Good try
GTG	Got to go
GTH	Go to hell
GTRM	Going to read mail
H&K	Hugs & kisses
H2CUS	Hope to see you soon
H8	Hate
HAGD	Have a good day
HAGN	Have a good night
HAGO	Have a good one
HAK	Hugs & kisses
HAND	Have a nice day
HB	Hurry back

HD	Hold
HF	Have fun or Hello friend
HHIS	Head hanging in shame
HIH	Hope it helps
HOAS	Hold on a second
HRU	How are you?
HTH	Hope this helps
HUGZ	Hugs
HV	Have
IAC	In any case
IAE	In any event
IANAE	I am not an expert
IANAL	I am not a lawyer
IAT	I am tired
IB	I'm back
IBRB	I'll be right back
IBTD	I beg to differ
IC	I see or In character
ICBW	It could be worse or I could be wrong
ID10T	Idiot
IDGAF	I don't give a f***
IDK	I don't know
I-D-L	Ideal
IDM	It doesn't matter

IDTS	I don't think so
IDUNNO	I don't know
IFU	I f***ed up
IG2R	I got to run
IGGP	I gotta go pee
IGTP	I get the point
IHNO	I have no opinion
IIRC	If I remember correctly
ILBL8	I'll be late
ILU	I love you
ILY	I love you
IM	Instant message, Instant messaging
IMHO	In my humble opinion
IMNSHO	In my not so humble opinion
IMO	In my opinion
IMS	I am sorry
INAL	I'm not a lawyer
INMP	It's not my problem
INNW	If not now, when?
INPO	In no particular order
IOH	I'm outta here
IOW	In other words
IRL	In real life
IRMC	I rest my case

ISS	I said so
ISTM	It seems to me
ISWYM	I see what you mean
ITM	In the money
IUSS	If you say so
IYKWIM	If you know what I mean
IYO	In your opinion
IYSS	If you say so
IYSWIM	If you see what I mean
J or C	Just checking
J or K	Just kidding
J or W	Just wondering
j00r	Your
JAC	Just a sec
JAM	Just a minute
JIC	Just in case
JJA	Just joking around
JK	Just kidding
JM2C	Just my two cents
JMO	Just my opinion
JOOTT	Just one of those things
JP	Just playing
JT	Just teasing
K	Okay or All right

k or b	keyboard
KBD	keyboard
KEWL	Cool
KFY	Kiss for you
KIR	Keep it real
KISS	Keep it simple, stupid
KIT	Keep in touch
KMA	Kiss my a**
KNIM	Know what I mean?
KOTC	Kiss on the cheek
KOTL	Kiss on the lips
KPC	Keeping parents clueless
KWIM	Know what I mean?
KYPO	Keep your pants on
L8R	Later
LD	Later, dude or Long distance
LMAO	Laughing my a** off
LMK	Let me know
LOL	Laughing out loud
LTM	Laugh to myself
LTNS	Long time no see
LYL	Love you lots
LYLAB	Love you like a brother
LYLAS	Love you like a sister

M8	Mate
MFI	Mad for it
MIHAP	May I have your attention please
MOMPL	One moment please
MOOS	Member of opposite sex
MorF	Male or female?
MoS	Mother over shoulder
MOSS	Member of same sex
MSG	Message
MTF	More to follow
MTFBWU	May the force be with you
MTFBWY	May the force be with you
MUSM	Miss you so much
MWBRL	More will be revealed later
MYOB	Mind your own business
N or A	Not applicable or Not affiliated
n00b	Newbie
N1	Nice one
N2M	Not to mention
N-A-Y-L	In a while
NBD	No big deal
NBIF	No basis in fact
NE	Any
NE1	Anyone

N-E-1	Anyone
NF1	No f***ing idea
NFM	None for me or Not for me
NFW	No f***ing way
NG	New game
NIMBY	Not in my back yard
NLT	No later than
NM	Nothing much or Never mind
NMH	Not much here
NMP	Not my problem
NO1	No one
NOYB	None of your business
NP	No problem
NRN	No response or reply necessary
NTK	Nice to know
NTYMI	Now that you mention it
NUFF	Enough said
NVM	Never mind
NW	No way
OBTW	Oh by the way
OIC	Oh, I see
OMDB	Over my dead body
OMG	Oh my God
OMIK	Open mouth insert keyboard

OMW	On my way
ONNA	Oh no not again
OO	Over and out
OOH	Out of here
OOI	Out of interest
OOTD	One of these days
OP	On phone
OT	Off topic
OTB	Off to bed
OTL	Out to lunch
OTOH	On the other hand
OTP	On the phone
OTT	Over the top
OTTOMH	Off the top of my head
OTW	Off to work
OVA	Over
OWTTE	Or words to that effect
P&C	Private and confidential
PCM	Please call me
PDQ	Pretty darn quick
PITA	Pain in the a**
PLMK	Please let me know
PLS	Please
PLZ	Please

PM	Private Message or Personal message
PMFI	Pardon me for interrupting
PMFJI	Pardon me for jumping in
PO	P*ss off
POAHF	Put on a happy face
PONA	Person of no account
POOF	Goodbye
POS	Parent over shoulder
POV	Point of view
PPL	People
PROLLY	Probably
PRT	Party
PRW	People or parents are watching
PTL	Praise the Lord
PTMM	Please tell me more
PU	That stinks!
PXT	Please explain that
P-ZA	Pizza
Q	Queue
QIK	Quick
QL	Quit laughing!
QT	Cutie
R&R	Rest and relaxation
RBAY	Right back at ya

RBTL	Read between the lines
RE	Regards or Hello again
RFD	Request for discussion
RFS	Real f***ing soon
RL	Real life
RME	Rolling my eyes
RML	Read my lips
RMMM	Read my mail, man!
RN	Right now
ROFL	Rolling on floor laughing
ROTFL	Rolling on the floor laughing
ROTFLUTS	Rolling on the floor laughing unable to speak
ROTM	Right on the money
RSN	Real soon now
RTFM	Read the f***ing manual
RTK	Return to keyboard
RTM	Read the manual
RU	Are you...
RUMOF	Are you male or female?
RUOK	Are you okay?
RUUP4IT	Are you up for it?
RX	Regards
SAL	Such a laugh
SC	Stay cool

SCNR	Sorry, could not resist
SEP	Somebody else's problem
SETE	Smiling Ear-to-Ear
SH	Sh** happens
SICNR	Sorry, I could not resist
SIG2R	Sorry, I got to run
SIS	Snickering in silence
SIT	Stay in touch
SITD	Still in the dark
SLAP	Sounds like a plan
SMAIM	Send me an instant message
SMEM	Send me e-mail
SMHID	Scratching my head in disbelief
SNAFU	Situation normal all fouled up
SO	Significant other
SOL	Sooner or later
SOL	Sh** out of luck
SOMY	Sick of me yet?
SOP	Standard operating procedure
SorG	Straight or gay?
SOTMG	Short of time, must go
SPK	Speak
SPST	Same place, same time
SRY	Sorry

SS	So sorry
SSDD	Same stuff, different day
SSINF	So stupid it's not funny
STFU	Shut the f*** up
STR8	Straight
STW	Search the Web
STYS	Speak to you soon
SUITM	See you in the morning
SUL	See you later
SUP	What's up?
SWAK	Sent with a kiss
SWDYT	So what do you think?
SYL	See you later
SYS	See you soon
T +	Think positive
TA	Thanks a lot
TAFN	That's all for now
TAH	Take a hike
TAM	Tomorrow a.m.
TANSTAAFL	There ain't no such thing as a free lunch
TAS	Taking a shower
TBC	To be continued
TBD	To be determined
TBH	To be honest

TC	Take care
TCB	The trouble came back!
TDTM	Talk dirty to me
TEOTWAWKI	The end of the world as we know it
TFDS	That's for darn sure
TFN	Thanks for nothing
TFW	Too freakin' weird
TGIF	Thank God it's Friday
THKS	Thanks
THNQ	Thank-you
THNX	Thanks
THX	Thanks
TIA	Thanks in advance
TIAD	Tomorrow is another day
TIC	Tongue in cheek
TK	To come
TLK2UL8R	Talk to you later
TM	Trust me
TMB	Text me back
TMI	Too much information
TMOT	Trust me on this
TMWFI	Take my word for it
TNA	Temporarily not available
TNC	Tongue in cheek

TNSTAAFL	There's no such thing as a free lunch
TNX	Thanks
TOM	Tomorrow
TP	Team player
TPML	Tomorrow p.m.
TPTB	The powers that be
TSIA	This says it all
TSTB	The sooner, the better
TTFN	Ta ta for now
TTG	Time to go
TTTT	These things take time
TTUL	Talk to you later
TTYL	Talk to you later
TTYS	Talk to you soon
TU	Thank you
TVN	Thank you very much
TWIMC	To whom it may concern
TX	Thanks
TXS	Thanks
TY	Thank you
TYT	Take your time
TYVM	Thank you very much
U2	You too?
UGTBK	You've got to be kidding

UKTR	You know that's right
UL	Upload
U-L	You will...
UR	Your or You're
U-R	You are...
UV	Unpleasant visual
UW	You're welcome
VBG	Very big grin
VBS	Very big smile
VM	Voice mail
VSF	Very sad face
W/O	Without
WAD	Without a doubt
WAG	Wild ass guess
WAM	Wait a minute
WAN2TLK	Want to talk
WAYF	Where are you from?
WB	Write back
WB	Welcome back
WBS	Write back soon
WC	Who cares?
WDYS	What did you say?
WDYT	What do you think?
WE	Whatever

WF	Way fun
WFM	Works for me
WG	Wicked grin
WIIFM	What's in it for me?
WK	Week
WKD	Weekend
WOMBAT	Waste of money, brains and time
WRK	Work
WRT	With regard or respect to
WRUD	What are you doing?
WT	Without thinking
WTB	Want to buy
WTF	What the f*ck
WTG	Way to go!
WTH	What the heck?!
WU?	What's up?
WUCIWUG	What you see is what you get
WUF?	Where are you from?
WWJD	What would Jesus do?
WWY?	Where were you?
WWYC	Write when you can
WX	Weather
WYCM?	Will you call me?
WYLEI	When you least expect it

WYP	What's your problem?
WYRN	What's your real name?
WYS	Whatever you say
WYSIWYG	What you see is what you get
WYT	Whatever you think
WYWH	Wish you were here
X	Kiss
X-I-10	Exciting
XLNT	Excellent
XME	Excuse me
XOXO	Hugs and kisses
YA	Your or Yet another
YBS	You'll be sorry
YDKM	You don't know me
YGBK	You gotta be kidding
YGBKM	You've got to be kidding me
YHM	You have mail
YKW?	You know what?
YKWYCD	You know what you can do
YMMV	Your mileage may vary
YNK	You never know
YOYO	You're on your own
YR	You're right or Yeah right
YTTT	You telling the truth?

YW	You're welcome
YWIA	You're welcome in advance
ZZZZ	Sleeping

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